**WHAT ARE YOUR "WANTS" VS "NEEDS"**

Flex your list building muscles and make a list of what you want and what you really need. Are you renting a room or an apartment? A year lease or month to month? Don’t worry about how long or short your list turns out to be. You’ll narrow things down once you consider other important factors in choosing a space to call home.

**EXPLORE POTENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS**

Whether it be in the heart of the city, on the outskirts, or as close to nature as possible, get out and explore the places you have in mind to see if it aligns with your needs (or wants).

**SET A RENTAL BUDGET**

Your rent expense should not only cover the lease. It should also include utilities. Beyond that, add-in your daily life expenses: travel, groceries, personal bills [cell phone, credit card, etc], and entertainment.

**ROOMMATE OR SOLO?**

How important is privacy? Lifestyle compatibility? If you have a low budget, sharing an apartment or house might be the best way to go. Refer back to the list you created in Step 1 to help you determine what would be best for your living needs.

**HOUSING SCAMS, APPLICATIONS, & LEASE, OH MY!**

If it's too good to be true, then it probably is. Is the landlord requesting money before showing the space? Does the communication sound genuine or read like it’s copy and paste? Is there a high tenant turnover or below the market rate? There are plenty of things to be conscious of. Review the guides below to find out more.

See Zillow and Trulia for more helpful tips and resources:
https://www.zillow.com/rent/guide/start-here/
https://www.trulia.com/guides/renter/