

PS. These guidelines try to cover most accommodation related topics like where to find the place, contract, legal aid and much more. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us directly.

Things you should know before renting an apartment

So, you are starting your semester in Tallinn and the first thing you need is accommodation. We've put together some useful tips and tricks you can use along the way on finding your new home :)

1. Make a budget. Think through what kind of apartment you want to rent. Ask yourself a question - Do you want to rent a place in the hostel or an apartment? Or maybe you want a place in the dormitory? Do you want to rent an apartment alone or with someone else? Also, keep it in mind that it will cost you more to rent an apartment in the city centre alone (or the closer you get to the centre).
2. You have made your decision, yay. Now it's time to look through some ads and pages to find yourself the perfect place for the semester. For a dormitory place, you can find more information from your university homepage or ask from your local Erasmus+ coordinator. They will help you out, don't worry ;) When you are trying to find a place in a hostel, write to them directly and ask for the information about the long period fee. Most of the hostels will have discounts if you stay longer. When using the search option, make sure your city is marked as Tallinn. Tallinn is divided into 10 districts. You can check the [map here](#).

Here is a list of some of the websites you can check out:

- <http://www.city24.ee/>
- <http://www.kv.ee/>
- <https://apartments.larsen.ee/>
- <http://1home.eu/>
- <http://www.g4s.ee/en/about-company/dormitory>
- <http://tallinnstudent.eu>
- www.airbnb.com
- <https://www.apartment.ee>
- <https://www.kinnisvara24.ee/home>
- <https://www.tudengikodu.org/?keel=eng>
- <http://www.expats.com>
- <https://www.lumikodud.ee/en/>

Unfortunately, this is only in Estonian, but their main business is to mediate rental apartments: <http://koduingel.ee/>

On FB you can find information from these pages and groups:

- https://www.facebook.com/Accommodation-for-international-student-s-in-Tallinn-237391599737566/?ref=ts&fref=ts&hc_location=ufi
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/240149779384739/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/537570133066696/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/309361605906104/?ref=ts&fref=ts>
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/650733614961733/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/YyrikorteridTallinnas/> (it's FB for KV.ee rentals)
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/299056793537765/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/korterikaaslased/>

Here is a list of hostels you can check out:

- <http://www.hostels.com/tallinn/estonia>
- <http://www.hostelworld.com/findabed.php/ChosenCity.Tallinn/ChosenCountry.Estonia>
- <http://www.hosteltallinn.com/>
- <http://euphoria.traveller.ee/>
- <http://www.teeninduskool.ee/hostel/>
- <https://www.academichostel.com/en/>
- <http://www.mahtra.ee/en/booking/>
- <http://welcomehostel.ee/>

Some of our ESN partners in Tallinn you can check out:

- <http://www.knight-house.eu/>
- <http://toth.ee/tallinn-backpackers/>
- <http://hostel.alur.ee/>
- <http://tallinnstudent.eu/>
- <http://toth.ee/themonksbunk/>
- <http://toth.ee/viru-backpackers/>

PS. If you have **ESNcard**, they have some good discounts also for some of those places ;) You can find more info from our web page about discounts with ESN card: [link to further information](#)

Some universities in Tallinn have their own dormitories. It's always a good idea to start by contacting your local **Erasmus coordinator**. Here is some information on the university dormitories:

Tallinn Technical University: <http://www.ttu.ee/en/?id=31356>

Tallinn University: <http://www.dormitorium.ee/en/>

Tallinn Health Care College:

<http://ttk.ee/et/%C3%BCli%C3%B5pilaskodusse-kohataotluse-esitamine>

(This one is a bit tricky as it is just a form to fill and that's how you apply for a place. They reply within 5 days and let you know if you have a spot or not.

Sorry, couldn't find English version).

http://www.yhikas.ee/index_eng.php

University dorms also accept students from other universities, if they have free places.

Real estate companies list you might find brokers to help you out:

<http://www.city24.ee/en/brokerSearch?isAgency=true&lang=en>

List of brokers:

<http://www.maakleritekoda.ee/professional-brokers>

3. In the dormitories there might not be enough spots so it's always good to add yourself to the **waiting list**. They will inform you if there are some free spots. (You might even get a spot in the middle of the semester, and they are usually cheaper than any other accommodation options)
4. For the hostels you should always ask for a better price if you decide to stay longer. They are happy to help you out. And now the tricky part – If you decided to rent an apartment you should be aware of the following things :
There are many people trying to cheat and scam you. Remember - renting an apartment is a legal process. Everything should be written down beforehand. So here are some things you should keep your eyes open before renting an apartment.

First things first

Remember to check out if the owner really owns this apartment. Easiest is to google him or her ☺ There is also this place you can check owner out, but to do that you need to pay a small fee (you can ask your tutor for help with the website):

<https://kinnistusraamat.rik.ee/detailparing/Login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2fdetailparing%2f>

Make sure that the landlord has the owner's authorization. Sometimes the owner and the landlord are not the same person. **NB! To avoid fraud: Before**

signing the contract and sending any personal details, ask for video call/Skype meeting. Do not send copies of passport/ID or money, before you are not sure. Google search images/people/email addresses. If it is a scam, there is usually some sort of proof already up there! Be smart, do not open links people are sending you if you are not sure about content! Phishing is one of the most common ways to get your personal info!

Contract

Always read not only the contract itself but also all of the fine print. Read everything in the document. If you don't understand something ask from someone you trust. Let someone translate the document if needed. You should not give or send out any money beforehand. Check apartment before you move in with owner or a representative of the owner. Mark down all the things you find unacceptable, like a broken pipe in the kitchen or dripping shower etc. Also, it is good to put into lease all furniture, electronics and other stuff that are in the apartment. It makes it easier to check, if everything is still attached :)

Make sure what is your and the owner's responsibilities. They should be written down in the contract. Don't forget to check out the utility part in the contract! All starting costs should be written into the contract like electricity, water, gas etc. These numbers are added to contract from the day you start your apartment lease, if you don't have any other agreement with the owner. Utility bill usually has some extra fees like repair fund etc. This should be also in the contract if you have to pay full apartment maintenance costs. **If there is only gas, electricity, water and heat mentioned, then the owner cannot ask you for extra fees.**

To take all these things together here is list what should be written down in the rental agreement:

- a) Description of the object (including an accurate inventory of furniture)
- b) The amount of rent and payment procedures
- c) Additional costs (utility bills), calculation and payment procedures
- d) Contract period and the termination of the contract, including the early termination and the arrangements if that happens.
- e) Yours and the landlord's obligations and rights
- f) Furnishings (furniture, equipment) preservation and the returning obligations.

If you have signed a fixed-term lease, the landlord can raise the rent only once a year. If it is at least a three-year contract, the extent of the increase in rent and the calculating method have to be clearly indicated in the contract also.

Securing your first apartment

A lease is a legally binding document. Be certain that you understand what's covered in a residential lease agreement. Ask your landlord, or a lawyer any questions before signing a lease.

One-time fees such as security, pet, and utility deposits can add up. **Your first month in a new apartment can easily reach up to 800 euros.** The good news: If you take care of the property, and abide by the lease, you should get some, or all, of your deposits back when you move.

After everyone has signed or co-signed the lease agreement with the landlord, it's a good idea for you and any roommates to sign a co-tenancy agreement. Spelling out responsibilities and liabilities for each person can prevent legal problems down the road.

Moving In

Inspect your new apartment. Write down any concerns or necessary repairs. This allows you to notify the landlord about problems, and get them fixed right away.

As a tenant, it's your right to live in a safe and habitable environment. Both you and your landlord have certain maintenance responsibilities for the apartment. To be on the safe side, it's a good idea to put your tenant repair requests in writing. Within a reasonable length of time, your landlord has an obligation to respond. If you need to make a complaint to your landlord, again, do it in writing (great if you also keep a copy of it yourself with the date marked on it). Never let a structural defect, health hazard, or community concern just sit. Telling your landlord about problems immediately can protect you from liability when you move out.

Even if you do everything right, sometimes the landlord-tenant relationship isn't straightforward. If you ever need help protecting your rights as a tenant you can contact your university contact, your tutor, a local ESN section or a lawyer.

Sharing an apartment

You have found a truly amazing apartment, but discovered that the monthly fee is too much. So you have a plan to find someone who is willing to share the costs. Before you are going down this road, you should be aware of some things. Sharing apartment is good, but the owner or the landlord should also know how many people are living there. Always contact your landlord and make sure they are OK with it. It helps also to prevent later problems with your landlord. In some cases the landlord actually is offering a room in a shared apartment. This info is usually mentioned in the add also. There are some things you should keep in mind - **first of all the contract**. Even in co-renting with someone there always should be a contract. The contract form is usually the same as renting the apartment alone. There can be one main contract and contract for every tenancy separately. In this case, ask for the main contract also. **Remember, renting an apartment together means you share the responsibilities**. Being late with the rent more than **two times** means the landlord can cancel your contract. This is also probably mentioned in the contract.

Most of the times people are already living in an apartment looking for someone to share their expenses. They hold main contract and usually are the ones who pay all of the expenses. They take care of contacting with the landlord and making sure that everything is okay. The main contract holder has also more to worry about. Be nice to them. They have taken a huge risk to share a living space with someone. If you are late with your payment, someone else has to pay your share. Make sure you meet all tenancies before signing your lease. Check out the apartment and the living conditions before! Always ask to see apartment beforehand. If something seems too good to be true it usually is. **Never pay anything until you have not seen apartment, contract and people sharing this place with you**. In dormitories there are supervisors, but in the apartment it's really hard to manage, if you don't trust other tenancies. If you can't check place out yourself, ask help from your local coordinator.

Legal advice :)

We are working together with Expat Legal Estonia. They offer a legal service in Estonia to help in all main areas of law and in all legal aspects of expat life. They can advise with rental and employment contacts, immigration issues as well as company establishment etc. They offer transparent and affordable pricing and more can be found on their website www.expatallegalestonia.com. You can also contact directly at ingmar@expatallegalestonia.com or check out their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/ExpatLegalEstonia/>.

2. Specifically regarding rental agreements. A simple review of the agreement before signing it can save a lot of trouble later on. It is important to understand what is in the agreement, what should be done during the duration of the agreement and what should be avoided. Any major problems in an agreement can be identified by a local expert fast. Expat Legal Estonia offer to review the rental agreement with the first 15 minutes free of charge. Most issues can be identified in that time and after that it is up to you if you want further help or not. Most times this 15 minutes is enough.

Hope this small overview gave you some ideas and ways how to manage your new life in Tallinn.

Be careful and good luck with your accommodation search :)

When you still have some questions about accommodation or other related topics feel free to contact us through our FB page found here: [ESN Tallinn](#)

PS. All information is gathered over a longer period of time and put together accordingly. We try to update information regularly so if you have some suggestions regarding the guidelines, [please let us know :\)](#)

LIST OF SCAMMERS AND SOME GUIDELINES FROM SWEDEN:

<https://bostad.karservice.se/en/pages/visit/100099>