Housing

In the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, student housing is offered by the Foundation for Student Housing in the Helsinki Region (HOAS), and the Aalto University Student Union AYY.

The university does not own student apartments and students are responsible for seeking housing themselves. The housing situation in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area (cities of Helsinki, Espoo Vantaa and Kauniainen) is challenging. There is a lack of small rental apartments and student housing within the area. Therefore finding suitable accommodation can be difficult especially in the beginning of the autumn term (August/September).

Although AYY and HOAS have thousands of apartments, they cannot accommodate all the students. Prepare yourself to seek for accommodation from the private rental market as well.

The monthly rents start at approx. €250 (unfurnished room in student housing in a shared apartment) ranging up to €700-900 (20-25 m² studio from private rental market). It's good to reserve €400-600 per month for accommodation so that you are not dependent on getting an offer from the most inexpensive category of apartments.

Note! If you are an exchange student, please read housing information for exchange students.

Key points of applying for accommodation

- Apply early and reserve time for finding the apartment.
- Apply simultaneously through various channels (AYY/HOAS/ private rentals).
- Your possibilities to find an apartment improve if you are willing to live outside the centre and campus areas. It is easy and safe to travel around the cities of Espoo and Helsinki: the public transportation works well.
- Accept the first offer you get, even if the location or the quality of housing does not match all your requirements. There is no guarantee that you would get another offer before the start of your studies and you can change the apartment later.
- Watch out for rental scams! Although it is usually safe to rent an accommodation from private landlords in Finland, it is good to keep in mind the possibility of a hoax. If the apartment sounds too good to be true (cheap and central/good location) it unfortunately can be a scam. Do not send any money/ credit card info etc. before you have seen the place and met the landlord and/or signed the contract. (This rule does not apply of course with trustworthy organizations such as AYY or HOAS).
- Cancel all the other possible applications when you have found your accommodation, unless you wish the stay in a queue for a different apartment.
- Consider the start date of your tenancy agreement (this is asked in the housing application forms) in relation to the start date of your studies and prepare to reserve other accommodation for the first days, if needed. Note that the tenancy agreements always start on the first day of the month.

Note, that regardless of the submission time of your application, offers for tenancy agreements beginning on 1 August are made mainly during June and July. Apartments becoming available on 1 September are offered mainly during July and August.

Make sure that you have a roof over your head when you arrive in Finland, even if it is a hostel room. Note that hostels/hotels tend to get fully booked in August/early September, so book your room early enough. (e.g. www.hostellit.fi, Forenom).

- Most of the rentals are unfurnished.
- If you have signed a fixed term rental contract (i.e. a contract for particular period agreed in the rental contract e.g. September 1st–December 31st) it cannot be terminated prematurely. The tenant is responsible to pay the rent for the entire fixed term.
- If you have an open-ended contract (i.e. from 1.9.2019 onwards) you as tenant are able to terminate your rental agreement by giving one month’s notice (or however long it states in the contract). For example, if you intend to move out on May 31st, you must terminate your agreement on April 30th at latest. If you fail to do this on time you will end up paying the rent of the next month whether you live in your apartment or not.
- If the landlord terminates the rental agreement, they have to give 6 months’ notice in the case of a tenancy of at least one year. If the tenancy has lasted less than one year, the notice time is 3 months from the landlord’s side.
- The tenant is always responsible for any damage whether on purpose, by accident, or done by guests. Therefore keep the apartment in good condition.
- Landlord does not have the right to enter to your room/apartment without a good reason, and without agreeing a time with you beforehand.
- Recycle as much as possible by sorting your waste. This has been made very easy in Finland. Every apartment building usually has their own garbage room in the building or a garbage ‘house’ in the yard with separate waste bins for paper, cardboard, mixed waste, and bio-waste. Your landlord or housing provider gives more detailed instructions for recycling.

- In general rentals are in rather good condition in Finland, of course there might be some exceptions as everywhere. Most of the rentals are unfurnished. If you apply and get a room from either student housing organizations (HOAS or AYY), electricity, water and internet are usually included to the rent. Note that this is not the case when renting from private market.
- All apartments are heated, and the indoor temperature should be between 18 and 22 °C throughout the year. Heating is usually included in the rent.
- You should expect to have at least a fridge and stove with oven in the kitchen. It is not common to have a dishwasher or washing machine in the apartment.
- Ceiling lamps and other lighting are considered furniture so you may need to buy these as well.
- Law requires that every apartment has fire/smoke detectors and it is the tenant’s responsibility to get one and check that it works. (Usually there is one already, but make sure that it actually functions!)
- Every apartment building has a maintenance company and usually repairs (e.g. do with adjusting heating, problems with plumbing which you cannot fix) are done rather quickly after you have made the notification. The maintenance company also takes care of the overall property in general, including yard and hallways.
- Landlord does not have the right to enter to your room/apartment without a good reason, and without agreeing a time with you beforehand.

For renting and buying homeware, please see the page for shops and shopping.