

Apartment Lease Options When Renting with Roommates

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Going through the rental process can be unnerving for some, no doubt. How will bills be split? Who's bringing what? What type of lease will I be signing? – These are all valid questions that may be constantly racing through your mind...but they're all normal concerns that should be discussed between roommates.

Once you've confirmed that renting with roommates is a go, and you've narrowed down your [apartment](#) search to a couple of communities, be sure to ask the property manager about the types of leases they can offer for those sharing an apartment. Renting with [roommates](#) is a

your situation.

JOINT LEASING

Joint lease agreements are like a marriage – once you're in it, you're in it (but only 'til the end of the contract!). To have a successful roomie relationship, you must have trust for the people that will be in your home. If you and your group choose a joint lease, you all enter a co-tenancy, which means everyone is responsible for utility costs, getting rent paid on time, and maintaining the home. If a roommate doesn't pay their portion of rent, the landlord may come collect from the rest of the group to cover the cost – which will make for an awkward and potentially hostile living situation.

If saving money is a priority, a joint lease is cheaper for sure. Each tenant has a voice in household decisions and cannot be asked to leave without proper eviction. This type of lease agreement is more common in one- and two-bedroom apartments, whereas individual leases are more popular in larger rentals. If a roommate ends up causing damage to the home to the point of eviction, you could also be asked to leave – so pick quality roomies!

INDIVIDUAL LEASING (BY-THE-BEDROOM)

Has your potential roommate been a tad flaky or unreliable in the past? Fortunately, individual lease agreements exist for that very reason. When you sign an individual or by-the-bedroom lease, you have your own room (and possibly bathroom) and share the common spaces. Students often gravitate towards this type of lease; if a roommate fails to pay their rent, the rest of the group isn't responsible for covering his or her late payment like they would be in a joint lease. Plus, you cannot be held liable for a roommate who damaged their room and then ended their lease early. In some instances, the landlord or property manager has the authority to pick the roommate(s) – ask about this before finalizing the agreement.

TAKING OVER A SUBLEASE

Maybe your friend has a vacant room in their apartment, because a roommate recently moved out? Now's your chance to snatch it! By renting a sublet apartment, you enter a sub-lease and become a sub-tenant. Sub-tenants tend to enjoy a more flexible lease, which means you could move out at any time with little notice.

Before you sign on the dotted line, always talk with your landlord or property manager about the [terms of your lease agreement](#) and any [red flags](#).

Published August 16, 2018

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

62 Responses



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Hello! I'm Lauren Ross, a copywriter here at Apartments.com. I love dogs, cupcakes, and lifestyle trends! In my free time, you can find me traveling or sipping my favorite cab-sauv wine. Tweet me @larossingaround!

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