

## **E. Housing**

### **Intermediate**

Knows how to read want ads for vacancies	PAYA Module 4 pg. 32-34
Understands basic terms (lease, sub-let, utilities, studio, efficiency, security deposit, references, etc.)	PAYA Module 4 pg. 32-33
Knows how to calculate the costs associated with different types of housing and identify the type of housing that is within their budget and meets needs	“I’m Getting Ready” PL-1, 2, 3, 4 PAYA Module 4 pg. 38-39 PAYA Module 4 pg. 42-50
Knows how to describe pros and cons of choosing a roommate	“I’m Getting Ready” PL-11, 12 PAYA Module 4 pg. 8-20

## Independent Living Skills Module IV

### Apartment Hunting

Now that you are aware of what qualities you are looking for in an apartment and have some idea what rent you can afford, you are ready to begin your search. Newspaper want ads are probably the most common way to find an apartment. The weekend editions, in particular, carry large advertisement sections for apartments. In order to be able to read and understand the ads as well as talk to landlords and building managers, you will have to be familiar with certain terms and abbreviations.



#### ACTIVITY

Familiarize yourself with the terms and abbreviations listed below.

#### Abbreviations

<i>A/C</i>	air conditioning	<i>Ldry</i>	Laundry
<i>Apt</i>	apartment	<i>Lge, lrge</i>	Large
<i>Ba, bth</i>	bathroom	<i>Livrm</i>	Living room
<i>Balc</i>	balcony	<i>Mo</i>	Month
<i>B, bdrm, br</i>	bedroom	<i>Mod</i>	Modern
<i>Cond</i>	Condition	<i>Nr</i>	Near
<i>Conv</i>	Convenient	<i>Park, pkg.</i>	Parking
<i>Compl furn</i>	Completely furnished	<i>Prch</i>	Porch
<i>D/D</i>	Dishwasher & disposal	<i>Refs</i>	References Required
<i>Ex, exc</i>	Excellent	<i>Renov</i>	Renovated
<i>Fl</i>	Floor	<i>Rm</i>	Room
<i>Frpl</i>	Fireplace	<i>Sec dep</i>	Security deposit
<i>Furn</i>	Furnished	<i>Sgl</i>	Single
<i>Ht</i>	Heat	<i>Utils</i>	Utilities
<i>HW</i>	Hot Water	<i>W/D</i>	Washer/Dryer
<i>Hwd fl</i>	Hardwood floors	<i>WW</i>	Wall to wall carpeting
<i>Incls</i>	Includes	<i>Yd</i>	Yard
<i>K, kit</i>	Kitchen		

#### Terms

**Efficiency apartment:** A small apartment, usually furnished, with a private bathroom and kitchenette (small kitchen).

**Lease:** A contract/legal agreement that allows you to rent an apartment/house for a certain amount of money for a specific time period.

**Security deposit:** A specific amount of money that the landlord requires you to pay before you move in just in case you cause some damage to the apartment while you're living there. The landlord keeps your money until you move out. He/she will then inspect the apartment and return

### Independent Living Skills Module IV

your deposit to you if there is no damage. If there is some damage, the landlord may use all or part of your deposit to repair the damage.

**Studio apartment:** A small apartment consisting of one main living space, a small kitchen, and a bathroom.

**Sublet:** To rent an apartment you have signed a lease for to another person.

**Utilities:** Public services, such as gas and electricity.



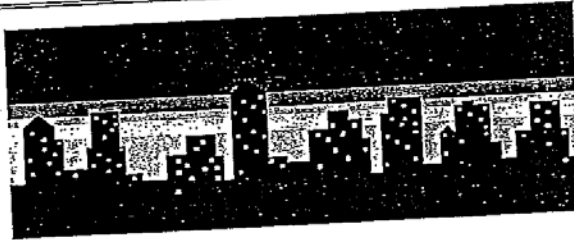
#### ACTIVITY

Evaluate the following advertisement section and circle the apartment that best meets your needs and budget.

Sm. 1 bdr. apt, WW, nr publ. transp. Sec. dep. \$350 & util. Call 489-3758	Effic. apt, furn, ideal for sgl prof. Pkg. Refs, sec. dep. \$380 incl. gas & HW. Call 678-9841	Close to downtown. Renov. studio apt. New bath. \$400 incl util. Refs. Call 468-0985	2 Bdrm in quiet neighborhood. Lrg kit, hrdwd floors. Painted, clean. 1st & last no pets. \$510 & util. 459-3546
Immaculate 1 BR in well-maintained bldg. Compl. appl, kit, W/W, A/C, Indry & prkg. \$480 & util. 1st, last, & \$250 sec. 345-4878	Lovely 3 bdrm apt. in triple-decker seeks neat & friendly tenant. \$760 & util. Call 897-4562	Mod. 1BR. WW, D&D, nr bus stop. No pets. Sec dep. \$510 util incld. Call 348-9841	Spacious 3BR in well maint. building. Elev., laundry, & bike room on premises. \$760 incl. ht, HW. Call 489-4327
Unique 1BR apt. A/C, loft, 2 levels, fir-ceil windows, private W/D, deck. Pool, jacuzzi, sauna, weight room. 24 hr concierge. Available now, sec. dep. \$800 & util. Call 745-1689	Sunny 2 BR, mod kit & bath, porch. \$600 & util, sec. deposit. References required. Call 952-6578	Quality furn'd apts for short and long stays. Wkly rate from \$150. No lease. Near public transp. Call 687-0418	Deleaded 2BR near busline. Cat ok. Sec. deposit, \$650 & util. Call 687-1560
Nice studio in brownstown building. 1st & last, \$340 util, incl. Call 241-4680	Near public transp. Mod 1 bdrm apt & den. A/C, prking, w/d, \$410 util. incld. Now available, lease. 451-6478	New luxurious 1 & 2BR apts. Elevator, hw/ht, psrking, Indry. Handicap accessible. \$450 - \$680. Call 467-4601	Deluxe 1BR condo. Sunny, beautiful view. \$780 util incl. Call 678-0484
1 bdrm suite, incl. base cost of util, Indry. Nr bus & city center. Lease. No pets. \$440. Call 781-1632.	2BR duplex, 1.5bath, gd prking, hwd flr. Pets ok. Refs, sec. dep. \$700 & util. Call 481-3389	Studio, high ceilngs. Sep. kit,fp, st. space. 1st& last, \$500 util. incl. Call 451-0489.	1 bdrm priv. entrance. Fresh paint. 1st & last. \$350, util incl. Call 487-0157.
4 rm apt, 3rd floor. Great for couple or roommates. Sec. Dpst, \$575 & util. Call 781-3578	3BR, mod. kit & bath. Excellent location \$750 & util. 487-1308	Mod apts. Rent includes pool, A/C, ht/hw, prkg. 1BR: \$500-\$580. 2BR \$695. Call 442-6687	Lg. 2 BR basement apt. on busy main st. \$300 dep. & \$340/mth & util. Call 480-25607

### Independent Living Skills Module IV

Explain your choice



#### ACTIVITY

Research your local newspaper, clip three apartment ads which meet your needs, preferences, and budget, and place them in the box below.

Explain your choices.

**DO I REALLY "NEED" IT... or... DO I ONLY "WANT" IT?**

To just stay alive, we have basic needs such as food, air, water, clothing, and housing. We may "need" shoes to protect our feet from freezing, but we may "want" a special label on them. We may "need" protection from the weather, but we may "want" a five bedroom mansion on a hill by a lake. People can't afford everything, so choices must be made.

Consider what your real housing "needs" are with the following list. Check off your real "needs".



- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cost should fit my budget  | <input type="checkbox"/> Furniture furnished        | <input type="checkbox"/> Refrigerator furnished     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities furnished        | <input type="checkbox"/> Washer/dryer furnished     | <input type="checkbox"/> Garage furnished           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Close to grocery shopping  | <input type="checkbox"/> Range furnished            | <input type="checkbox"/> Window coverings furnished |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Close to my work           | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to transportation    | <input type="checkbox"/> Near family                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Close to Laundromat        | <input type="checkbox"/> Near to church             | <input type="checkbox"/> In safe and secure area    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pets allowed               | <input type="checkbox"/> Loud music/parties allowed | <input type="checkbox"/> Cable hook-up without cost |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enough room for my hobbies | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 bedrooms                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Private bath               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Private kitchen            | <input type="checkbox"/> Meals furnished            | <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming pool              |

List other "needs":



**NOW FIGURE \$\$\$... YOU CAN AFFORD FOR EACH MONTH'S RENT:**

The recommended amount people should spend on housing is from 30-35% of their income. (It's best to stay within 30% if possible.) This amount includes utilities, phone, furnishings, supplies, and equipment.

My income:

- |                              |                 |                 |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Job #1                       | \$ _____        | (Take-home pay) |
| Job #2                       | \$ _____        | (Take-home pay) |
| Subsidies from government    | \$ _____        |                 |
| Other regular monthly income | \$ _____        |                 |
| <b>TOTAL.....</b>            | <b>\$ _____</b> |                 |

30% OF MY TOTAL INCOME = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (Divide total income by 3)

This is the amount of rent you can afford.

**NOW FIGURE THE AMOUNT YOU NEED FOR EXPENSES BEFORE YOU MOVE:**

- |   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| First month's rent                              | \$ _____        |
| Security deposit a landlord may require         | \$ _____        |
| Utility company deposits (gas, water, electric) | \$ _____        |
| Telephone company deposit                       | \$ _____        |
| Hook-ups required for cable or utilities        | \$ _____        |
| Supplies and equipment                          | \$ _____        |
| Furnishings                                     | \$ _____        |
| Moving expenses                                 | \$ _____        |
| <b>TOTAL.....</b>                               | <b>\$ _____</b> |

**NOW FIND AN AD IN THE NEWSPAPER FOR A RENTAL UNIT YOU CAN AFFORD.**

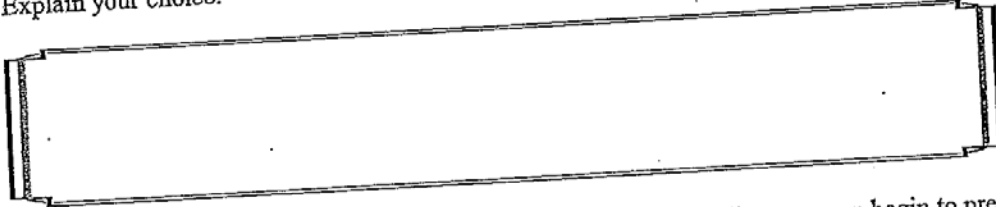
**ASK YOURSELF:**

- Does it meet my needs?
- Will I need to share the rental unit to help pay the rent?
- What other alternatives do I have?

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After evaluating the previous information, have you decided which type of living arrangement will meet your needs and budget?

Explain your choice.



Once you have made a decision regarding where you would like to live, you can begin to prepare and plan for your move. As stated previously, you will need to save money for start-up costs (the security deposit, the first month's rent, furniture, household items, etc.) prior to leaving care. *For detailed information, please refer to Module I.*

In addition to the money necessary for start-up costs, there are many additional factors to be considered before obtaining your own living situation.



**ACTIVITY**

Utilize the following worksheet to assist you in planning and preparing for your move.

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<b>Income</b>		<b>My Choice of Living Arrangements</b>	
Employment:		City:	
Is my job secure?      Yes      No		Neighborhood:	
Average Earnings:		I Can Afford \$ _____ / Month in Rent	
Other Income:		Utilities Included	Utilities Excluded
Other:		Roommate	Own Apartment
		Furnished Room	Lease
<b>Savings</b>		Other:	
Estimated Start Up Cost:		<b>Household Items</b>	
\$ _____		Have It	Need it
My Total Savings Are:			
\$ _____			
Other:			
<b>Furniture</b>		<b>Support System</b>	
Have It	Need it	Family:	
		Friends:	
		Professionals:	
		Community:	
		Other:	
<b>Transportation</b>			
Public	Own Car		
<b>Am I Ready?</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>

## Independent Living Skills Module IV

### Utilities

Whether you will live in an apartment by yourself or with a roommate you will need utilities. Utilities are public services such as gas and electricity. Some utilities, like water and gas, might be included in your rent while others, such as telephone service, will always have to be paid for separately.

*Note: For estimates on your average monthly utility costs, please refer to Module I.*

### Gas:

Gas is needed for heat, hot water, and gas stoves. If gas is not included in your rent, you will need to contact your local gas company prior to moving into an apartment in order to obtain services. Usually, there is no charge to have your gas turned on and no security deposit is required. Gas bills will be issued monthly. Every other month, a representative from the gas company will come to your building and read from a gas meter how much gas you have used. The cost of gas in the months between visits is based on an estimate, using your previous month's bills to predict how much gas you have used.

If you heat your apartment by gas, you have the option to pay higher fees during the summer months (when you don't use a large amount of gas) in order to keep the costs in the colder, more expensive winter months.

### Paying Your Gas Bill

It is important that you pay all your utility bills on time!



### ACTIVITY

Familiarize yourself with the following sample bill and answer the questions that follow.



Independent Living Skills Module IV

Tri County  Gas Co.

489 Fossil Fuel Blvd  
Petroleum, MA 01918

PLEASE RETURN TOP PORTION OF BILL WHEN PAYING BY MAIL

Service Address John Doe 47 Dynamo Road Petroleum, MA 01918	Account Number 99-00-9900-1		Service To Sept. 09, 1995	Date of Next Reading Oct. 11, 1995
	Rate R/3	Billing Days 30	Billing Date Sept. 13, 1995	Payment Due Oct. 11, 1995

Aug 10	PREVIOUS BALANCE	21.82
Sept 12	PAYMENT RECEIVED -- THANK YOU	21.82 -
	LEAVING A BALANCE OF	0.00
Sept 09	METER # 45085 BILLING FROM -- 5558 TO -- 5593	
	CCF USED -- 35 ACTUAL READING	25.06
	YOUR ACCOUNT BALANCE TO DATE IS	25.06

R/3 RATE SCHEDULE  
CUSTOMER CHARGE \$7.51

FIRST 30 CCF @ .52991/CCF  
OVER 30 CCF @ .32991/CCF

\*\*\* RESIDENTIAL RATE CLASSES \*\*\*

- R/1 NON HEATING
- R/3 HEATING
- R/2 WELFARE/FUEL PROGRAM - NON HEATING
- R/4 WELFARE/FUEL PROGRAM - HEATING

GAS ADJUSTMENT FACTOR	BUDGET PERIOD	GAS USED	BUDGET BILL	AMOUNT DUE
.047270 CR.	TO DATE ---	25.06	0.00	25.06

How much does John Doe have to pay this month? \_\_\_\_\_

How much gas has John used during this billing period? \_\_\_\_\_

By what date will John have to pay the bill? \_\_\_\_\_

Does John take advantage of the option to pay a higher amount during the summer months to keep his costs down during the winter months? \_\_\_\_\_

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Using gas thoughtfully will assist you in saving money. Keep the following conservation tips in mind when using gas.

- Insulate all windows and doors, particularly during the winter months.
- Insulate pipes, if appropriate.
- Keep your thermostat at a reasonable temperature when you are in your apartment.
- Turn your thermostat down when you leave.
- Showers are less costly than bathing.
- Don't leave the water running.
- Wash only full loads of laundry.



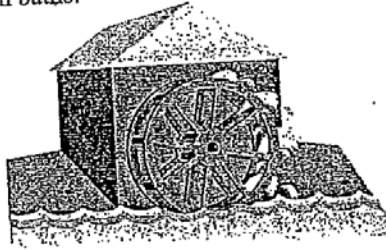
### ACTIVITY

Contact your local gas company and inquire about payment options and additional conservation tips.

### Water

Unless you own a home or rent a duplex or an entire house, your water is usually included in your rent. However, in order to help the environment and to prevent rent increases due to high water usage, you should always try to save water. Some water conservation tips:

- Never leave the water running unnecessarily. Be sure all taps are tightly closed.
- Repair leaky faucets as soon as possible.
- Only turn the washing machine or dishwasher on when they are full.
- Showers use less water than baths.



### ACTIVITY

For additional conservation tips, contact your local water company.


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Electricity

Similarly to gas, you will need to contact your local electric company to get your electricity turned on. This initial service is free of charge and no security deposit is required. Billing procedures are also similar to those of the gas company. A representative will read the meter bi-monthly. During the alternate months, the amount of the bill is based upon an estimate according to the electrical usage in the previous month.



ACTIVITY



**City Electric Co.**  
 489 Tesla Coil Blvd  
 Brightlights, MA 01212

Budget payment plans are available for the payment of utility bills. Call or write for details.

Service Address		Account Number		Service To	Amount Due
Jane Smith 19 Phillips Street Brightlights, MA 01212		537-035975		9/22/95	\$71.26
		Apts.	Billing Days	Bill Date	Due Date
		1	32	10/1/95	10/17/95

Reading	Previous	KWH USED	CODE	AMOUNT	CHARGE CODE
65049	64341	708	BD B1	.80 63.68	B1 RESIDENTIAL RATE B2 RESIDENTIAL OFF-PEAK B3 RESIDENTIAL OFF-PEAK C TOTAL ELECTRIC RATE BD PAST DUE OR CREDIT BALANCE
FUEL ADJ.USTMENT CHARGE (.00930 PER KWH)				6.58	E ESTIMATED BILL
RESIDENTIAL CONSERVATION SERVICE				.20	FB FINAL BILL
					KWH KILOWATT HOUR(S)

When does Jane have to pay the bill?

How much does Jane have to pay this month?

How many kilowatt hours has Jane used during this billing period?

### Independent Living Skills Module IV

Keep the following tips in mind. They will help you to save money on your electricity bill.

- Turn off all lights, the television, stereo, etc., when you aren't using them or when you leave the house.
- Close the refrigerator doors as soon as you can. Refrigerators need a lot of energy and are responsible for as much as 25% of your total electric bill.
- Use other appliances (such as hairdryers and humidifiers) thoughtfully. They use a lot of energy as well.
- You might want to buy energy-efficient light bulbs, which are initially more expensive than regular light bulbs but will save you money in the long run.



#### ACTIVITY

Contact your local electric company for additional billing and conservation information.

### Telephone

To obtain telephone services, contact your local phone company. You must be 18 years of age or older. If you do have a phone jack in your apartment, NYNEX charges an initial service fee of \$37.07 to connect your telephone and activate service. If you do not have a phone jack, NYNEX will charge an additional:

\$39.95	Basic fee to install a phone jack, including dispatching a service repairman to your apartment or home.
\$55.00/hr	Hourly fee for service repair.
\$2.40	Cost of the phone jack
\$2.40/ft	Cost of each foot of wiring necessary

Unless you have had previous financial problems with the phone company, no security deposit is required.

*Note: For information on calling plans, service fees, costs of local and long distance phone calls, and an explanation of long distance carriers, please refer to Module I.*

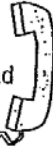


#### ACTIVITY

Read the sample phone bill and answer the questions below.

Independent Living Skills Module IV

PHONE CO.  
1043 Telegraph Road  
Bell, MA 01235



Account Number 508 555-0000 000 000 0  
Billing Period Sep 11 - Oct 10, 1995  
PHONE Co. Page 1

Customer	Account Number	Amount Due
Tim Davis 143 Second Street Boston, MA 01232	508-555-0000-000-000-0	\$ 48.13

Summary of account

Previous charges and credits	
Amount of last bill	\$74.27
Payment received - Thank you	74.27CR
Current charges	
PHONE Co.	29.16
Long Distance Co.	18.97
Total current charges	48.13
Total amount due	\$ 48.13
Payment is due upon receipt.	

- Total current charges are due upon receipt. Current charges will be considered delinquent after November 25.
- If you have questions about your bill, please call the individual company involved. Phone numbers for each company are listed on the account summary pages for each company.
- You have the right to dispute your bill. See the back of your phone bill for details.

CHARGE CODES  
DE DAYTIME RATE  
EE EVENING RATE  
NE NIGHTIME/WEEKEND RATE

PHONE Co. Current Charges

Monthly charges	
Unlimited Residential Service	\$15.85
OPTIONAL Discount Calling Plan	\$ 9.50
OPTIONAL Touch-Tone Service	\$ 0.99
Total of Monthly Charges	\$26.34

Calling Services

NO.	DATE	TIME	PLACE	AREA-NUMBER	*	MIN:SEC	AMT
1.	AUG 11	807AM	BOSTON	617 555-0000	DE	1	.270
2.	AUG 13	1212PM	MEDFORD	617 555-0000	NE	10	.402
3.	AUG 20	535PM	BOSTON	617 555-0000	EE	1	.158
4.	AUG 27	717PM	MEDFORD	617-555-0000	EE	17	.829
OPERATOR ASSITED DIRECTORY ASSISTANCE CALLS						0	
DIRECTLY DIALED DIRECTORY ASSISTANCE CALLS						0	
						SUBTOTAL	1.659
DISCOUNT CALLING PLAN SUMMARY							
TIME USED						122 MINUTES	
ALLOWANCE						120 MINUTES	
ADDITIONAL PEROD MINUTES @ .58 PER MINUTE						2	1.16

Total of Calling Services 2.82

Independent Living Skills Module IV



Long Distance Co.

Account Number 508 555-0000 000 000 0  
 Billing Period Sep 11 - Oct 10, 1995  
 PHONE Co. Page 2.

This portion of your bill is provided as a service to your long distance carrier. There is no connection between PHONE Co. and Long Distance Co. You may choose another company for your long distance calls while still receiving your local telephone service from PHONE Co.

Summary of Long Distance Co. charges

Monthly service	10.50
Itemized calls	7.84
Federal Tax	0.24
State and Local taxes	0.39
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$18.97</b>

Monthly Service Charges  
 Long Distance Co. 24 Hour Monthly Service 10.50

No.	Date	Place Called	Number called	Time	Rate	Min.	Amount
1.	AUG 3	FARAWAY CA	909-555-0000	09:49PM	EVE	11	\$1.87
2.	AUG 11	FARAWAY CA	909-555-0000	07:31PM	NIGHT	12	\$1.65
3.	AUG 25	STAUTON GA	404-555-0000	04:21PM	DAY	16	\$4.32
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>							<b>\$7.84</b>
Federal Tax @3%							\$0.24
State and Local Taxes							\$0.39
<b>Total Calling Service</b>							<b>\$8.47</b>

\$18.97

Total Long Distance Co. Invoice Charge

How much are Tim's service charges?

How much does Tim have to pay for long distance calls?

How much does Tim have to pay for calls made through the long distance carrier?

When does Tim have to pay the bills?

Does Tim use any special calling plans? (discount options)

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**ACTIVITY**

Contact your local telephone company and obtain additional information on calling plans and discount options.

It is important that you pay all your utility bills on time.

Consider the following:

Joan has not paid her phone bill for two months in a row. She did not pay attention to the due dates on the bills and forgot to send a check to the phone company. Today, Joan returned home and discovered that her phone is not working.

What do you think happened?

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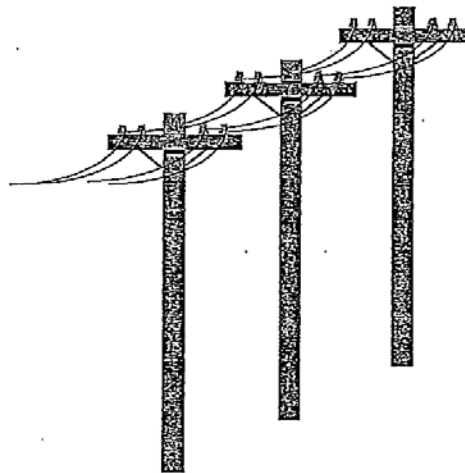
What advice would you give Joan?

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If you have bad credit or outstanding bills with any of the utility companies, it will be difficult to continue services or to get new connections even when you move!

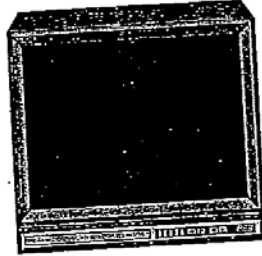


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**Cable Television**

Cable television is not so much a utility as a luxury service. You will need electricity and heat, but you will not *need* cable. However, if you should decide to get cable television, you need to contact your local cable company.

*Note: For different options, services, and monthly costs, please refer to Module I.*



The average costs associated with obtaining cable television are as follows:

- \$24.52      Connection fee for cable when an outlet/wiring is already in the apartment.
- \$39.74      Connection fee for cable if there is no outlet/wiring in the apartment.

Consider the following:

Brian has \$40 in his recreation budget. He is debating whether or not to order the family service cable package which would cost \$26.18 per month. He is not sure, however, if he would have enough money left over for other activities. What would you do? Why?



COMPATIBILITY CHART		
Personality	OK	Tolerable
NoWay!		
Lazy		
Outgoing, laughs easily		
Short temper		
Oversensitive		
Self centered		
Dishonest		
Is a prude		
Quiet		
Always late		
TV "Couch potato"		
<b>Sleeping Habits</b>		
Snores		
Stays up late at night		
Early riser		
Sleep walks		
Needs music to go to sleep		
<b>Eating Habits</b>		
Grazes, snacks a lot		
Prefers to cook at home		
Eats out often		
Uses pre-prepared foods		
"Picky" eater		
Has bad nutritional habits		
Buys expensive food		
Has many guests to feed		
Vegetarian		
<b>Personal Habits</b>		
No respect for privacy		
Doesn't budget		
Does drugs		

COMPATIBILITY CHART		
Personality	OK	Tolerable
NoWay!		
Lazy		
Outgoing, laughs easily		
Short temper		
Oversensitive		
Self centered		
Dishonest		
Is a prude		
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TV "Couch potato"		
<b>Sleeping Habits</b>		
Snores		
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Has many guests to feed		
Vegetarian		
<b>Personal Habits</b>		
No respect for privacy		
Doesn't budget		
Does drugs		

INFORMAL ROOMMATE CONTRACT

Address of unit to be rented \_\_\_\_\_  
Date agreement begins \_\_\_\_\_ month \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_ year \_\_\_\_\_

I. Roommates renting units:  
#1 \_\_\_\_\_ Present address \_\_\_\_\_  
#2 \_\_\_\_\_ Present address \_\_\_\_\_  
#3 \_\_\_\_\_ Present address \_\_\_\_\_

II. Rent (Check appropriate statement and complete or mark out blank lines)  
Rent amount for the unit is \_\_\_\_\_ per \_\_\_\_\_ Date payment is due \_\_\_\_\_  
This payment includes the following utilities \_\_\_\_\_

III. Utilities (Check appropriate statement and complete or mark out blank lines)  
Utilities not covered by rent:  
Gas bill will be paid by (name) \_\_\_\_\_  
Names on billing will include \_\_\_\_\_  
Electricity bill will be paid by (name) \_\_\_\_\_  
Names on billing will include \_\_\_\_\_  
Water/sewer bill will be paid by (name) \_\_\_\_\_  
Names on billing will include \_\_\_\_\_  
Other utility bills (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

Will be paid by (name) \_\_\_\_\_  
Names on billing will include \_\_\_\_\_  
All persons will share equally in the payment of rent and utilities  
IV. Telephone (Check appropriate statement and complete or mark out blank lines)  
Telephone will be paid by (name) \_\_\_\_\_  
Names on billing will include: \_\_\_\_\_

Each roommate will pay equal portion of base bill.  
Each roommate will pay his/her personal long distance calls.  
V. Security deposit \_\_\_\_\_ will pay \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ will pay \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ will pay \_\_\_\_\_

This amount will be paid back when security deposit is returned when he/she moves out.

VI. Moving out  
When roommate moves \_\_\_\_\_ days notice will be given. If proper notice isn't given, the roommate must pay his/her share of rent until the notice period is up.  
When moving out: (Check appropriate spaces)  
\_\_\_\_\_ All roommates agree to move out at same time on: Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ If, for any reason, a roommate must move, he/she will continue to pay his/her share of rent and bills to end of lease.  
\_\_\_\_\_ If, for any reason, a roommate moves before lease ends, he/she may replace self with a substitute roommate that is agreed upon by remaining roommates. No financial loss should be left for the remaining roommates.  
\_\_\_\_\_ If any damage is done to the unit, whoever caused the damage must pay for it.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Cleaning up process will be shared before anyone moves.  
\_\_\_\_\_ If there are costs that are charged from the security deposit, each roommate will pay his/her share.  
Other: \_\_\_\_\_

VII. Food  
VIII. Shared equipment & furnishings  
IX. Renter's insurance  
XI. Space sharing (laundry, rooms, jobs, quiet hours, guests, hobby limits, automobile space)  
Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Independent Living Skills Module IV

**Roommates:**

Housing can be very expensive and will most likely take up a large part of your income. However, you should not pay more than 40% - 45% of your earnings for rent (including utilities). Otherwise, you will most likely have difficulty meeting your other financial responsibilities. For many young people, living alone may be financially impossible. Therefore, cutting expenses in half by living with a roommate might be a good option.

What do you think are the advantages/disadvantages of living with a roommate?

+ Positive	- Negative

There are many things to be considered prior to making a decision about sharing an apartment and choosing a roommate.

**C**onsider the following:

Fran and her roommate moved into a two bedroom apartment one month ago. They have been friends for two years and neither thought it was necessary to talk about expectations and rules prior to moving in together. Now they are discovering that their lifestyles and personalities are very different. Fran always likes the apartment to be clean, while her roommate leaves everything lying around. They are getting in constant arguments over chores. It is the end of the month and the first bills are coming in. Fran's roommate has spent most of her money and does not have enough left over to pay her share of the bills.

What do you think will happen to Fran and her roommate?

**Independent Living Skills Module IV**

How might these conflicts have been avoided?

In choosing someone to live with, you may find yourself looking for qualities that are different from those you expect in a friend. How might some of your expectations be different?

FRIEND	ROOMMATE

When looking for a roommate, would you consider someone of the opposite sex with whom you may or may not be romantically involved?

What would be the advantages and disadvantages of such a living situation?

Advantages	Disadvantages

Adapted from materials in P.U.S.H. for Youth G.O.A.L.S. Developed by Eastern Michigan University, 1988.

## Independent Living Skills Module IV

To avoid unwelcome surprises and conflicts, it is important that potential roommates consider the following issues prior to moving into an apartment together.

- Personality - Will you be able to get along with your roommate?
- Lifestyles - Do you generally keep the same hours? Enjoy the same things?
- Expenses - How will you divide the costs of living?
- Family and Friends - Should you make some agreement about visitors?
- Household Chores - Who will do what? When?



The following profile may help you to determine if you and your potential roommate will be a good match.

Independent Living Skills Module IV



**ACTIVITY**

This exercise is designed for two people, you and your potential roommate. First, decide who will be Roommate A and who will be Roommate B. Then complete the following statements by filling in the blanks or answering the questions. You can adapt the activity for more than two people by adding spaces for Roommate C, D, etc.

ROOMMATE A

ROOMMATE B

**Personality**

1. I would describe myself as this type of person:  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. This makes me angry:  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. When I get angry, I:  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. I don't like it when someone:  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. When I am alone I feel:  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. If I have a problem, I:  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. I get nervous when:  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. For an appointment, I am always:  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. I feel happy when:  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. If I could change one thing about myself, it would be:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Independent Living Skills Module IV

ROOMMATE A

ROOMMATE B

**Lifestyle**

11. When I have free time, I like to:

\_\_\_\_\_

12. I usually watch television for (number of hours per week):

\_\_\_\_\_

13. My favorite TV programs are:

\_\_\_\_\_

14. I usually go to bed and get up at (time of night/day):

\_\_\_\_\_

15. I generally talk on the telephone for about (minutes/hours per week):

\_\_\_\_\_

16. Spending time alone is:

\_\_\_\_\_

17. The kind of music I usually listen to is:

\_\_\_\_\_

18. Cooking is:

\_\_\_\_\_

19. I usually eat (when and where):

\_\_\_\_\_

**Expenses**

20. Do you have enough money to live on your own?

\_\_\_\_\_

21. Have you planned a weekly/monthly budget?

\_\_\_\_\_

22. Have you been able to save some money on a regular basis?

\_\_\_\_\_

Independent Living Skills Module IV

ROOMMATE A

ROOMMATE B

23. Do you have a steady income?

---

24. Are you usually able to pay your bills on time?

---

25. Do you often need to borrow money from others?

---

26. What do you think about putting some money aside, having a "cash kitty," for the common household expenses?

---

27. Should you and your roommate each buy your groceries separately or should you share the food bills?

---

**Family and Friends**

28. Do you have a lot of family and friends who will visit often?

---

29. Would frequent visitors bother you?

---

30. What are your feelings about your roommate having overnight guests?

---

31. Boyfriends?

---

32. Girlfriends?

---

33. Should you and your roommate set some rules about overnight guests?

---

34. What are your feelings about parties at your apartment? What kind of parties? Number of guests?

---



Independent Living Skills Module IV

35. Can you say "no" to your friends if you need time to yourself?

---

**Household Chores**

36. Is a neat and clean apartment important to you?

---

37. Are there certain chores you really dislike and some you don't mind?

---

38. How do you think you and your roommate should share the chores?

---

**Other**

39. Do you smoke? If so, how often.

---

40. Do you use drugs?

---

41. Do you have any medical problems?

---

42. Does it bother you if others borrow or use your belongings (clothes, TV, radio, food)?

---

Independent Living Skills Module IV

Where To Find a Roommate

If you have made the decision to share an apartment and are looking for a potential roommate, there are several options which can assist you in your search. Ask your friends; family; and coworkers if they know of anyone who might be interested in sharing an apartment. Often, "Roommate Wanted" advertisements are posted in designated spaces at colleges, supermarkets, laundromats, etc. In selected large cities, services are available which offer assistance (usually for a fee) in finding a roommate who is right for you. Additionally, most newspapers carry a roommate section.



ACTIVITY

Evaluate the following advertisements. Keep in mind what you are looking for in a roommate.

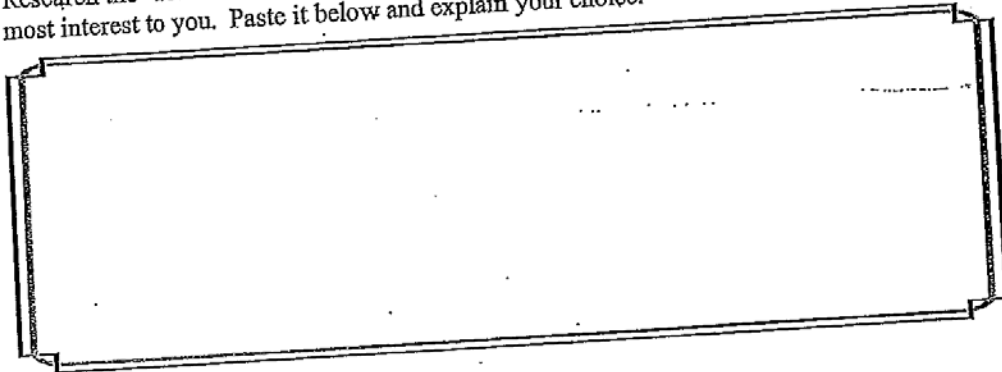


<p>Apartment to share available immediately. 1 mile from center of town, 3rd floor of 3 family home, includes washer and dryer in apartment and driveway parking. Seeking a non-smoking male or female who likes cats and dogs. Rent includes all utilities except telephone. \$325 per month. Security deposit required. Call after 5:00 P.M. 222-3344.</p>	<p>2 prof. females looking for 2 quiet M/F roommates to share lrg. 4 bedroom house close to the ocean. Yard, porch, washer &amp; dryer, off-street parking. \$450 per person, utilities incl. Available first of the month. Call 354-6548.</p>
<p>College student looking for M/F roommate for small 2 bedroom apt. close to public transportation. Available immediately. \$220 and 1/2 utilities, sec. dpst. Call 642-8465.</p>	<p>Roommate wanted by male prof. to share 2 bedrm, 2 bath apt. in large apartment complex. Pool, tennis, weight room, washer &amp; dryer, parking. \$380, utilities incl. Call 942-8435.</p>
<p>Roommate for 2 bedroom cottage in the country. Must enjoy healthy lifestyle, share vegetable garden. Pets OK. Call 195-9838. \$320/month. Util. incl.</p>	<p>3 fun loving m/f seeking 4th roommate for duplex in suburbs. \$280, util. incl. No pets, no smoking. Call 843-1473.</p>

Would you answer any of the ads above? Why or why not?

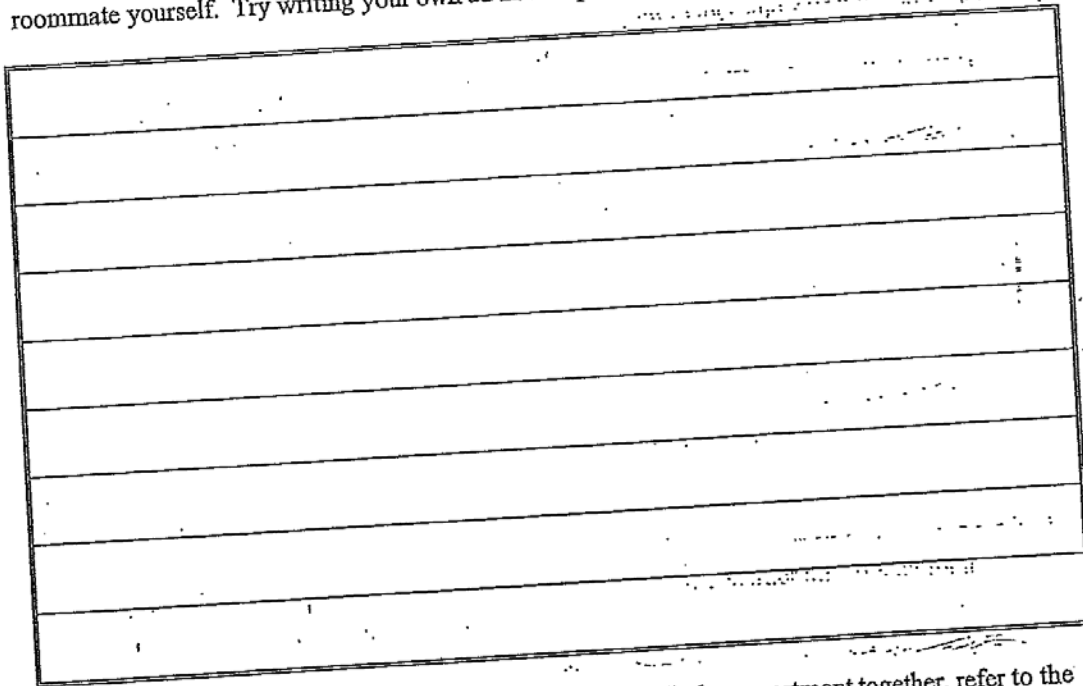
Independent Living Skills Module IV

Research the "Roommates Wanted" section in your local newspaper and select the ad which is of most interest to you. Paste it below and explain your choice.



**ACTIVITY**

If none of the ads you find meet your expectations, you might consider advertising for a roommate yourself. Try writing your own ad in the space below.



**NOTE:** If you have found a roommate and are looking to find an apartment together, refer to the "apartment" section in this module.

### Independent Living Skills Module IV

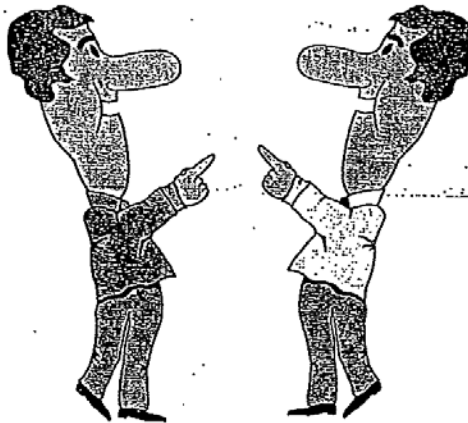
Once you have found a roommate (or several roommates) and you have decided that you are a good match, it is important to define chores, expectations, rules, and expenses clearly.

Consider the following:

Chris and James have decided to move into an apartment together after evaluating each other's personality and lifestyle. They both like to do similar things and each has a steady income. Chris and James decided that they would share chores and expenses. However, they did not make a definite plan as to how. Now they have been living together for two weeks and are already having several disagreements. James is upset because he feels that he is doing most of the chores, while Chris thinks that he is doing his share and does not understand why James is angry. Meanwhile, Chris is upset because James is constantly borrowing his things and eating more than his share of food even though they split the cost of food in half.

What advice would you give to Chris and James?

How could these conflicts have been avoided?



**Independent Living Skills Module IV**

Prior to living together, you and your roommate should come to definite and detailed agreements in the following areas:

**A.**

*Who is doing which chores when?* A simple rotating cleaning schedule like the following will be helpful, particularly if it is posted in a visible spot.

Week of 6/19/95 - 6/25/95

What	Who	How Often	When
Bathroom		Once a week	Saturday
Living Room		Once a week	Saturday
Kitchen		Everyday	Every morning and evening after meals.
Other: _____			

**B.**

*Will you share certain expenses?* If so, which ones? How much will each party pay?

Item	Roommate A	Roommate B
RENT		
UTILITIES		
FOOD		
OTHER: _____		

**C.**

*Would you be willing to share certain belongings?*

Item	Roommate A	Roommate B
FURNITURE		
APPLIANCES		
CLOTHES		
CDS/TAPES		
OTHER: _____		
OTHER: _____		

Independent Living Skills Module IV

D.

*Do you agree about visitors?*

	Roommate A	Roommate B
VISITING HOURS		
OVERNIGHT GUESTS		
NOISE		
OTHER: _____		
OTHER: _____		

E.

*Who will...*

	Roommate A	Roommate B
SIGN THE LEASE?		
CONTRACT WITH ...		
THE PHONE COMPANY?		
THE GAS COMPANY?		
THE ELECTRIC COMPANY?		
BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SECURITY DEPOSIT?		
OTHER: _____		
OTHER: _____		

F.

*What will you do when you disagree?*

	Roommate A	Roommate B
HOW WILL YOU RESOLVE POTENTIAL CONFLICTS?		
IF DISAGREEMENTS CAN'T BE RESOLVED, WHO WILL MOVE OUT?		
OTHER: _____		
OTHER: _____		

Independent Living Skills Module IV

Can you think of other agreements you would like to make with a potential roommate prior to moving in together?

G. \_\_\_\_\_?

	Roommate A	Roommate B
_____		
_____		
_____		

If potential roommates evaluate each other's lifestyle as well as personality and establish a detailed agreement listing expectations, sharing an apartment can not only have financial advantages over living alone but can also be a rewarding experience.

Would you consider living with a roommate? Explain your choice.