



cal rentals

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HOURS:
Monday–Friday,
10 a.m. – 4 p.m., excluding
official University holidays

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when to look for housing

The rental market changes daily and every day there are new places offered for rent. Therefore, it is simply not true that the “good” housing gets taken in the late spring or early summer, or any other time of the year for that matter. The best time to look for housing is whenever you can afford to begin paying rent, coupled with wanting or needing to move. Begin the process by no more than four to six weeks in advance of your target move-in date. Most people find housing in under a month, but you may want to build in a little extra time if you are new to this process.

BROWSING THE RENTAL MARKET FAR IN ADVANCE

Many people feel anxious about this process and it makes them feel better if they can just see some rental listings. That’s fine; just be aware that if you elect to obtain the listings now, but plan to move to Berkeley much later, you will not be able to do much with the information at present. The rental listings will help you to gain a sense of the market and develop a knowledge base of typical rents and amenities. You are likely to find that you can only make use of the rental listings later, when listers begin to advertise availability dates closer to the time when you want to move. Even then, most landlords, and almost all people seeking new roommates, will want to meet you in person before deciding whether or not to select you as a tenant.

HOUSE-HUNTING TIMETABLES

This section is written primarily for students who are vacating the University residence halls at the end of spring semester and plan to live off-campus, but it may also be useful for anyone who needs to transition from one form of housing into another over the summer.

If you are currently in Berkeley and you plan to live in Berkeley during the summer, you could begin your housing search in early to mid-March with a targeted move-in date of late May or June 1. This is common for many students who plan to leave the University residence halls and move off-campus, so start your search early!

But, what do you do if you’re going away this summer? If you will be within the state of California, you could obtain our online rental listings, call on new ads as they are posted online during the course of a week, and set up weekend viewing appointments. You could then fly or drive here to look at perhaps 10 or 15 places over a weekend, submit applications for the rentals you like and hope you get selected for one of them. Ask the landlords when they plan to make their decision, and make sure you are easy to reach. This process may need to be repeated over a few weekends until you are successful.

If you will be far away or must wait until August to house-hunt, it is best to plan a concentrated block of time to be in Berkeley during which to conduct your search.

No matter when you come to Berkeley to look, be sure to plan where you will stay. Friends and relatives, of course, are good and usually free! From June to mid-August the University operates the **Summer Visitor Residence** and we also have a list of Hotels and Motels on our website.

Some students try to rent a place in late May or early June and then sublet it over the summer to a summer session visitor. While that may be a good strategy, be aware of the following pitfalls: 1) you need the landlord’s permission to sublet, 2) if you don’t find a subtenant, you might be stuck paying rent over the whole summer, and 3) since summer session visitors arrive with literally a suitcase, your place will need to have at least a minimal amount of furniture, and you may not have had the time to run out and get furniture as you’re finishing up your final exams.