Once you’ve found your off-campus housing, you’ll need to find a way to get to and from your classes, figure out how you’ll feed yourself outside the comfortable blanket of a full meal plan and ensure you stay on top of tasks like paying rent. For the uninitiated, “adulting” can be surprising hard, so the Thresher reached out to off-campus students for some tips.

**Transportation**
- If you don’t have a car, you’ll need to decide whether biking, walking or public transportation will be best for getting to campus. Using Uber all the time will seriously add up.
- Ask yourself: How late do I usually stay on campus at night, and am I all right with biking or walking home by myself at that time? If you live near the edge of campus, night escort is available to help you get home.
- Living near campus also has the advantage of being able to drop by home if you forget anything there. If you’re farther away, even a 15-minute journey becomes tiresome to do multiple times a day, especially in bad weather.
- If you’re further away, being everything you need on campus each day. Be sure to check the weather and bring rain stuff if there’s even a slight chance of rain (we’re talking so pourous).
- You can rent a locker at the Rec Center cheaply for a semester to store clothes, especially if you’re still working out on campus. Many colleges also have OC lockers — ask your coordinator.
- Keep a sleeping bag on campus. Find friends who will let you crash on late nights. If you don’t have friends, find your favorite college commons couch, Findly floor or other campus location (say, the Thresher office).
- If you don’t have a car, buy a poncho for rainy days.
- If you do have a car, the campus exit behind the OEDK by the trash bins is the only one open late at night without driving all the way to RUPD.

**Other Logistics**
- With your roommates, pick one person to be the point of contact with the landlord and coordinate paying bills.
- Easy options for paying rent are to alternate monthly, or have one person pay and divide costs among the others.
- Figure out a chore each roommate is willing to do, or rotate responsibilities each week.
- “Make sure you have bleach, and buy the big black garbage bags — they will make your life easier.”
Finding yourself signing a lease that entails where you are going to live for the next year can be scary. You might be tempted to just frantically sign on the dotted line. However, instead of skipping over the details and accidentally signing your soul to the devil, read the lease carefully, and read our tips carefully to rent an apartment with all the suave know-how of a young professional.

The lease is a contractual document including information on move-in and move-out dates, fees, and regulations, that the tenant and landlord agree to when renting property. Some landlords have subletters for the summer. Rice students, who might begin their leases in May and hope to have subletters for the summer. Some landlords explicitly forbid subletters in the leasing agreement, and it is important to check this beforehand. Be careful with occupancy limits, as sometimes subletters might want to double up on rooms, but this could violate a leasing agreement that explicitly caps the number of tenants. Sneaking subletters in is not worth the trouble of possibly being evicted — just find a different set of subletters who will stay within the occupancy limit, and whatever you do, check the lease before signing any subletters.

As someone who accidentally lived in an apartment complex that had multiple break-ins and renamed itself because a police officer fatally shot an alleged burglar in a unit the year prior, I cannot stress this enough. Do your research, whether that is looking up crime statistics at the complex or talking to Rice students who used to live in the unit, before you sign anything. Don't be afraid to directly ask the landlord and tenants, especially for apartment complexes, how often break-ins occur and whether they are reported to the entire complex, as well as how often repair requests are called in to the units. This reveals red flags that influence whether you choose to sign. And if you do choose to sign, because hey at least the unit's cheap, they could help you decide whether to purchase additional security like a monitoring service or renter's insurance.

Do your research before signing.

Yup, you don’t even know if you can live there yet and you’re already paying the landlord. Many housing options will require potential tenants to complete an "application" (read: background and credit check) in addition to the lease. This typically costs an additional fee because it costs the landlord to run a background check. However, be wary if this costs more than $75 per tenant; at that point, they’re probably just using this as a moneymaking scheme. If you feel uncomfortable paying this fee, it’s worth bringing it up with the landlord, as they might be willing to let you provide some other proof of income.

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Request a walkthrough before moving in.

The unit you are moving into will have imperfections, whether that’s chipped paint or a broken trash compactor. To ensure these issues aren’t attributed to you and the repair fee isn’t subtracted from your safety deposit at the end of your stay, request a walkthrough of the unit before you move in. A walkthrough involves you and the landlord going through the unit together with a checklist to identify any imperfections at the time of leasing. You can look back at the checklist when moving out to see what damage can be attributed to your occupancy and what was already damaged at the time of leasing.

Expect security deposit fee and don’t forget to get it back.

Most housing options will require tenants to submit a security deposit of one or two months’ rent. The landlord uses this fee to preemptively cover the cost of any repairs due to damage incurred from your stay. It’s very easy to forget that you submitted this fee at all, especially at the end of the year when you’re trying to do is not fail your finals and get home as soon as possible. Texas law requires landlords to return the safety deposit to the tenant within 30 days of the tenant moving out. Make sure to write down how much you paid in your security deposit and when you expect to have the amount returned.

Verify subleasing options and occupancy limits.

This is especially relevant for Rice students, who might begin their leases in May and hope to have subletters for the summer. Some landlords explicitly forbid subletters in the leasing agreement, and it is important to check this beforehand. Be careful with occupancy limits, as sometimes subletters might want to double up on rooms, but this could violate a leasing agreement that explicitly caps the number of tenants. Sneaking subletters in is not worth the trouble of possibly being evicted — just find a different set of subletters who will stay within the occupancy limit, and whatever you do, check the lease before signing any subletters.

Finally, make copies of your lease.

Later in the year when you’re wondering everything from “Does my landlord replace the lightbulbs or do I?” to “Well shit I broke the garbage disposal, now what?” you can always check back with your lease. This also helps to keep your landlord accountable.

**LEASING 101**

Anta Alem
Managing Editor

**COME LIVE IN MIDTOWN**
McGowen St. and Austin St.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Amenities</th>
<th>Convenience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Downtown</td>
<td>7 min walk</td>
<td>2 bedroom/2 bathroom and 2 bedroom/1.5 bathroom units available. Ceiling fans in living room. Patio off kitchen and balcony off one of the bedrooms (in 2-story units). Coin-operated laundry room on-site. One unassigned covered parking space per unit.</td>
<td>1/2 mile to Main St &amp; W. Holcombe 580ft to bus stop 0.7 miles to light rail/Medical Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midtown (Home)</td>
<td>10 min walk</td>
<td>Off-campus housing with all the suave know-how of a young professional.</td>
<td>1/2 mile to Rice University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>15 min walk</td>
<td>Rent at Post Midtown Square: $1,385+ Rent at Rice Village Apartments: $1,130+ Rent at Graduate Apartments: $1,130+</td>
<td>0.2 mile to Rice University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One unassigned covered parking space per unit.</td>
<td>11 min drive</td>
<td>Rice University</td>
<td>0.2 mile to Rice University</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prices range $1,200-$1,400. 6-month to 1 year leases. Call to set up an appointment 713-799-5933, Denise.

**COMFY HOME**

- Looking for a new roommate in my Midtown townhouse!
- Come live in the best part of Houston, where events and activities are so close you can literally walk to them!
- My house features an open concept kitchen, 150 inch projector screen in the living room, and a washer/dryer.
- Your room will have a front yard view, large private closet, and many toiletries included!
- Email me at oxygenwater1988@yahoo.com, or text me at 626-869-8593

2318 DORRINGTON
8 unit complex

Amenities:
- 2 bedroom/2 bathroom and 2 bedroom/1.5 bathroom units available.
- Ceiling fans in living room.
- Patio off kitchen and balcony off one of the bedrooms (in 2-story units).
- Coin-operated laundry room on-site.
- One unassigned covered parking space per unit.

Conveniently located:
- 0.2 mile to Rice University
- 0.2 mile to Main St & W. Holcombe

Rent at Post Midtown Square: $1,385+
Rent at Rice Village Apartments: $1,130+
Rent at Graduate Apartments: $1,130+
You pay: $835
Each residential college is at liberty to choose their method of determining who stays on and who gets relegated to off campus, but for each, one thing remains certain: There are not enough beds for everyone.

As students across campus scramble to determine their housing arrangements for the following year, it may help to remember a time when there were only nine colleges to house undergraduates.

Part of Rice’s Vision for the Second Century included plans to increase the student body by 30 percent. Overall, the freshman class increased by 23 percent from 628 in fall 2000 to 775 in fall 2006. McMurtry and Duncan Colleges opened their doors in 2009 to accommodate the increase.

As a result of the ballooning student body population, nearly every college experienced an increase in the number of students bumped off campus. In 2009, Will Rice College was asked to take in 84 freshmen, leaving the residential college with more students guaranteed housing than there were beds available. At one point in the housing saga, Will Rice had negative six spots available for juniors. The same issue recurs this year.

According to Will Rice Vice President Angela Zhang, those in charge of housing jack calculate the number of leftover beds for juniors after reserving a certain number of beds for incoming freshmen, a number the college coordinator prevails unavailable.

“They try not to give us more freshmen than what we can handle,” Zhang, a junior, said. “My sophomore year, more freshmen came in than we expected and they ended up having to move some of them to other, larger colleges. In any case, we haven’t had to kick off people who were already told they were eligible to stay on campus.”

According to Gregory Van Kirk, the Duncan College legislative vice president, Duncan had to kick around 40 students off campus this year.

“In the past it’s been as low as 30 and as high as 50 depending on how many people want to live on campus and how many bump-dismiss people there are,” Van Kirk, a sophomore said. “We don’t usually have beds open in the fall but sometimes do in the spring because of people studying abroad, for example.”

For students at other colleges who have not been deemed eligible to live on campus, there may be hope yet. While other colleges still utilize bonus point systems to incentivize those moving off campus voluntarily, in 2015, McMurtry voted on a proposal to remove those housing point bonuses to encourage students to remain on campus. According to Van Kirk, if there are extra beds available after all the Duncan students who want to live on campus have been given a bed, then students from other colleges can ask to live there if they have been kicked from their college. 

“Our waitlist is a little on the longer side this year so I don’t know if that will be a possibility this year,” Van Kirk said. “But I know this year we have a couple of students who are not Duncaroos but are living in Duncan this year.”

Whether students are rejecting another year on campus – perhaps at the comfort of their own residential college, perhaps not – or frantically hoping to find an available apartment off campus, hopefully this brief history of housing jack makes you a bit more grateful there aren’t negative six available beds at your college.

### Staying social

The practicalities of party planning and social life off-campus

**Anna Ta**

Assistant News Editor

Whether you’re “deep OC” basically living in your college’s study rooms or you scored an ace and are significant other, social life when off campus requires more planning. The Thresher broke down the different components of the party life off campus, with help from students currently living the experience:

**Student Judicial Programs**

The Code of Student Conduct clearly states all policies of the code apply to students whether on or off campus. Additionally, any crime of which you are convicted or accused off campus can lead you to an SJP referral. This means a citation for public intoxication or injury.

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1. **Student Judicial Programs**
   - The Code of Student Conduct clearly states all policies of the code apply to students whether on or off campus. Additionally, any crime of which you are convicted or accused off campus can lead you to an SJP referral. This means a citation for public intoxication or injury.

2. **Neighbours**
   - Many like in a college, your neighbours are still a collection of people that often didn’t have a say on who lives next door. Students’ experiences with neighbours differ, as expected. While Youngs has never lived in a place with noise complaints, another off-campus student, Ben Herndon-Miller, and neighbours are truly hit or miss. “[Our neighborhood] is prone to email our landlord if our TV is too loud,” Herndon-Mille, a Will Rice College junior, said.

3. **Planning an OC party**
   - Unlike an on-campus party where spaces and resources are frequently shared, an off-campus party requires your own setup, coolers, speakers and more. However, one anonymous student bounces on the comparative financial benefits of hosting in their house. “People like going to off-campus parties because you can have liquor,” this student said. However, hosting parties off campus also requires the host to be liable for damages or legal violations that could occur at the party, in addition to always being subject to the code of student conduct.

4. **Police**
   - All off-campus students we interviewed shared the conclusion that neither Houston Police nor

### HOUSING JACK TRADITIONS

**LOVETT**

Lovetts chug Biggie cups full of Skittles to discover their eligibility number at the bottom of the cup. The lowest number gets first preference.

**WILL RICE**

Will Ricers draw from a gripped deck of cards for both the strength of an Ace of Spades gets first preference, and the number of hearts gets last preference.

**WIESS**

Wies’ eligibility jack changes annually. This year, Weis freshmen gathered around go cups that each contain a freshman’s name. The chosen person then threw the next ball.

**ILLUSTRATIONS BY CHRISTINA TAN**

![BUDGETING FOR HOUSING AROUND HOUSTON](image)

**HOUSTON AVERAGE RENT BY NEIGHBORHOOD**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighborhood</th>
<th>Average Rent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Downtown</td>
<td>$2054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>$1897</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midtown</td>
<td>$1694</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montrose</td>
<td>$1680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Center</td>
<td>$1526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West University</td>
<td>$1522</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bellaire</td>
<td>$936</td>
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**HOUSTON AVERAGE RENT BY ROOM TYPE**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Room Type</th>
<th>Average Rent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>All beds</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 bed</td>
<td>$1087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 beds</td>
<td>$1424</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*dfrom data RentJungle (2017)*
MAP OF HOUSTON NEIGHBORHOODS

Our map marks many of the major stores, the METRORail red line, and Houston zip code boundaries, which are useful for online searching.

Greenbriar Bend Apartments  1 Bedroom - $900,  2 Bedroom - $1200.  $400-$600 Deposit.  Small Complex, only 31 units built around the pool.  Three laundry facilities .75 wash or dry, Quiet & Peaceful located at 7000 Greenbriar at Bellefontaine and Greenbriar Dr in West University Place.  Walking minutes from MetroRail or Quickline Bus. Walk/bike to Work/school near Med Center.  Call Lyla 713-660-9996