

# Information helps relocation

Handbooks are available to help students know their rights and responsibilities as renters

By Monica Hande  
Oregon Daily Emerald

For whatever reason, you've decided to move.

Perhaps you're tired of the residence halls. Maybe it's your neighbors. Or it could just be that you and your roommate have absolutely nothing in common.

Regardless of your motivation, the fact remains that moving is not always an easy task. However, knowing how to begin can really take away some of the pressure.

First, you face the task of finding a roommate, or perhaps making the decision to live alone.

Selecting a roommate is a very important step, ASUO Housing Advocate Matthew Lieuallen said, because you have to be able to trust the people you decide to live with.

"Choose who you live with wisely, because it could make or break your housing experience," Lieuallen said.

He also warns that, in many situations, if your roommate abandons his or her responsibilities, you are left individually obligated.

The Roommate Survival Guide, available at the Rental Information Office in the EMU or on-line at [oregon.uoregon.edu/~rio/survive.html](http://oregon.uoregon.edu/~rio/survive.html), suggests a

variety of options for effectively selecting and getting along with roommates.

Next, it's time to decide what type of housing you're looking for.

Do you want to live in the residence halls? Hoping to share space in a fraternity or sorority house, a co-op or a private residence? How many bedrooms are you looking for? Do you want a washer and dryer? Do you need a parking space? All these questions and more abound.

Thankfully, many options are available. And once you have a good idea of what best suits your needs, you're ready to start your search.

According to the Renter's Handbook, prepared by OSPIRG and the ASUO, it's in your best interest to look at many different places before choosing one, even if you like the first one you come across.

Several resources are available for you to consider when looking for a place to live. Try newspaper advertisements, the Rental Information Office and property management firms. Also, bulletin boards throughout campus carry notices from renters seeking roommates or people to take over their leases. Several landlords use signs in windows and lawns, as well, to attract renters.

Also, never overlook the power of word of mouth referrals. If you know people who live in places you're interested in, ask them to notify you of vacancies. According to the Renter's Handbook, many residences are rented even before they are advertised. Friends can also help you weigh the pro and cons of places they are familiar with.

But no matter how you

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Matthew Lieuallen  
ASUO housing advocate

go about finding a place to live, make sure you do it with time to spare.

"Don't wait," Lieuallen said. "If you wait, you're not going to find much." He said there's always a supply of apartments — although the longer you wait, the harder they are to find — but procrastinators do not usually have much luck finding houses.

During your search for a new place to live, you'll likely find yourself meeting landlords or managers. It's important to take advantage of this opportunity, said David Lussier Dyer, University senior and resi-

dent manager of Blackstone Manor. At this time, the landlord or manager can answer most of your questions.

The most important questions to ask, Lussier Dyer said, involve proximity, security and neighbors. People should familiarize themselves with the distance from a residence to places such as the University, grocery stores or bus stops. Also, security questions about the neighborhood, such as inquiries about robberies, are useful, Lussier Dyer said.

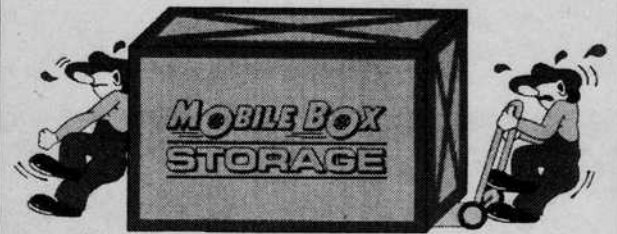
Of course, once you have decided for sure where and with whom you'll be moving, you must move out of your old place.

If you are currently renting on a month-to-month basis, it's necessary to give notice of your departure at least 30 days prior to your move, according to the Renter's Handbook. When leasing, however, notice is not required, but you are responsible for paying rent for the entire duration of the lease — even if you move out before your lease has been terminated.

According to the Renter's Handbook, make sure you immediately contact the utility company when moving out to shut off your services. Otherwise, you could be billed for the next tenant's use of those services. The person whose name appears on

Turn to **Renter tips**, page 9B

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