



Inspect-By-TenantSM
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Important Points To Know Before Signing A Lease

Prior to signing a lease, it is crucial for renters to be proactive in addressing practical matters. While the excitement of exploring a new house or apartment can be overwhelming, it is equally important to conduct a thorough inspection using our [Inspect-By-Tenant App](#), of your potential new home to avoid headaches and potential security deposit disputes in the future.

Here is where you can pause for a moment and collect your thoughts! Remember, our Inspect-By-Tenant App will guide you through each room and space and have you focus on these items.

Here are 10 essential things to check before renting a new house:

1. **Interior Paint:** Carefully examine each room's painted surfaces, documenting any scratches or damages. Note any areas affected by mold or water damage and promptly inform the landlord. Also, inquire about restrictions on changing the home's decor. Are you allowed to repaint or modify any area?
2. **Carpeting:** Inspect the condition of the carpeting in all rooms, taking note of permanent stains, rips, or damages. Pay attention to corners of each room for stains and odors due to prior pets. Capture pictures of these issues with the [Inspect-By-Tenant App](#) and discuss them with the landlord. Check for evidence of insects.
3. **AC and Heating:** Ask the landlord to demonstrate the heating and cooling systems in the house, ensuring all vents, radiators, or air conditioning units are operational in every room. It's a great idea to bring a laser temperature gauge with you. They are under 10.00 and you literally point them at the air duct to capture the temperature coming out of the vent. Identify and report any excessively dirty or damaged parts of the system. Additionally, inquire about the home's insulation to estimate potential heating and cooling costs. Keep in mind, many utilities will give you an estimate if you call them which will be based on prior usage.
4. **Windows:** Verify that all windows can be locked and opened. Note any damages to the glass or screens before finalizing the lease. If possible, check for drafts around windows that might need sealing for better insulation.
5. **Plumbing:** Inspect exposed pipes in the basement and under kitchen and bathroom cabinets for signs of wetness, mold, or damage that requires repair. Test faucets and flush toilets, documenting any issues within the [Inspect-By-Tenant App](#) and discuss potential repairs with the landlord. Note the condition of showers and tubs, checking for mold or water damage on the floor. Fill up the tub and sink and let it drain while you're still walking through the spaces. You don't want to move in and discover draining issues.



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6. **Appliances**: If the house comes with appliances, request the landlord to demonstrate their proper functioning, including the refrigerator, stove, dishwasher, and washing machine. Report any damages like scratches, dents, or broken parts through photographs. Look for the items to be fully operational while paying attention to any leaks under and behind the appliances.

7. **Electricity**: Test the lights and ceiling fans in each room to ensure the electricity is functioning properly. Familiarize yourself with the function of every switch in the house. Check the electrical outlets for proper operation and inquire about additional lines if needed.

8. **Safety Equipment**: Verify the presence of functional smoke detectors and Carbon Monoxide detectors on each floor and check the accessibility of fire extinguishers. If applicable, be prepared to bring your own as this is an area you do not want to miss! Ensure that the items are on and functional. Carbon Monoxide is noted as odorless, tasteless and undetectable without a detector. Don't live in your new space without one. They are available at places such as [Home Depot](#).

9. **Exterior**: Document any damages to the house and yard, including fence damage. Inquire about parking options and guidelines for yard use, such as gardening or pet ownership. Assess the neighborhood for potential nuisances that could affect your comfort. Ask the landlord who is responsible for the yard landscaping. This can be a very important and sometimes costly area if not clarified.

10. **Lease Terms and Other Details**: Alongside inspecting the physical structure, clarify important lease details, including:

- Total rent and inclusions (utilities covered).
- Security deposit amount and additional fees. Ask ahead of time about the move-out requirements should you decide to move at the end of your lease. What are the move-out requirements and responsibilities? How much notice will the landlord require? Professional cleaning can sometimes be a requirement and that can be an unexpected cost.
- Repairs and who will be responsible for them. How should they be requested? Ask for an email to ensure that you can send your requests in writing.
- Submit documentation: Once the lease agreement is reviewed and signed, attach pictures and notes of any existing issues to the lease. When you have finished the Inspect-By-Tenant Inspection App, you will have a document and access to all your photos and video to refer to.

Ultimately, the goal when renting a home is to safeguard against future problems. By documenting any pre-existing issues upon move-in with our [Inspect-By-Tenant App](#), tenants can protect themselves and ensure the return of their full security deposit when the lease ends.