

# Home Rental Guide



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# Definitions

**Guarantee:** an amount given by the tenant to the landlord at the start of the tenancy as security, i.e. if they refuse to pay the rent or damage the house, the landlord can keep the security deposit.

**Building manager:** is responsible for maintaining the common areas of the building and paying the common expenses.

**Common expenses:** all expenses for maintenance and repair of common areas and machinery

**Electricity Bill:** the bill for electricity. The total amount includes the consumption of electricity as well as some taxes, for example for the municipality or the public television.

**Groundfloor:** (Gr ισόγειο) the house that is in the same height level as the ground.

**Demi-floor:** (Gr ημιόροφος) between the ground and the first floor.

**Individual house:** (Gr Μονοκατοικία) an independent house building, not in an apartment building.

**One room apartment:** (Gr Γκαρσονιέρα) a small apartment with one sleeping room, WC and living room and kitchen in a common space.

**Two room apartment:** (Gr Δυάρι) an apartment with two separate rooms, plus the kitchen and the toilet. In the same way, a three room apartment has three separate rooms plus the kitchen and the WC.

**Studio:** a small apartment in which sleeping room, living room and kitchen are all in the same space.

**Contract:** an important document that sets out the terms and conditions of renting a house.

**Quiet hours:** hours when tasks and activities that cause a lot of noise should be avoided. These are the following:

- from 1st April until 30th September from 15:00 until 17:30 and from 23:00 until 7:00
- from 1st October until 31st March from 15:30 until 17:30 and from 22:00 until 07:30



# Where do I begin?

The first thing you should do before you start looking for a house is **to make a plan**. This plan should include the following:

- **In which area do you want to stay?** You may like a house or it might be quite cheap, but it may not have good commute to work and thus be more expensive since it will take more time and money for transportations.
- **How many square meters do you want the house to be?**
- Do you want the house to contain **furniture or not?**
- **How much money can you afford to rent** the house each month?
- What **type of heating** you prefer?

## House expenses

### Rents

Rents vary a lot from house to house. The rent price depends on the following:

- The **area** where house is located.
- The **square meters** (meaning the size) of the house. In general, bigger houses have higher rent and often higher bills (eg electricity).
- Whether it is **furnished or not** – furnished houses are more expensive. Houses are usually rented unfurnished or partially furnished, but you can buy used furniture and appliances that will be cheaper.
- The **timing** we are looking for a house – for example in the summer houses are generally more expensive due to students coming to live in the city.
- The **age** of the house. Newer ones are usually more expensive but often have better insulation, so heating/cooling them will be more economical.

### Fixed expenses

- Common expenses: these are costs of the apartment building (electricity in the staircase, elevator, cleaning, etc.) which are shared by all the apartments.
- The electricity bill.
- The water bill.
- Internet/telephone (if you choose to have connection).
- Heating for winter (gas, heating oil, electricity).

## Heating

More specifically, heating can be:

**Autonomous:** this means that you control when you want to have heating or not have heating and when you will not, by turning on the radiators/airconditioner etc.

**Central:** this means that the building collectively fills the tank with oil/gas and the radiators automatically turn on at certain pre-set times. The cost of oil/gas is paid through the common expenses.

Note that often, mainly in the oldest houses, there may be central heating but the apartment building does not want to use it, so you will need to find another way for heating. Also, if there is central heating but you do not want it, you can come to an agreement with the apartment manager so as to be excluded.

## How should I search for a house

Once you've finalized your plan and are sure of what you're looking for, then you'll be ready to start searching. The search can be done:

- **Online.** In social media like Marketplace of Facebook In websites like: spitogatos.gr, rentola.gr, remax.gr, xe.gr, spiti24.gr, tospitimou.gr, spiti360.gr, plot.gr and many more. Those websites can also be translated in English.
- **Advertisements** on the street, at the entrances of apartment buildings, pillars, bus stops, shop windows, etc. (yellow pieces of paper with red letters) or in newspapers.



- **With the help of a real estate agent.** Note that the real estate agent will ask for a fee which is usually the price of one or two rents. The real estate agent's fee is separate from the guarantee and rents you will have to pay. A very good way is through friends who know a house that is being rented or are leaving a house that is being rented, etc.

# What should I be careful about?

Prefer recently posted ads. It is very possible that ads with an old date are not valid and they forgot to remove the ad. Prefer ads that contain photos of the house. This way, you will avoid spending time looking at a house that you don't like or that doesn't meet your needs. If you like a house from the photos, don't rush to rent it without making an appointment to see it in person. **It is possible that the photos are misleading and fake.**

Appointments should be made in the morning so that the condition of the house can be clearer. **Check the house thoroughly.**

Look out for plumbing, moisture and mold on walls and inside cupboards, for any holes and cracks and door frames and check for cockroaches, fleas and bugs.

Also check if there is a security door and if the windows are airtight, so you don't experience heat loss in the winter months. Also check the condition of the electrical appliances if there are any (in example airconditions, oven etc). You will need to agree with the landlord the amount of rent and the deposit you will give as a guarantee. Also, ask more details about the common expenses of the apartment building that you will have to pay, as well as other bills such as water or electricity.



# Contract

The landlord will have drawn up a private tenancy agreement, the terms of which you should read carefully and if you agree, then you should sign it. **In case you do not understand the terms of the contract, it is a good idea to ask the owner if he can explain it to you. If not, consult an attorney.** Also, if you don't agree with some terms in the contract, discuss it with the owner and if he agrees, they can be removed. For example, the owner can have as a condition that a certain number of people can live in the house, or that a roommate can not come, or prohibits animals in the house.

## Supporting documents for drawing up the contract

1. Owner's and tenant's ID
2. Owner's and tenant's tax return certificate
3. Energy Performance Certificate (Πιστοποιητικό Ενεργειακής Απόδοσης) – it must be given by the owner

## What is included in a contract?

1. Contract declaration number
2. Date of the online submission of the contract
3. Name and Family Name of the owner and the tenant
4. The agreed terms and conditions
5. The amount of the rent
6. The duration of the lease
7. Address, floor and square meters of the house
8. Number of electricity (DEI) counter
9. Energy class

The duration of the contract is defined in the terms of the contract. If you want to leave the house before the end of the contract, the landlord can claim the following rents that are lost and the guarantee you gave to rent the house. Also, if agreed, every year there is an increase in the rent from 1% to 2%.

After signing the rental contract, the owner will electronically declare all his data in the TAXISnet system. After the owner has completed the submission, the system will send you an email to your account at TAXISnet and you will have to accept the rental contract online.



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# What else should I know?



- 1** You should know that renting a house entails rights and obligations with which you should be consistent. This means that you will have to abide by the conditions that exist in the apartment building such as not making a lot of noise during the common quiet hours. Also, it is important to not leave garbage in common areas and put it in the trash cans. Finally, it is very important that you pay the monthly rent on the date you have agreed with the owner. In case of delay, it is advisable to inform the owner immediately.
- 2** If you cause any damage to the house, you are obliged to repair it yourself, for example broken glass, burnt out lamps or stained walls. Natural problems that occur in time and due to the age of the house and NOT due to bad use (for example cracks in the window/door frames, walls and tiles, blocked pipes due to age of use, burnt fuse of the boiler, etc.) should be fixed by the owner and it would be good to inform him/her and stay in touch. It is important for damages that we have to restore, to discuss with an expert in order to fix them and not try ourselves! Also, remember not to throw toilet paper in the toilet because it can block the pipes!
- 3** The house should be rented and delivered clean to the owner. When we leave the house, we must leave it in the condition in which it was when we received it, otherwise the owner has the right to keep money from the guarantee or ask us to repair the damage. In furnished houses, the furniture should also be delivered in the same condition.

# Allowances

It is important to add that there are some allowances which can help financially, either with a subsidy or a discount on electricity, heating and house rent. These are the following:

## Rent allowance:

Those who have an active contract are entitled to it. The main condition is that you have to reside legally in Greece for at least 5 years. This means that you have to have at least 5 tax returns submitted during the submission period.

## Social Residential Tariff:

It is a utility that gives you a discount on your electricity bill. The main condition is that the electricity meter should be registered in your name and that you have submitted your tax return.

## Heating Allowance:

It is an aid which subsidizes part of the consumption in oil, gas, etc. between October and May. Also here the main condition is that the number of the electricity meter should be registered in your name and that you have submitted your tax return.



For any additional information, or for anything else that you will need, you can contact us at

 **Athens Solidarity Center**  
Domokou 2 & Philadelphias, Athens  
 +30 2108220883  
 athens@solidaritynow.org

 **Blue refugee Center**  
Ioanni Koletti 25D, Thessaloniki  
 +30 2310 555263-4-6  
 thebluecenter@solidaritynow.org