

Renters' Checklist

Questions to ask the landlord:

- ___ What type of heat does the apartment have (gas or electric)?
- Who pays for the heat, and what is the average cost?
- Who controls the thermostat
- When is the heat turned on?
- ___ Is the apartment air conditioned?
- ___ Who pays for other utilities (telephone, cable, etc)?
- ___ Do you provide regular exterminating services?
- ___ Can I hang pictures on the walls without being penalized?
- ___ Are draperies, curtain rods, or blinds included?
- ___ Are there limits to the number of occupants permitted in the apartment?
- ___ Are pets or children allowed? Is there an additional charge?
- ___ Are there any restrictions regarding guests, parties, etc.?
- ___ Is parking available and if so, is there an additional fee?
- ___ Will the apartment be ready for occupancy at the start of the lease?
- ___ Will you put any promises or commitments in writing?
- ___ What are the requirements for a full refund of my security deposit?
- ___ Who do I call in an emergency?
- ___ What do I do if I lose my key?

Things to learn about the facility locale, and amenities:

- ___ Are the interior rooms and building commons areas reasonably clean?
- ___ Are the walls in reasonably good condition?
- ___ Is the carpet or flooring clean and in good condition?
- ___ Are the appliances gas or electric and are they in good condition?
- Is the refrigerator clean and in good condition?
- ___ Is there sufficient lighting?
- Do the light fixtures work?
- Will I need to provide additional lighting?
- ___ Are there enough electrical outlets?
- ___ Are there sufficient phone jacks?
- ___ Does the toilet function properly and not leak?
- ___ Do the hot and cold water faucets function and not drip?
- ___ Do the sinks, shower, and tub drain quickly?
- ___ Are there any signs of water damage around water fixtures or on the ceiling?
- ___ If the apartment is furnished, is the furniture in good condition?
- ___ Will my furniture fit comfortably in the apartment?
- ___ Is there sufficient closet space?
- ___ Are there any signs of infestation?
- ___ Are there laundry facilities in building?
- ___ Is there storage space available in the building?
- ___ Are the exterior grounds maintained in reasonable condition (grass/shrubs trimmed with no visible debris)?
- ___ Are there proper containers provided for trash disposal with clear instructions (pick-up schedule, recyclables, etc.)?
- ___ Who lives in the adjoining apartments and the neighborhood?
- ___ How close are grocery stores, shops, restaurants, entertainment and public transportation?

Safety and Security:

- ___ Is the main building entrance door sturdy, locked, and is there an intercom or doorbell for guest access?
- ___ Is there a private mailbox (preferably lockable) for each apartment?
- ___ Is the building number visible and readable from street?
- ___ Is the exterior lighting sufficient?
- ___ Does the building have a security system?
- ___ Does the building have a fire escape? If not, where is the nearest emergency exit?
- ___ Are there two emergency exits to the street? Are they kept clear and do they open outward without a key?
- ___ Is emergency lighting provided?
- ___ Are the hallways well lit?
- ___ If it's a multi-unit building, are there fire extinguishers available and identified on each floor?
- ___ Are there handrails on all stairs?
- ___ Is the apartment door in good condition? Does it have a deadbolt lock and/or a security chain?
- ___ Are there smoke detectors in each sleeping room of the apartment?
- ___ Are the windows unbroken, functioning, and lockable, especially on lower floors? (Bars or other security features are recommended for ground floor windows).
- Are screens provided?
- Does each bedroom have a minimum of one functioning exterior window?
- ___ Is there a fire extinguisher near the kitchen?
- ___ Are electrical outlets in bathroom and kitchen GFI type?
- ___ Is the heating system in good functional condition