



Apartment Finances

For many of you currently searching for a place to settle next year, living in your own apartment for the first time can often be a nerve-wrecking transition from living in a dorm or your parents' house. All the previous comforts and utilities that were once provided to you such as freshly cooked food, internet service, and electricity are now no longer as conveniently available and pre-prepared for you. However, that switch to apartment living does not have to be as problematic or worrisome as you would like to believe as long as you keep in mind the following tips during your apartment preparation for next year.

Rent:

Before you even start looking around for an apartment, try to set up a price range for yourself of how much you can afford to pay, taking into account how much income, financial aid, and family assistance you will be receiving. If you are planning on rooming with others in your apartment, try to agree on a price range with them as well. Sites such as www.lifeafterdorms.com or www.bruinwalk.com/apartments can be particularly useful in helping you find the apartment that matches your desired price range.



Furniture:

Unless your apartment comes fully furnished, you will eventually have to deal with the laborious task of going furniture shopping. However, beds, couches, and tables can be expensive, so definitely think about renting your furniture instead. There are various furniture rental sites out there that can help you find all the high-quality furniture you need at low cost, with some even charging you as low as \$99/month for a completely furnished living room, dining room, and bedroom. Some of these sites include:

<https://www.cort.com/student#get-started>

<http://www.ifr-furniture.com/rent/college-student-furniture.php>

<http://www.fashionfurniture.com/>

Utilities:

Make sure that you set up your electricity, water, gas, and internet services before actually moving in since many of these services are not often included with your apartment purchase itself. For electricity and water, you will definitely need to consort with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, which is in charge of all water and electricity utilities in the city. To begin, you need to set up an account with the department at its official website, www.ladwp.com, and once that has completed, you will be charged a small start-up fee of \$19 for any water or electricity service ordered for your apartment. The account you set up will then be used for any future bill payment that you make for your water or electricity service.

For gas service, you will need to consult with the Southern California Gas Company at www.socalgas.com. Similar to the way you set up our services with LADWP, the process to set up your gas service will also require that you create an online account with the company.



Finally, for internet service, there are several internet companies for you to choose from., including Time Warner, Verizon, and AT&T. Thus, when deciding which company to order your internet from, be sure to look carefully at the monthly cost and speed of each company's internet plan as well as checking to see if there is any additional cost the company requires of you such as a purchase of a modem or internet set-up fees.