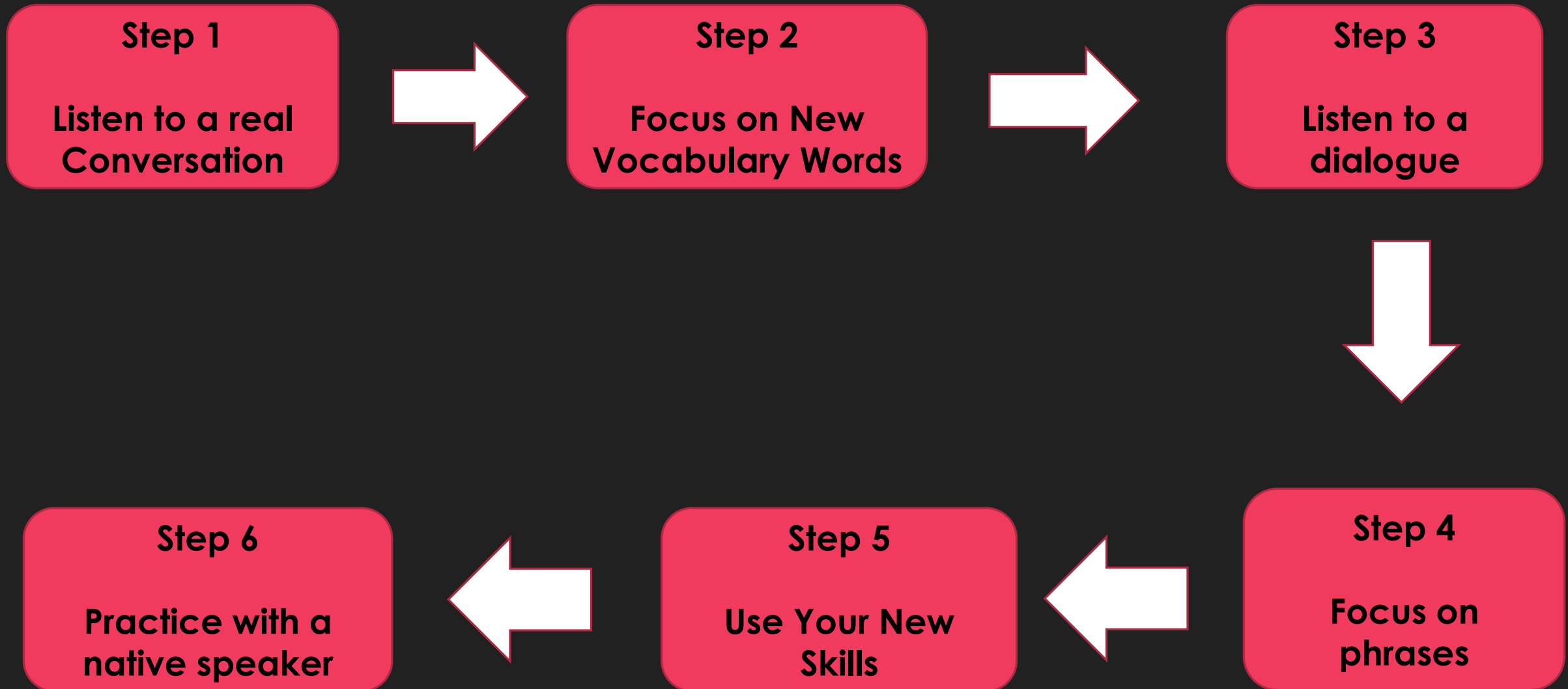




# How to Rent an Apartment in the United States

## A Vocabulary Lesson

# Our Method



# Step 1: Renting an Apartment in the US



**Please listen to Audio Step 1- Renting an Apartment in the US**

**What do you need to know if you plan to rent an apartment in the US? Francis and Kerri will give you all the details in this conversation**

**Please view Transcript Step 1- Renting an Apartment in the US**

## Step 2: Focus on New Vocabulary Words

**Realtor**

**Utilities**

**To settle for**

**To knock on  
wood**

**Security  
deposit**

**Month-to-  
month lease**

**Horror  
Stories**

**To take  
one's time**



# Security deposit

Noun



The money that is held by the landlord and is used to cover damages that tenants are responsible for in the apartment

*“The security deposit in the US is usually one month’s rent.”*

# Realtor

Noun (service mark for member of National Association of Realtors)

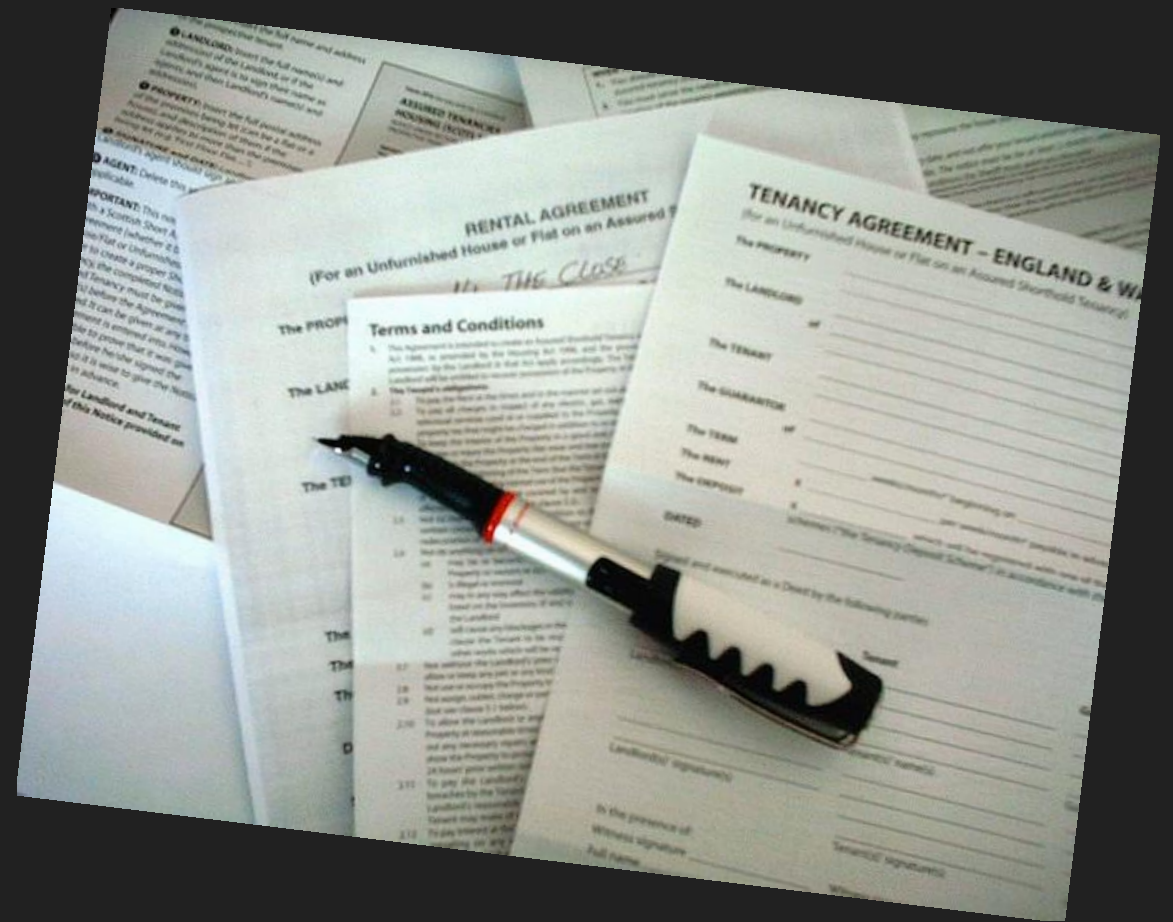


A person in the real estate business in the US. Someone who helps clients buy or sell homes.

*"We worked with a realtor to find our home."*

# Month-to-month lease

## Expression



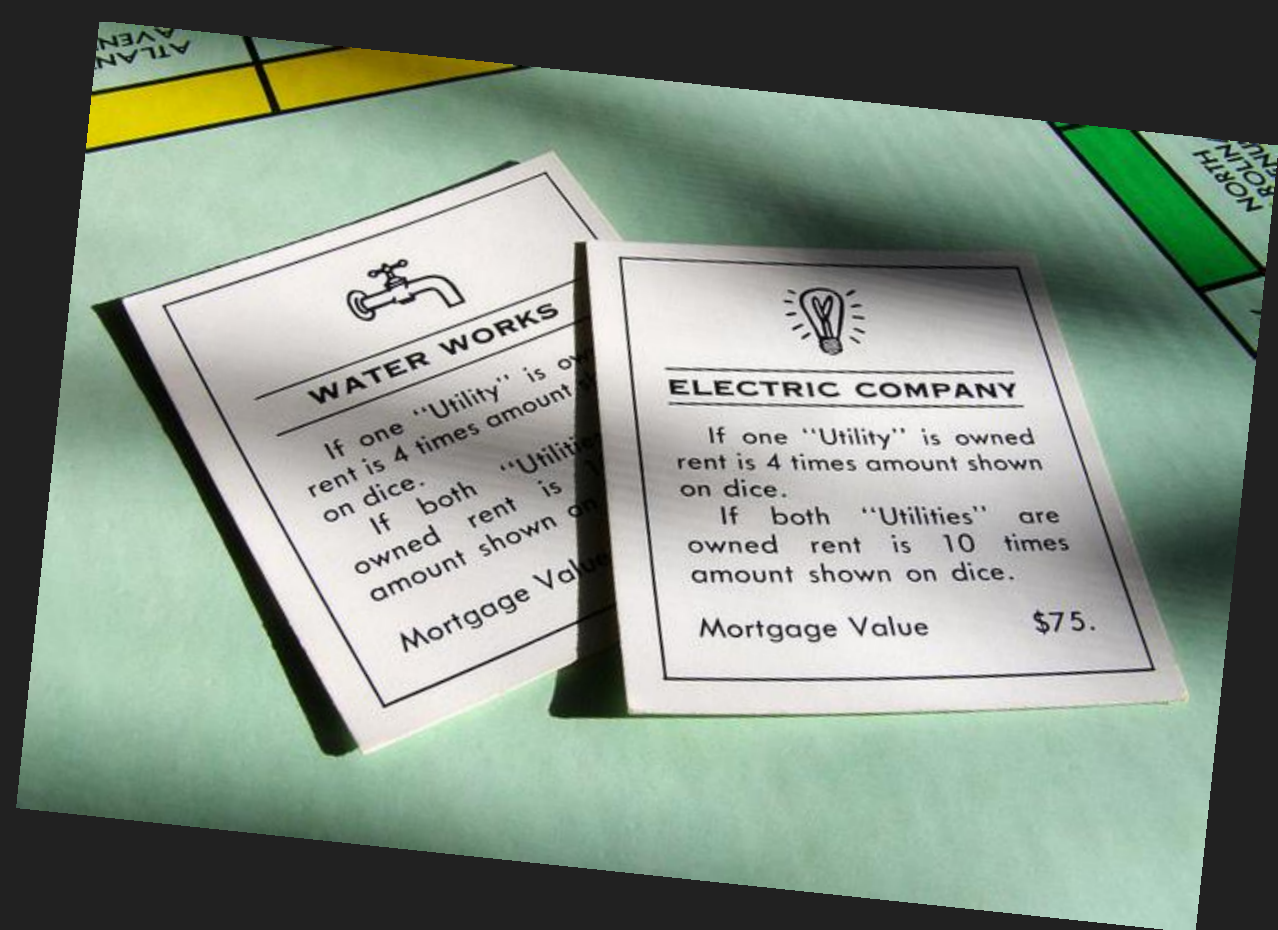
A lease agreement that can be renewed every month

*“We don’t have a year-long lease. We have a month-to-month lease.”*



# Utilities

## Expression



*A commodity or service that is provided by the public including water, electricity, gas*

*“Our utility bills stay low in the summer.”*



# Horror stories

Expression



Examples or stories where something went wrong

*“I hear so many horror stories about people living with terrible roommates in Boston”*

# To settle for

## Expression



To accept something that is less than what you want

*“My colleagues had steak and I had to settle for a*

To take one's  
time

Expression



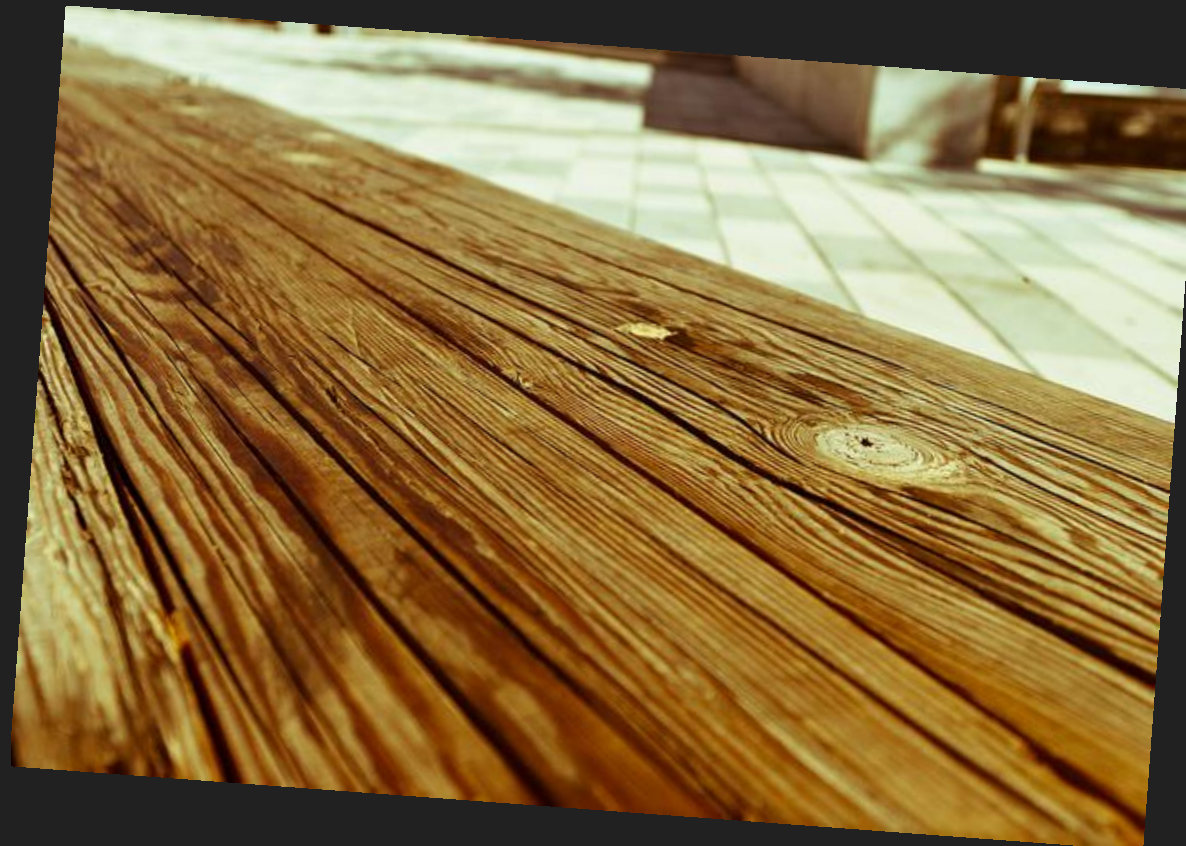
To take enough time to think through your choice in a  
deep way

*“When I buy a book to read I really take my time.”*



# To knock on wood

Expression (used as a phrase to ask for good luck)



To ask for good luck while you say something else

*“I think I have finally recovered from my sickness, knock on wood.”*



## Step 3: I Need a Place to Live

In this audio you will hear two people talking about renting an apartment together.

**Listen to Audio Steps 3 and 4-I Need a Place to Live**



## Step 4: Focus on the Vocabulary Phrases

Learn the new vocabulary in context!

Please open Transcript Steps 3 and 4 – I Need a Place to Live

### Key Vocabulary Phrases

- “I like to take my time when I check out apartments”
- “I don’t want to settle for something that’s not quite right.”
- “I have heard one too many horror stories”
- “I was on a month-to-month lease”
- “800\$ per month including utilities”
- “I guess we’ll definitely have to do it without a realtor”
- “we’ll need to pay the security deposit”

# Bonus! Say It Another Way!

Learn how to say the phrases in a different way!

**Click on the file “Say It Another Way”**

## Step 5: Use Your New Skills

**Realtor**

**Security  
deposit**

**Month-to-  
month  
lease**

**Utilities**

**To settle  
for**

**Horror  
Stories**

**To take  
one's  
time**

**To knock  
on wood**

A: How much is this apartment?

B: It's 650 per month plus \_\_\_1\_\_\_ (water, electricity) and there is a one month \_\_\_2\_\_\_ financial guarantee) when you sign.

A: I have heard \_\_\_3\_\_\_ (scary experiences) about this neighborhood.

B: But the rent is so low!

A: Well maybe we should do a \_\_\_4\_\_\_ (1 month lease).

B: Let's \_\_\_5\_\_\_ (spend some time) and make a decision next week.



# Answers to Quiz Step 5

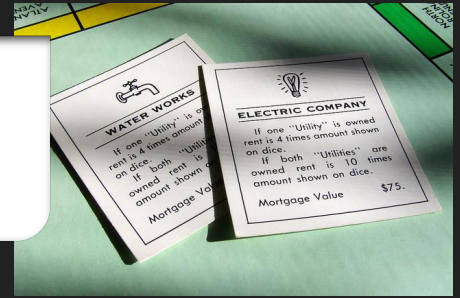
- 1) Utilities
- 2) Security deposit
- 3) Horror stories
- 4) Month-to-month lease
- 5) Take our time



To  
knock  
on  
wood

# Prepare Your Vocabulary Cards

Utilities



Horror  
Stories



Security  
deposit



Realtor



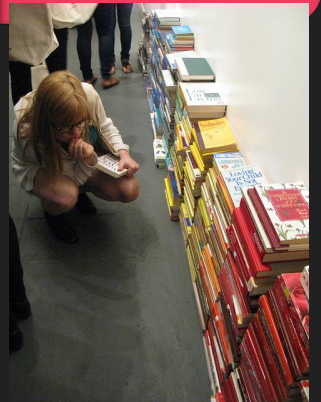
Month-to-  
month  
lease



To settle  
for



To take  
one's time



# Step 6: Practice with a Native

- Is it common to work with a **realtor** in your country? Did you use a realtor the last time you bought a house?
- In your home country, what is a typical amount that the landlord asks you to pay to cover the **security deposit**? How much do you usually pay for **utilities**?
- Is it possible to rent an apartment using a **month-to-month lease** or do you have to sign for a full year?

**Bonus Conversation 1: Please use the phrases from Say It Another Way** (A= friend, B= friend)

A: (student) I need a \_\_\_\_\_ (realtor) so that I can find a new apartment. My place is getting too expensive.

B: Ok but let's just sign a \_\_\_\_\_ (month-to-month lease) if we can.

A: Why?

B: I don't know. I heard that the \_\_\_\_\_ (utilities) in these old houses can get expensive.

# Answers to Bonus Step 1

**Bonus Conversation 1: Please use the phrases from Say It Another Way**(A= friend, B= friend)

A: *(student) I need a real estate agent so that I can find a new apartment. My place is getting too expensive.*

B: Ok but let's just sign a monthly lease if we can.

A: *Why?*

B: I don't know. I heard that the public services in these old houses can get expensive.



# Step 6: Practice with a Native

- Have you ever **settled for** an apartment or a house that you didn't like? Did you regret it later? Talk about why you settled for it and how you felt when you regretted settling for it.
- Do you have any **horror stories** related to buying/renting a house or house-hunting? Please share! Do you prefer to **take your time** when you look for a new home or do you want to get it over with quickly?

**Bonus Conversation 2: Please use the phrases from Say It Another Way** (A= friend, B= friend)

A: (student) *This apartment looks great! It's so cheap!*

B: No way. I am not \_\_\_\_\_ (settling for) this one. It's dirty and it's in a bad location.

A: *Come on. It's a good price.*

B: Let's \_\_\_\_\_ (take our time) and keep looking. I have too many \_\_\_\_\_ (horror stories) from past apartments so I don't want to make the same mistakes I made before with apartment hunting.

# Answers to Bonus Conversation 2

**Bonus Conversation 2: Please use the phrases from Say It Another Way** (A= friend, B= friend)

A: *(student) This apartment looks great! It's so cheap!*

B: No way. I am not going with this one. It's dirty and it's in a bad location.

A: *Come on. It's a good price.*

B: Let's go slowly and keep looking. I have too many scary stories from past apartments so I don't want to make the same mistakes I made before with apartment hunting.

# Additional Conversation Questions

- Is it typical to rent an apartment when you are in college/university in your home country or are people more likely to live at home with their parents? Why?
- What neighborhoods would you recommend to someone who is looking to rent an apartment in your home city and why? Describe the area and why it's a good place to live.
- Is the cost of living (apartment, food, etc.) high or low in your city compared to other cities?

# Additional Conversation Questions

- Have you ever rented an apartment or bought a house in the US? What are the biggest differences in the buying/renting process between your country and the US that you noticed? What mistakes did you make during this process?
- If you haven't bought/rented in the US, what differences did you notice from the conversations in this module?
- Describe your dream home or apartment. Where would it be? What would it look like on the inside and the outside?
- In your country do most people consider home ownership a way of building wealth or a "nest egg"? Why or why not? Has this mentality changed since the Recession of 2008?



# Credits

- 1. Security deposit: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/stevendepolo/5437288053/in/photolist-9htwiK-9VwVc2-8HWvej-62LEPx-bu6pKh-7HedAv-kyBTGB-f54gft-9qRF8r-6QFDYU-4BfaUm-7987Vs-bH1eiH-bH1gac-62QVb5-62LD8Z-6hSkjK-9htwN2-5KQyH9-chEaLb-4sUYDb-aB7uKh-9PSLHY-fKKcRD-bxDiow-ght8m7-dSXXyh-9VADkr-9gYtwj-6c6Q6r-cEHZc1-bi1bhM-9qREU2-9KU6T1-5WEQZB-8ip71R-4e5gDL-8ip6YF-8ddtDt-8PWifN-bZwdFC-9kNSHL-9kMUQb-4e1gT8-oh2EL-fEHuLF-5yL49b-5WsjQv-a32GWs-chEfau>
- 2. Realtor: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/mdgovpics/6872100759/in/photolist-btgj8R-btgpSa-btgcvt-btgrMV-btggS8-btgdhr-6nHNNB-9aThgJ-8Ri5oY-7ZFjYA-aQWhQa-aQW3ft-aQWfdH-aQW86H-aQWcen-aQWbo8-aQW5BD-aQWiCa-aQWgCn-aQWeFa-aQWgd4-aQWjFZ-aQWdmF-aQW9vi-aQW4Bt-ee6mbX-5BoSdv-eq8gsA-bxQzC6-c3LuDb-7rH1mn-7rVfqv-7rZE1N-7rZiXf-7rVpLk-7rZ7y1-7rVzEc-7rVjnV-7rLUjs-7ZBPXK-79Bh25-7rZuD3-7rZ5yw-7rV65n-7rH2Tc-7rZHd5-9ECCob-9EzJZx-81UgVc-bZCtG7>
- 3. Month-to-month lease: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/nobmouse/4052848608>

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- 4. Utilities: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/86530412@N02/8215022167/in/photolist-dvW8Te-udDf2-uM7kw-uM6Vp-uM6PL-uM77y-4eRpMQ-9WaLdN-bv4mb7-5AWh6C-7nxU1s-2k2731-uM7c1-uM7ry-uM7Zg-uM8hd-uM7fD-uM7Fq-5ogNmY-dGbF1f-2f2ZsA-8nqL7Q-8nnCQD-8nqL2E-9XJJ5R-2k23md-2mpRbt-2muayb-enQAFM-7hUqcU-8qhks9-8mkQi2-dZ4MiH-8QyWVd-a5FMNo-2DP2wV-8VJ3c1-6p8Yzv-4UtBWw-6b1WZS-5ohc5N-6imEZb-Ry277-S31Bn-6AdtRF-7QtUP-5HPfsn-imSBv6-9YDSBH-7JaiJ>
- 5. Horror stories: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/metrojp/94392593/in/photolist-6gE6vv-6BfcNB-9kMCv-5gqgSo-6BfcWx-3yyGPC-4KrzBq-8NhUdQ-6eMn5G-82FSnu-6WB82b-6WB86s-6Wx7q4-6Wx7GV-6Wx7sR-6WB84b-6Wx7sg-6Wx7Ez-9mH1eW-4VmgdA-CY4xz-dDfQL6-6WB81m-6WB7Wh-6WB83d-5xjAJo-6WwRfi-boNE1W-7urueS-6Wx7qD-6WB7TG-6Wx7wa-6WwTSD-ijjKR-6WwRgi-6WwRe2-5NYBz6-h9WDxp-6wF8Ue-6w8WjN-9h1nyt-6o4zMA-4dppxo-puQXB-p2C7A-p2C7v-puQXD-p2C7u-p2C7w-p2C7x>
- 6. To settle for: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/jmrosenfeld/3573924943>
- To take one's time, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/goincase/5658392528>
- Wood: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/mrpolygonymous/>
- Listening parts 3 and 4: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/matusfi/>
- Cover: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/milestonemanagement/>