An aerial photograph of a suburban neighborhood with various houses, trees, and a white fence in the background. A large green semi-transparent rectangle is overlaid on the center of the image, containing white text.

CONTACTING LANDLORDS: A HELPFUL GUIDE FOR TRENT STUDENTS

What Should You Do Before Reaching Out?



Search housing on Places4Students, SpacesShared, Kijiji, Facebook Marketplace, etc.



Beware of scams:

- Verify the address on Google Maps
- Never send money before seeing the place or having a signed lease
- Be cautious of deals that sound too good to be true



Know:

- Your move-in date
- Monthly rent budget
- Lease length you prefer (e.g. 12 months)



Link:

- Visit Trent's [Off-Campus Housing site](#) for tips on spotting scams

Making the First Contact

If Calling a Landlord:

- Have a script prepared for voicemail or live call
- Write down:
 - a) Landlord's name and phone number
 - b) Date/time of call
 - c) Address of the unit
- Be ready to:
 - a) Ask key questions (see Page 7)
 - b) Schedule a viewing
 - c) Follow up if needed

If Emailing a Landlord:

- Use a clear subject line: "Rental Inquiry for [Address] – Trent Student"
- Be polite, professional, and give a brief background (examples on next page)

Tip: Keep a personal "Landlord Contact Chart" to track who you contacted, appointments, and responses.

Sample Scripts to Use

Email and Phone Scripts

Below are email scripts (for domestic and international students) to use when contacting landlords. You can add and revise these scripts as needed. These email scripts can also be used as a phone script, though, you may need to make some adjustments.

Good day (landlord's name),

Thank you for taking the time to read this email. My name is ____, and I am interested in the room/apartment/house you have available at [enter the address], which I saw on [enter website].

I wanted to inquire if the rental unit is still available. If so, I would love to set up an appointment with you, at your convenience, to ask further questions and see the rental property.

A bit about myself- I am a first-year undergraduate student in Sociology at Trent University Durham, and I am looking for a place to rent while I complete my studies. I currently work part-time at Walmart and have financial support from my family. My hobbies and interests include reading, cooking, and spending time with family and friends. I'm mature, financially responsible, reliable, and clean. I look forward to hearing from you!

Sample Scripts to Use

Email and Phone Scripts

For International Students Outside the Country:

Good day (landlord's name),
Thank you for taking the time to read this email. My name is _____, and I am interested in the room/apartment/house you have available at [enter the address], which I saw on [enter website].

I am an international student from [write down home country] starting my [first, second?] year at Trent University and currently enrolled in the _____ program. I am looking for a room to rent while I complete my studies.

A bit about myself- In my spare time, I enjoy_____. My interests and hobbies include _____. I am quiet, reliable, and easy to live with.

I would love to set up an appointment, at your convenience, to see the rental property. At the moment, I'm not in Canada, but I plan on arriving in the upcoming weeks. Before I arrive, would it be possible to view the rental unit through a WhatsApp call?



How to Set Up and Prepare for a Viewing

- Confirm a time and date - never rent without seeing the unit in person or via video
- First impressions matter - be polite and express positive reasons for your move (e.g., new school, job)

What to Bring to a Viewing:

- ID and proof of enrollment
- Required Documentation (e.g. references, credit score, etc.)
- Pen and notebook to take notes
- A printed checklist to compare units
- A respectful attitude - avoid negative talk about past landlords.

Note: Be prepared to sign a lease and provide a deposit (first/last month's rent)

During the Viewing:

- Be curious — turn on appliances, check taps and water pressure, flush toilets, open cupboards
- Ask about:
 - a) Routine maintenance and how repairs are handled
 - b) If the landlord has any rules or expectations
 - c) Consider chatting with current tenants, if possible and ask what their experience has been

Questions to Ask the Landlord

Ask these questions during your call or viewing

Rental Unit Info

- What's the full address of the rental?
- How many rooms are available, and when?
- What is the monthly rent?
- Are utilities or internet included in the rent?
- Is the unit furnished?
- Is it pet-friendly?
- Is it occupied by the landlord?
- Do tenants have a separate/private entrance?
- Are kitchen/bathroom areas shared with the landlord?

Who Else Lives There?

- How many other tenants live at the property?
- Who would I be sharing space with, if anyone?
- Are there house rules or quiet hours?

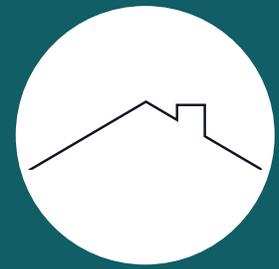
Lease & Documents

- What is the length of the lease?
- What documents are required (e.g., proof of enrollment, references)?
- Can I schedule a WhatsApp video viewing if I'm not in Canada yet?

Maintenance & Amenities

- Is laundry available? Is there an extra charge?
- What amenities are included (e.g., backyard, parking)?
- Who maintains the property (e.g., lawn care, snow removal)?
- How are repairs and maintenance requests handled?

Know Your Rights as a Tenant



According to the law:



Landlords CANNOT:

- Discriminate by race, gender, ethnicity, religion, age, or income source
- Demand post-dated cheques
- Charge a “damage deposit” before lease confirmation
- Evict you just for having pets (unless allergies or damages)
- Forbid overnight guests or enforce substance bans (except in smoke-free buildings)



Landlords CAN:

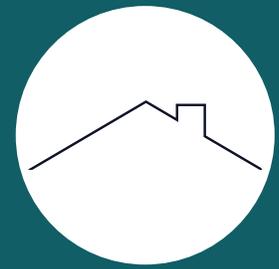
- Ask for proof of income or references (but within reason)
- Request first and last month’s rent
- Require you to respect quiet hours, cleanliness, and property rules



Learn more:

- [Ontario Tenant Rights](#)

Additional Resources



Useful Links:

- [Trent Off-Campus Housing Website](#)
- [Places4Students.com](#)
- [SpacesShared](#)
- [Tenant Rights – Ontario](#)
- [Durham Community Legal Clinic](#)
- [Peterborough Community Legal Centre](#)

Contact offcampushousing@trentu.ca for support.