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When to rent on Long Island

By Gigi Berman Aharoni



Photo credit: Handout | Glen Cove town house rental available for \$3,500 a month.

A new study indicates that Long Island will continue to lose young people unless apartments are built in transit-oriented downtowns throughout [Nassau](#) and [Suffolk](#). The [Garden City](#)-based Rauch Foundation's "Getting It Done" report faults communities for failing to embrace high-density developments near train stations, noting that change is slow in the making.

In the meantime, where are renters to go? Here's a look at 10 of Long Island's best communities for renting - with apartments now available for lease - as well as a guide to the ins and outs of a rental agreement.

MONTHLY PRICE RANGE \$1,600 to \$7,800

WHERE IT'S AT [Glen Cove](#) is on the North Shore with more than 10 miles of waterfront. There are three public beaches, two nature preserves, a public golf course and a public park. The Garvies Point Museum is a community gem famous for its research on geology. There are three railroad stops in the area and highways are minutes away by car.

HOT RENTAL TIP Stop in at the Business Improvement District or the [Glen Cove](#) Chamber of Commerce to get rental leads.

WHAT'S FOR RENT (Pictured above) This town house at 157 Shore Rd. in the North Shore school district is available for \$3,500 a month. It has three bedrooms, 2 1/2 baths, an eat-in kitchen, a fireplace, a wood deck and central air. The owners are offering a flexible lease period with an option to buy.

A one-month security deposit is required, as is a Realtor's fee of one month's rent. Utilities not included. Smoking is not allowed; pets will be considered with an extra security deposit. Parking is in the driveway.

The listing agent is Melissa Mindich of Daniel Gale [Sotheby's International Realty](#) (516-759-6822, ext. 104).

GREAT NECK



WHAT'S AVAILABLE Rentals in homes, apartments buildings, condos, co-ops and town houses.

MONTHLY PRICE RANGE \$1,250 to \$7,000

WHERE IT'S AT While [Great Neck's](#) main shopping area only measures a third of a square mile, it boasts a vibrant downtown with a railroad station, more than 250 retail stores, restaurants, a

movie theater, an arts center, about 40 office buildings and two four-star hotels. The expressway is five to 10 minutes by car.

HOT RENTAL TIP The market is competitive for rentals below \$2,500 a month; above that price is much more negotiable.

WHAT'S FOR RENT This 1,000-square-foot unit at 8 Bond St. in [Great Neck Plaza](#) is in a prewar historic landmarked building. Listed for \$2,100 a month, it has two bedrooms, one bath, an efficiency kitchen with granite countertops and ceramic tiles, and central air-conditioning.

One- to three-year leases are available. A one-month security deposit plus the first month's rent is required; there also is a Realtor fee of 15 percent of the first year's rent. Small pets and smoking are allowed. A parking garage is available for \$30 a month. The listing agent is Philip Raices at Turn Key Real Estate (516-647-4289).

LONG BEACH



WHAT'S AVAILABLE Rentals in apartment buildings, homes, condos, co-ops and town houses.

MONTHLY PRICE RANGE \$1,200 to \$6,500

WHERE IT'S AT [Long Beach](#) is a 6-mile-long and half-mile-wide barrier island that is only a

55-minute commute to Manhattan by the [LIRR](#). You can walk, ride your bike and run on the famous Boardwalk along the Atlantic Ocean. Enjoy restaurants, cafes, boutiques and shopping malls.

WHAT'S FOR RENT This fourth-floor apartment at 100 W. [Broadway](#) in the Ocean Club high-rise condo is available for \$2,800 a month. The unit, which has water views, offers two bedrooms, two baths, an efficiency kitchen and hardwood floors. It is available furnished or unfurnished. Amenities include an oceanfront in-ground pool, a round-the-clock concierge, a full gym and a washer and dryer on every floor. A one-year lease is available. There is a \$250 nonrefundable application fee.

A one-month security deposit, a \$500 moving-in fee and one month's rent are required. There is a reserved parking spot. Small pets are OK, but smoking is not allowed in the building. The listing agent is Joyce Coletti of Prudential [Douglas Elliman](#) Real Estate (516-313-2700).

PORT WASHINGTON



WHAT'S AVAILABLE Rentals in two-family homes, single-family homes, condos, town houses, garden apartment complexes, senior citizen communities and houseboats.

MONTHLY PRICE RANGES \$1,100 to \$10,000

WHERE IT'S AT Surrounded by [Manhasset Bay](#), "Port," as the bustling community is known, has Main Street charm with art galleries, antiques shops and restaurants. There is a railroad station downtown with a 33-minute express train to Penn Station, and it is a 15-minute drive to the LIE.

HOT RENTAL TIP Look on the bulletin boards at the [Port Washington](#) library or the Chamber of Commerce for rentals.

WHAT'S FOR RENT This town house at Quarterdeck at Driftwood Harbor is available for \$4,550 a month. There are three bedrooms and 2 1/2 baths. The floors are cherrywood, and there's a new kitchen. The unit has a living room, a dining room, a fireplace and a finished basement. The second and third floors both have decks with water views. It is within walking distance to waterside restaurants.

A one- or two-year lease with a two-month security deposit is required, as well as one month's rent. Pets and smoking are not allowed. The unit comes with a garage space. The listing agent is [Virginia Pergola](#) of Point to Port Realty (516-944-6800).

WESTBURY



WHAT'S AVAILABLE Most rentals are in homes and apartment complexes.

MONTHLY PRICE RANGE \$2,200 to \$3,800

WHERE IT'S AT [Westbury](#) is in the heart of a shopper's paradise: minutes from The Source and [Roosevelt Field](#) malls, Target, [Loews](#) Movie Theatre and countless restaurants. The [LIRR](#) and major highways are minutes away.

WHAT'S FOR RENT This two-bedroom, 1,098-square-foot apartment on the second floor of the garden apartment-style gated community Archstone Meadowbrook Crossing is available for \$2,700 a month. (Mold shut down the property in 2007, and the owners say the problems have been fixed; the complex reopened in early 2009. It is 98 percent leased.) It features stainless-steel appliances, including a gas stove, as well as nine-foot ceilings and crown molding. There is a private patio.

Residents have access to the Caliber Sports Club, a private screening room, the Click Café, lounges, a private heated pool and a playground.

Two-month to one-year leases are offered. There is no security deposit required pending credit check. Up to two pets (dog or cat) are allowed, with breed and weight restrictions. Smoking is allowed. Parking is included in the rent, and residents are not limited to parking spaces. The listing agent is Dawn Olsen at Archstone Meadowbrook Crossing (516-222-2244).

HUNTINGTON



WHAT'S AVAILABLE Most rentals are within private homes and in co-ops.

MONTHLY PRICE RANGE \$900 to \$9,000

WHERE IT'S AT [Huntington](#) boasts a large downtown with about 10 blocks of shopping that includes boutiques, the Cinema Arts Centre and an array of ethnic dining choices. There also are two marinas. The [Vanderbilt Museum](#) & Planetarium are in nearby [Centerport](#). Heckscher Park provides a walking path around a pond as well as a playground and a gazebo. The [Huntington](#) train station is on Route 110 and offers express trains to the city. There is easy access to the [Northern State Parkway](#) and [LIE](#), about 10 minutes away.

HOT RENTAL TIP If you want to be near the beach, then search for the "Southdown" or "[Huntington Bay](#)" areas for your rental. Marinas are a great spot for local postings.

WHAT'S FOR RENT This first-floor apartment inside the house at 291 W. Shore Rd. is available for rent at \$1,550 a month. It has three rooms: one bedroom, one bath and a large, upgraded eat-

in kitchen. There's wall-to-wall carpeting and panoramic views of [Huntington Harbor](#). The tenant has use of the backyard as well as beach rights.

A one-year lease and first and last months rent are required as security, and there is a broker's fee of one month's rent. Utilities are included. Pets may be considered upon approval; there is a pet security deposit. The listing agent is Deborah Sande of Daniel Gale [Sotheby's International Realty](#) (631-427-6600, ext. 229).

MIDDLE ISLAND



WHAT'S AVAILABLE Rentals in condos, town homes and private homes.

MONTHLY PRICE RANGE \$800 to \$2,200

WHERE IT'S AT [Middle Island](#) is within minutes of the LIE and the [Port Jefferson LIRR](#) station. Shopping at the Tanger Outlets or the Smith Haven Mall is not that far. Other area attractions include the Prosser Cathedral Pines Park, which is distinguished as the largest white pine forest

on Long Island, the Spring Lake Golf Course and the [Middle Island Country Club](#).

WHAT'S FOR RENT This rental at 743 Spring Lake Dr. at the gated Birchwood at Spring Lake condo golf community is available for \$1,975 a month. Located in the [Longwood](#) school district, the unit has two bedrooms and two full baths. There's an eat-in kitchen, a dining room, a living room and a den.

There are two clubhouses with indoor and outdoor pools, tennis, racquetball, fitness centers and bocce, kiddie play areas and a walking and jogging path. A one-year lease with two months' security is required, as is a broker's fee of one-month's rent. Small pets are OK, but smoking is not allowed. The listing agent is Thomas Annunziato of Coach Realtors (631-331-3600, ext. 118).

WEST BABYLON



WHAT'S AVAILABLE Rentals in apartment buildings, garden apartments and co-ops and condos.

MONTHLY PRICE RANGES \$1,000 to \$1,800

WHERE IT'S AT [West Babylon](#) is in southwest [Suffolk County](#), just south of [Sunrise Highway](#) next to Route 109, about one mile to the [Long Island Rail Road](#) for an easy commute. Many rentals are only a few minutes from shopping.

The area also is convenient to major highways ([Sunrise Highway](#), [Southern State Parkway](#)) and close to bus transportation. The South Shore beaches are nearby.

HOT RENTAL TIP West [Babylon](#) is more affordable than nearby [Babylon](#).

WHAT'S FOR RENT This first-floor 850-square-foot unit at 59 Claire Ct. in the Fairfield Court apartments in the [Babylon](#) school district is available for \$1,495 a month. It has one bedroom, and the kitchen has stainless-steel appliances and cherrywood cabinetry. There's carpeting, a living room, a dining room and sliding doors to a deck. A one- or two-year lease is available; a one-month security deposit is required, as is a \$35-a-month charge for a dog, with breed restrictions. Smoking is allowed. The listing agent is [David Berger](#) of Fairfield Properties (631-587-6096).

BAY SHORE



WHAT'S AVAILABLE There are a lot of rental houses, gated communities on old estates and apartments within houses.

MONTHLY PRICE RANGE \$800 to \$2,800

WHERE IT'S AT The hamlet of [Bay Shore](#) is in the Town of [Islip](#) on the South Shore, adjoining the [Great South Bay](#). One of the highlights is the ferry terminal that can take you to many [Fire Island](#) destinations. Main Street has restaurants, boutiques and other stores and offices. The [Bay Shore](#) Beautification Society created a meditation garden that has since been recognized for its excellent design. [Bay Shore](#) is 12 miles from Long Island MacArthur Airport and is on the [Montauk](#) Branch of the [Long Island Rail Road](#). Touro Medical School is there.

HOT RENTAL TIP Touro has lots of listings posted for renters.

WHAT'S FOR RENT This apartment in a two-family house at 295 N. Third Ave. is available for \$1,400 a month. It has two bedrooms and one bath and access to a private yard. A one-year lease and one-month security deposit are required, as well as a broker's fee of one month's rent. Cats and smoking are allowed. There is parking in the driveway. The listing agent is Margie Hanson of

[Century 21 American Homes](#) (631-968-5300, ext. 113).

CORAM



WHAT'S AVAILABLE Rental apartments, rentals in homes, rentals in condos and town houses.

MONTHLY PRICE RANGE \$1,000 to \$2,000

WHERE IT'S AT [Coram](#) is a quaint hamlet in [Suffolk](#) County. One attraction is Diamonds in the Pines, a town park at Pine Road and Route 83. The park has its own football fields, huge

playgrounds, a public golf course and a clubhouse. Shops, services and eateries can be found along Middle Country Road and Route 112. Nearby attractions include [Port Jefferson Village](#) and the Tanger Outlet Center in [Riverhead](#), as well as Boomers! and Kids Kingdom amusement parks. There is easy access to the [Port Jefferson](#) railroad station and major highways.

HOT RENTAL TIP [Stony Brook University](#) can sometimes be a source of rental listings in [Coram](#).

WHAT'S FOR RENT This two-bedroom, two-bath, 1,102-square-foot apartment at 1 Charles Pond Dr. at Avalon Charles Pond is available for \$1,695 a month. It features a kitchen with black appliances, a patio, walk-in closets in both bedrooms and a full-size washer and dryer. Amenities include a fitness center, a clubhouse with a lounge and a billiard room and a grill area, as well as access to an 18-hole golf course at Avalon Pines, within a short drive.

The complex is in the Middle Country Central School District. A one-year lease is available. A \$750 security deposit and an application fee are required. Pets are OK, but there are breed restrictions. Smoking is allowed. An outdoor parking space comes with the unit. It is listed with the Avalon Bay leasing office (866-588-1901).

TIPS ON SIGNING A LEASE

Once you've found an apartment, what do you do next? Long Island [real estate](#) experts offer the following advice on the do's and don'ts of signing a lease:

THE BASICS

Many leases are standard, preprinted forms, so be sure the details you discussed with the landlord are in black and white, says Greg Lisi, a [Rockville Centre real estate](#) attorney. "You can't imagine how many people I represent in court admit they never read their lease before signing," says Lisi. He warns that it's a legal document, and if you don't understand something, you should ask the landlord questions and consult a lawyer. "As long as you're an adult of sound mind, you are almost always bound by what you signed," he says. Are you signing a lease specifically written for New York? The state should be printed on top or at the end of the preprinted form. Is the correct address listed for the property you are renting? What's the rent? Be sure the agreement spells out the exact rental price and the due date. For example, if \$2,000 is due on the first of each month, that should be spelled out. If there's a grace period before a late charge is assessed, make sure that's on the lease, too. And, finally, what's the term or length of the lease? It should clearly state the dates.

HIDDEN FEES

There are many charges in a lease that renters can miss if they don't read carefully, warns Lisi. There could be a stipulation for no pets or for monthly pet fees. Be clear if you are signing on to pay for taxes, renters insurance or house insurance. Are you responsible for utilities, and if so, whose name are the utilities going to be under? "Be careful that you are only paying for your utilities - there could be one electric meter for more than one unit," says Lisi. Be alert to clean-up fees when your lease is up, move-in and move-out fees (especially in co-ops) and attorney fees should the landlord need to go to court to enforce the lease.

SECURITY DEPOSITS

Often the first month's rent and security - equal to one or two months rent - is due upfront. This way, if you suddenly decide to move before your lease is up or if you damage the apartment, the landlord has the security to offset his losses. However, Lisi says, the law doesn't allow the tenant to use a separate security deposit as the last, or any, month's rent. The tenant must pay the rent to the end of the lease. Sometimes the last month's rent is also required before the landlord will sign the lease.

THE FINE PRINT

Read and understand the lease to the end because it is often filled with more rules and regulations, Lisi advises. Ask whether you have a parking space or whether there are restrictions on where you can park. Landlords often require personal guarantees by a parent or other adult - especially when college kids are moving in. If the child doesn't pay rent, is evicted, or if there's a fight over security, the guarantor could still be on the hook. The guarantor could even be liable if your child's roommates do not pay their rent or cause damage.

RENT CONTROL

Before signing, check if the premises are covered by rent-control or rent-stabilization laws, advises Lisi. It should be on the lease. It can impact how much your rent can be legally raised each year. If the landlord has violated these laws, you might be able to get reimbursed. There also are eviction rights under these laws that regular tenants don't have.

IS IT LEGAL?

Many apartments on Long Island are inside homes. The easiest way to find out if the landlord has a permit to rent such a space is to call the building department in your town or city. Basement apartments are often illegal, Lisi says. A tenant could lose an apartment if the town discovers it is illegal. And illegal apartments often are dangerous because they may not meet electrical or fire safety codes.

RENTAL INSURANCE

"If there was a fire, water damage or theft, for about \$200 (a year) you can cover all your personal belongings and property," says Thomas Orr, president of the Dooley Deremer Orr Agency in [Garden City](#). Think about the value of your computers, couches and clothing - to name a few things. Renters insurance would even cover you to stay in a hotel and eat out while your apartment is being fumigated from smoke damage due to a neighbor's fire. It also provides liability coverage in case someone gets hurt on your premises.

- Gigi Berman Aharoni

APARTMENT ETIQUETTE

***PACKAGE P'S AND Q'S:** If you don't have a 24-hour doorman to collect packages, consider sending your ordered goods to your work address if you know you won't be home to receive them. This saves your neighbors the hassle of being asked to sign for you when you aren't home.

***DON'T LET THESE WALLS TALK:** When you live in an apartment complex, it's important to consider who might be listening to your conversations - whether they want to or not. If you're speaking to someone in the hallway, consider bringing them inside your apartment to continue the conversation. Remember to keep your TV and music at lower volumes during the early and late hours of the day.

***PARTY PERMISSION SLIP:** If you're planning a party in your apartment, consider telling your neighbors in advance, either in person or by slipping notes under their doors. Consider inviting them over, too, so they don't feel left out.

***DON'T TRASH YOUR NEIGHBORS:** Although your trash might not bother you, it could be ruining the ambience for your neighbors. Make the extra effort to bring the trash bag downstairs right away or keep it inside your own apartment until pickup. It will appease your neighbors while keeping away unwanted pests.

***CONTROL YOUR CRITTER:** If you're taking your dog for a walk, make sure to put on a leash before you leave your apartment. This way, you're able to control your pet easily, in case you're sharing the elevator with a neighbor.

***PARKING PATROL:** Park efficiently so that others will have room to park. If there is a space big enough to fit two cars, don't park squarely in the middle of it. Leave room for the other car. And if the whole street is empty, park at the end of the closest driveway or otherwise leave room for cars to fit both in front of and behind yours.

Source: rent.com

SECTION 8 HOUSING

In Section 8 housing, the tenant pays a portion of the rent, but the government also contributes. To see if you qualify and what apartments on Long Island participate, call the Office of Housing and Homeless Services in [Nassau](#) County at 516-572-1900 or Housing Resource Center in [Suffolk](#) County at 877-428-8844. You also can log on to nyhousingsearch.gov.