

Northwest University's Student Magazine

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[HOME](#)[CAMPUS LIFE](#)[OUTSIDE THE BUBBLE](#)[ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT](#)[OPINION](#)[AUDIO/VISUAL](#)[LETTERS TO THE EDITOR](#)[ABOUT US](#)[THE SCREECH PODCAST](#)

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under [Opinion](#)
[Permalink](#)

COMMENTARY: HEARD OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING? NEITHER HAVE I.

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Photo credit: Jeff Wilcox



Housing prices have been skyrocketing in the Seattle area. According to Zillow, the cost of living in the Seattle metropolitan area has risen 11.6% in just one year. The average price for rent in Kirkland is \$2,395 per month.

If that isn't shocking enough, costs will only continue to rise. According to Geekwire, Facebook will be leasing 274,000 square feet of building in Seattle and is set to possibly double its employee size. Microsoft, Amazon and Google are also expanding in this growing tech hub.

What does this mean for you? Prices will continue to rise and your pockets might seem a little emptier than before.

Never fear. There is still hope.

If you're a college student like myself, or happen to not be on a Microsoft tech budget, then you might be asking yourself if and how will you be able to afford living in this beautiful area. There are a few things you should consider before committing to a lease.

1. Don't Do the Dorms – Even as a college kid this is not the place you should be looking. At Northwest University, a room in a residence hall works out to about \$865 a month. At first glance this doesn't sound half bad, but look closer. This \$865 will provide a small studio size space for two people, not including a private bathroom or private kitchen.

Zillow lists studio apartments in Kirkland for as low as \$850. Split this between two people and your money will get you nearly twice as far.

2. Use the Internet – If you do not possess the typical Seattle budget then it might be time to scour some internet sources. Easyroommate is a place you can start. There are a plethora of other Apps and websites such as roommates and metroommate that can help you find a roof over your head for a cheaper price than you might

expect.

Even as a last resort, Craigslist can be a dream come true. Your brilliant author used the latter option. I posted a decent picture of myself, was contacted only a short week later, and am now proof that the system works.

The offer I received was way below the typical market offer and the gentleman who I am renting from is incredibly nice. Take your time, do some research, and if you're creating an ad make sure to be honest and upfront about yourself and your situation. If you are willing to take a risk this could be an excellent way to save some money.

3. Find Friends – They always say "the more the merrier," and in this case the more the less you have the pay. Yes, having six or more people in a house might not be the ideal, but if you have some good friends who get along then this is the perfect way to save money and make good friendships even better.

One of my friends chose to go this route and it has worked out very well for her. She is rooming with six other girls in a small house and each girl is paying for half of the residence hall rate. This will halve the cost for you, but hopefully it will not halve the friendship. Just be sure to be clear about who owns the vanilla yogurt.

Yes, the house market is claspng its greedy hands together and raising the prices yet again, and it will continue to do so. Do not fret. There are still honest and kind people out there, and with enough research, a little luck, and maybe a few friends you can still find an affordable place to live and have enough money left over in your pockets for a good weekend.

Good luck, and may the odds be ever in your favor.

For more information from Zillow Kirkland to aid in your housing endeavors, follow this link <http://www.zillow.com/kirkland-wa/>