One of the most important decisions you will have to make when coming to Madrid is deciding where and how you want to live!

Probably for quite a few of you, your apartment in Madrid will be your first experience living “alone”. This can be very exciting, but also overwhelming. Where do you start? How much is reasonable when it comes to rent? What neighbourhood should you choose? Where can you search and what options do you have? How to find roommates to share an apartment? What do you need to know about your housing contract? Do you need to set up Internet? The list of questions is probably long, but before you start to get nervous and stressed, don’t worry, we are here to help you answer ALL of these questions with this guideline!

Simply keep reading and let us help you!

Join our FREE Questions & Answers forum on facebook and get all your questions answered immediately!
Sol, Malasaña, Chueca

Madrid’s centre is probably the most popular place for international students to look for a place to stay. Sol & Gran Vía are the heart of the city, a meeting point with lots of possibilities for shopping, eating & entertainment. Malasaña is the city’s hipster area packed with bars and full of history. Chueca is a very popular trendy neighbourhood filled with cool trendy bars and coffee places. It is also a very proud neighbourhood as it’s the hub for Madrid’s LGBT community! Read more...

Huertas, Barrio de las Letras, Lavapiés & La Latina

Huertas & the Barrio de las Letras are one of the most traditional areas of Madrid, popular among young internationals for the culture, gastronomy and nightlife. Lavapiés is the most multicultural & alternative area in Madrid becoming more and more popular. Last but not least, La Latina is Madrid’s traditional area packed with tapas places and the place to be on Sundays. Read more...

Moncloa, Argüelles, Chamberí & Chamartín

Moncloa & Argüelles are popular and cheaper areas compared to the centric areas above, especially among the Spanish students, with many bars and places to go out. Chamberí is a more quiet area with a rather small-town feeling just north of the centre with easy and quick access to the other areas. Chamartín is a more residential area in the north and home to the famous Bernabéu Stadium of Real Madrid. Read more...

Retiro & Salamanca

The Retiro area is perfect for people who love to go for a bike ride, a walk, a run or simply to enjoy some sun in Madrid’s biggest park! It is a very safe neighbourhood within walking distance to the city centre. Salamanca is Madrid’s posh area full with designer shops and trendy, but pricier restaurants. On average, this neighbourhood is more expensive than the other areas described above. Read more...

Read all there is to know about this beautiful city by downloading our FREE Madrid Essentials guide now!
If you prefer to start the apartment hunt upon your arrival in Madrid, we recommend to arrive 1-2 weeks before your classes start. Feel free to take advantage of the DISCOUNTS (Hotels, Hostels & Touristic Apartments) we established for you!

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Types of housing - These are your alternatives!

Madrid is a big city with quite a big range of available housing options for young internationals. As already mentioned, the most common option is **renting a room in a shared apartment** with either young internationals or Spanish locals. Besides that, you can also choose to live in one of the many **student residencies** in Madrid, with a Spanish family (**homestay**), or you to try find a **studio apartment** for yourself. These three options are usually more expensive!

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**Shared Apartment**

- Probably the most affordable option with an average rent of 450€ per month (including expenses).
- **WHAT TO EXPECT:**
  - Social life
  - Share the “house work”
  - Make friends right from the start
  - Noisier

**Studio Apartment**

- More expensive than sharing a flat but less availability throughout the city.
- **WHAT TO EXPECT:**
  - Peaceful and quiet
  - Independent (your own rules)
  - More costly
  - Less social life

**Student Residency**

- Living in a residency is more costly but puts you in contact with many like-minded peers.
- **WHAT TO EXPECT:**
  - Meal plans
  - Social life
  - Support
  - More costly
  - Strict rules

**Homestay**

- Living with a Spanish family will foster cultural exchange but less personal freedom during your time in Madrid.
- **WHAT TO EXPECT:**
  - Secure residence
  - Integration into Spanish culture
  - Support
  - More costly
  - Less social life

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Aside from all the reliable housing platforms illustrated in this guide, another good place to look for apartment listings is on the website of your university as well as on the blackboards of each campus in Madrid! If you are interested in living in a residency, we recommend you check out **Mi Casa Inn & Nexo Residencias**!
Understand your contract to avoid frustration and “unnecessary discussions” during and at the end of your stay!

Avoiding pitfalls

Understanding your contractual obligations & housing related expenses is really important! Before renting your room/apartment, you need to make sure you understand the details of the contract and the obligations that come along with it. Contracts, especially in a different language, can be complicated and it is crucial to understand e.g. the cancellation period of your contract, the refund conditions of your initial deposit as well as the housing related expenses such as water, gas & electricity.

Monthly rent

This is the amount you will have to pay on a monthly basis for living in the apartment. Check the deadline for paying it to avoid any penalization. It is common in Spain to pay the rent in the first week of each month via money transfer or in cash.

Housing related expenses/fees

It is very important to check if the rental price includes all expenses (“gastos incluidos”) such as gas, electricity (“luz”), water and community costs (“gastos de comunidad”). Most of the times when renting directly from landlords (not agencies), these costs are not included. Average monthly fee in a 4 bedroom apartment will be around 40€ euros per person. Also check if Internet is available in the flat and included in the rent.

FREE contract reviews: Simply contact us or stop by the office in Calle Gran Vía 22Dpdo - 2nd floor during our opening hours!
Deposit & Commission

You will most likely be asked to pay an upfront security deposit which usually is equivalent to one or two month’s rent. It will be used to cover any damages that may exist when you leave the apartment at the end of your stay. The deposit will be returned within 3 months after moving out. Ask for a “damage checklist” that you can review when moving in (so you don’t get blamed for any pre-existing damages) and when moving out (again, so you don’t get blamed for any damages that might occur after you’ve left) to ensure to get back your deposit. Also, don’t hesitate to take before/after photos of your flat for extra insurance! Also always ask for a receipt and also check on potential commissions in case you rent from a rental agency.

Duration of the contract

It is very important to check the length of your contract and what happens in case you leave the apartment before the contract ends. Usually you will be either obliged to find a substitute in case you leave earlier or pay one month of rent.

Code of conduct

When renting a flat through a company, there will be clear and concise rules that they will expect you to abide by while living in their space. These rules usually include topics like pets, smoking and guests or noise levels. When renting through an independent landlord be persistent about asking for their code of conduct, and include it in your contract so there is a clear understanding of expectations. This will avoid them making random rules as they please. If you fail to comply with any of these conditions, you could lose the right to remain in the apartment.

By now you should roughly know in which neighbourhoods of Madrid you would like to live in and what kind of lodging you prefer. To help you determine your available budget you can click here for a free high-level guideline which will help you understand the average costs of living in Madrid. It outlines information on general prices of rent, public transport, cell phones, insurance, food, leisure, etc. If you’d like to do more research on Madrid to determine which location is better for you and to become more familiar with the layout of the city itself, head over to the Citylife Blog. Here we write about all things Madrid; from neighbourhood breakdowns, to events, social life, restaurants, art and culture, where to go during your free time, shopping, sports, metro lines – anything you can think of!

So let’s find the perfect new home for you now!

Join the Madrid Roommate & Flat Search forum now to find roomies, check on flat offers or publish your own room!
Finding the perfect place to stay – Reliable websites & trustful agencies!

We know that it can be confusing to see how to start your housing hunt as there are so many options. To make it easier for you, you can start your search now by clicking on the buttons below. The Housing Request Form is a free service that gives you access to some of the most reliable housing platforms in Madrid. Once you have submitted the form, you will receive housing offers via email that match your specific search criteria!

Recommended agencies & online platforms:

Some platforms are free, like Idealista, Fotocasa and Easypiso (but always be aware of misconduct/scam!). While others, like helpMadrid, Aluni, Mi Casa Inn, Atmosphere Living and PyR Solutions, are rental agencies offering great and reliable service throughout your entire stay in Madrid. Other options to search are Uniplaces, Spotahome and Study Abroad Apartments which are popular & secure platforms to search for rooms & flats online but a reservation fee* will be applied upon the booking of your room.

Our recommendation is to rent your room with a rental agency. This way, everything is official, organized and most importantly, you will have a reliable contact in Madrid in case you have any questions.

*You can obtain on all three platforms, Uniplaces (25%), Spotahome (15%) & Study Abroad Apartments (15%), a discount on the reservation fee indicating the promotion code “CITYLIFEMADRID”!
Great news everybody! Participate in our contest and **win a 6 month Housing Scholarship** with Citylife Madrid and Uniplaces for the upcoming semester! Simply **fill out the application form here** and let us know why you should be the one winning the Housing Scholarship.

**The scholarship consists in...**

- **3500€** credit with our friends from Uniplaces
- **3000€** cash in case you already have your flat reserved

For more information & tips, join our **Housing Whatsapp Group**

**Save money** when organizing your trip to Spain: Travel & Flight • Hostel & Hotels • Airport Transportation • Parcel & Luggage Shipment! Simply **click here**!
Hints & tips – Further things to bear in mind during your search!

Now that you are already aware of contractual obligations & housing related expenses here are some more hints & tips that we would like to give you to avoid future issues:

**Interior vs. Exterior Light:**
Some apartments in Madrid have direct access to exterior light while others have only access to interior light (building interior). Room prices between the two vary with exterior light being pricier.

**Furniture & Appliances:**
When searching for your new home, make sure you understand exactly what is being offered to you. Some places are fully furnished and supplied with all you need, while others are not. If you need to buy things to decorate & furnish your new home, there are several cheap places in the city like *El Universo del Hogar, Muy Mucho, Hema* and Ikea to name a few. There you will find everything you need (and some things you’ll just want), from bed sheets to kitchenware, you will have no shortage of options! For more information and discounts on furniture & appliances click here!

**Quiet Areas vs. Active Areas:**
Living in the city centre seems like a fabulous idea, until you suffer a few sleepless nights! Make sure you are fully prepared to live in the barrio you have chosen so you are not met with any unpleasant surprises. If you need a quiet and relaxed neighbourhood, living in the central, cultural and social hubs of the city will not work for you. If you love life in the streets, the noise and the action of living in the city, then the quiet residential areas in the north will not be the best options for you! Keep an eye on it while you are searching the perfect place that matches your expectations.

**Communication & Surroundings:**
Check either online or by exploring your potential neighbourhood to ensure that you have easy access to the metro, buses, supermarkets and anything else that you prefer to have nearby!

Always check if Internet is available in your new flat. If you do not have Internet in your flat, check here for your options!
Be part of it!

Follow us:

Learn all there is to know to get the most out of your time abroad!

We have created more material outlining important information to help you prepare for and get the most out of your time in Madrid!

Before Arrival
- Important thing to prepare from home
- Questions & answers forum
- Plan & organize your trip
- Useful hints & tips

Upon Arrival
- Get your free Madrid Starter Pack
- Discover Madrid & make friends
- Free getting settled support
- Academics & getting legal

Madrid Essentials
- Madrid basic information
- Get settled at a glance
- Live & enjoy Madrid
- Useful hints & tips

Live & Enjoy
- Experience Madrid by day & night
- Traveling Spain, Europe & Africa
  - Discounts in Madrid
  - Let’s get cultured

Subscribe to our weekly Newsletter
- Stay up to date on what’s going on in the city
- Receive information on great discounts
- Discover Spain, Europe & Africa
- Explore & enjoy Madrid

Check out our Blog
- Madrid’s hidden treasures
- Live & enjoy Madrid
- FAQ/the essentials
- Art & culture

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