

Wear and Tear vs. Damages

This document is meant to provide a general overview of the difference between wear and tear vs damage when evaluating a property for security deposit eligibility.

Security deposits can be used to repair damage for which a resident is responsible. However, the landlord cannot apply the security deposit to normal wear and tear. The question is: “What’s the difference, and how do I decipher between the two?”.

Normal wear and tear is damage that is expected when a rental unit is used in a normal way, such as gently worn carpets and faded walls. Damage is the destruction caused by abusive or negligent use of a rental unit, like ripped carpets and heavily stained walls.

“**Normal wear and tear**” is deterioration that occurs naturally as a result of the tenant using the property as it was designed to be used.

Examples include:

- Gently worn carpets
- Lightly scratched glass
- Faded paint and flooring
- Lightly dirtied grout
- Loose door handles
- Stained bath fixtures

“**Damage**” means destruction to the rental unit that occurs because of abuse or negligence by a tenant during the course of the tenancy.

Examples include:

- Heavily stained, burned, or torn carpets
- Broken tiles or windows
- Holes in the wall
- Missing fixtures

**Continue to the following pages for a more in depth explanation of differentiations.*



Wear and Tear	Damages
1. Small nail holes caused by a 6 penny nail or smaller. A 6 penny nail is 2 inches long and is used for hanging picture frames and other items on walls	Large holes from hanging shelving, pictures, screws, wall anchors, flat screen television brackets or any other wall hanging that causes damage larger than a 6 penny nail
2. Faded paint	Spot painting and patching or touch up painting of any kind
3. Faded caulking around the bathtub and tiles	Missing caulking around the bathtub and tiles
4. Hard water deposits	Buildup of dirt, mold, mildew, or water stains from a preventable or unreported water leak or drip
5. Worn out keys	Broken, lost or unreturned keys
6. Loose or stubborn door lock	Broken or missing locks
7. Loose hinges or handles on doors	Damage from a door from forced entry, or damage from using feet to open doors
8. Worn carpet traffic patterns	Torn, burned, stained, missing, ripped, scratched, or snagged carpet, pet damage
9. Faded finish on wood floors	Scratches, gouged, warped or water damaged wood floors
10. Linoleum worn thin	Linoleum with tears, chips, or holes
11. Worn countertops due to daily use	Burned, cut, stained, scratched or water damaged countertops
12. Drywall cracks from settling	Holes in walls, doors, screens or windows from misuse, negligence, carelessness, accident, or abuse
13. Faded, chipped or cracked paint	Unapproved or poor tenant paint job
14. Loose wallpaper	Ripped or marked-up wallpaper
15. Worn or heat blistered mini-blinds	Broken, bent, cracked or missing slats, wands or hardware, broken strings



16. Dirty window and door screens	Torn or missing screens
17. Sticky window	Broken window
18. Loose or inoperable faucet handle	Broken or missing faucet handle
19. Running toilet	Broken toilet seat, tank top or chipped or cracked toilet bowl
20. Musty odor	Urine or pet odor throughout unit
21. Closet bi-fold door off track	Damaged or missing bi-fold door
22. Non-functioning smoke or CO detector	Missing or detached smoke detector or CO detector or missing batteries
23. Non-functioning light fixture	Missing, burnt out, or incorrect style light bulbs
24. Dry lawn	Lawn with pet urine spots, dead areas, excessive weeds
25. Slow draining drains	Drains that are clogged by hair, toys, or other non-flushable objects