

► TIPS FOR TOURS



Be proactive and do your research beforehand. Contact the property prior to scheduling a visit to ensure your preferred options are available.



Arrive a few minutes early to sit in the lobby and observe. Can you see yourself living here?



Test your cell phone service while touring the building. Make sure it's not a dead zone!



Take notes! You'll be taking in a lot of information, so it helps to write it all down.



Take lots of photos! This makes it easier to compare apartments later.



Observe the apartment grounds thoroughly. Do you see any potential security or safety issues?

► MOVING IN

So, you have decided on a property and signed a lease but are unsure of what comes next? Make sure to do the following:

- Confirm your move-in date with the property manager.
- Confirm with the property manager the day, time, and location where you will pick up your keys.
- Familiarize yourself with the complex's designated parking and unloading areas to avoid tickets.
- Report any issues to your property manager or landlord.
- Don't forget to pack essential items such as trash bags, cleaning supplies, paper towels, toilet paper, and soap.
- If possible, coordinate with your roommates the shared items each of you will bring.

Once you have arrived:

- Conduct a thorough walkthrough of the apartment before getting settled in.
- Document and report damages not corrected prior to your arrival.
- Inspect for cleanliness of the unit and check all plumbing and electrical features, walls, locks, appliances, flooring, and safety equipment provided.
- Check for pest and rodent issues.
- Be sure to properly display a current parking decal.

► MOVING OUT

When moving out, be sure to:

- Remove all of your belongings and dispose of trash properly.
- Clean the unit thoroughly.
- Follow up with utility companies to transfer or suspend services.
- Return your keys to an office staff member or your landlord.
- Update your forwarding address to ensure you receive final paperwork and your security deposit.


Additional Tips:

- It's a good idea to take photos of the unit to document the condition prior to your departure.
- If you have gently used items that you wish to get rid of, consider donating them to a non-profit organization.
- Remember that security deposits are refundable but may be applied to tenant damages beyond normal wear and tear.
- Be aware of lease term dates. Most student-facing properties operate on a leasing cycle from mid-August to mid-July. It's important to watch for gaps in lease coverage for the following year.

► CONTACT INFO

OCSSMailbox@charlotte.edu
704.687.1892 | housing.charlotte.edu/niner-choice

NINER CHOICE



Interested in off-campus living?

► THE NINER CHOICE PROGRAM

The Niner Choice Program is a safety initiative designed to help students and supporters make informed decisions about off-campus living options. It is a partnership between UNC Charlotte Housing and Residence Life, the Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department, and UNC Charlotte Police and Public Safety. Implemented in 2014 and reimaged in 2019, the program is focused on supporting the safety of students and building relationships with off campus resources. It is not a stamp approval or endorsement from UNC Charlotte or the Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department, a guarantee of student safety, or an option for every property.

Properties which choose to participate in the Niner Choice program need to meet and adhere to specific safety standards and record-keeping, and not meet or exceed specific crime thresholds. Participating properties agree to undergo an annual physical security survey and an annual administrative review of leasing files. This assessment evaluates the safety features of the property, its grounds, and units.

Please note that neither the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNC Charlotte) nor the Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department (the CMPD) own, manage, endorse, or recommend any specific rental property. A Niner Choice designation is not a representation or warranty regarding the suitability, fitness, condition, or safety of any specific rental property, and neither UNC Charlotte nor CMPD are responsible for the accuracy or completeness of, or any liability or damage arising from the use of, any information provided in connection with the Niner Choice program. Students and families must exercise independent judgment when evaluating a prospective rental property.

► OFF-CAMPUS STUDENT SERVICES

The Department of Housing and Residence Life believes that living on-campus offers the best possible start for a college student's journey. We recognize students are faced with tough decisions about where to live on and off campus. Off-Campus Student Services is part of a unit in Housing and Residence Life that is committed to assisting students to make the most of their off-campus experience. Through education and outreach, Off-Campus Student Services aims to help to guide students who are searching for and establishing a home off campus. Our goal is to help students and their families be savvy consumers of off-campus housing options. Additionally, we're here to facilitate connections between off-campus students and valuable campus resources.

► OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING WEBSITE

The off-campus housing website is designed to simplify the off-campus housing search for students and their families, a link can be found at housing.charlotte.edu/niner-choice. The website is managed by Off Campus Partners, a company with a proven track record of connecting students with off-campus housing options, roommates, and resources. Off Campus Partners is a part of CoStar Group, the leading global provider of commercial real estate information, analytics, and online marketplaces. CoStar's Apartments Division is the most heavily trafficked digital rental marketplace in the US and includes Apartments.com, ApartmentFinder.com, ForRent.com, ApartmentHomeLiving.com and other brands. The website only features communities that voluntarily participate in the Niner Choice Program and meet the safety criteria identified in the program's guidelines.

► FINDING AN APARTMENT

When shopping for an apartment, it is important that you do your research! Once you have a set budget, narrow down your search and focus on your top ranked communities. It is a good idea to start your process by reading reviews for each property. It is also beneficial for you to visit and tour the communities you are interested in and talk to current residents you may know. When you have decided on a property, read the lease carefully before signing and ask about all upfront fees you will be required to pay, such as security and cleaning deposits. Additionally, never sign a lease with a community until all paperwork qualifying you has been received, processed, and approved.

► UNDERSTANDING A LEASE

A written lease is a legal, binding contract that holds a tenant responsible for covering all fees during its term. All leases should contain information regarding:

- Names and addresses of the management company and tenants
- Guarantor requirements and information
- Lease terms and rent payment details
- Security deposits and additional fees
- Lease restrictions that address areas such as the pet policy, guests, and subletting
- Tenant and landlord responsibilities
- Renewal processes
- Allowable reasons for entry by the property manager or maintenance staff
- Conditions for terminating the lease

Signing your first lease can be an overwhelming experience. It's important that you are aware of your rights as a tenant and understand all components prior to signing any document that holds you liable for any charges. If you have additional questions or concerns regarding a lease agreement, it may be a good idea to seek out a legal services provider that can review all of the terms and conditions.

► THINGS TO CONSIDER



How close is the property to campus? Will you need transportation? Does the complex offer a shuttle option that fits your schedule?



Estimate the monthly expenses you'll need to cover rent, food, utilities, laundry, insurance, transportation, etc.



Do you prefer to live in a student housing community?



Who will you live with? Will you utilize the complex's roommate placement service? Will they have a similar schedule as you? What beliefs and habits do they practice to create a healthy living environment?



Are there amenities you feel would make your living experience better? Free parking? Fitness center? Pool? What are the safety features management utilizes to keep residents safe?



What are the terms of the lease? Will you be responsible for only your share of the rent? Will you have to coordinate payment each month with a roommate?