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# Ontario Tenant's Guide (2025)

## 1. The Basics

The **Residential Tenancies Act (RTA)** is the law that protects tenants and landlords in Ontario. It applies to most rental housing, apartments, houses, condos, and basement units. It **does not** cover student residences, co-ops, or if you share a kitchen or bathroom with the owner.

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## 2. Before You Move In

- **Standard Lease:** Landlords must use the [Ontario Standard Lease Form](#).
- **Deposits:** Only **one rent deposit** (equal to one month's rent) is allowed. No "damage deposits."
- **Keys:** A refundable fee can be charged, but it must be returned when you give the keys back.
- **Fair Housing:** You can't be refused a place because of race, age, gender, family status, or source of income (protected under the **Human Rights Code**).

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## 3. Paying Rent

- Pay rent on time each month as stated in your lease.
- Landlords must give a **receipt** for any rent paid (especially if paid in cash or e-transfer).
- If you're late on rent, your landlord must give notice (Form N4) — they can't lock you out or remove your things.

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## 4. Rent Increases & Rent Control

- Landlords can only raise rent **once every 12 months** and must give **90 days' written notice** (Form N1).
- Most homes built **before November 15, 2018**, are **under rent control**, meaning the increase can't exceed the government's yearly guideline (e.g., 2.5% for 2024).
- Newer buildings (after 2018) may be exempt.

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## 5. Repairs and Maintenance

Your landlord must:

- Keep your unit safe, clean, and in good repair.
- Provide essential services (heat, hot water, electricity).
- Follow fire, health, and building codes.

Your responsibility:

- Keep your space reasonably clean.
- Report maintenance problems quickly.
- Don't damage the unit or common areas.

If your landlord refuses to fix something, you can:

1. Call your **municipal property standards office**, or
2. File a complaint with the **Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB)**.

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## 6. Privacy and Entry

Your landlord **cannot enter without notice** unless:

- It's an emergency (like a fire or flood),

- You agree, or
- They give **24 hours' written notice** (for repairs, inspections, etc., between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m.).

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## 7. Ending Your Tenancy

- Give **60 days' written notice** (Form N9) before you move out.
- You are responsible for the rent until your notice period ends.
- Landlords can only end a tenancy for legal reasons (e.g., owner moving in, non-payment, demolition).
- Only the **Landlord and Tenant Board** can order an eviction — landlords **cannot** change locks or remove belongings themselves.

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## 8. Protecting Yourself

- Always get a signed lease and rent receipts.
- Communicate in writing (email or text).
- Keep copies of all documents.
- Learn your rights — you cannot be evicted without due process.

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## 9. Where to Get Help

- **Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB)**: [tribunalsontario.ca/ltb](http://tribunalsontario.ca/ltb)
- **Rent Increase Info**: [ontario.ca-rent-increase-guideline](http://ontario.ca-rent-increase-guideline)
- **Community Legal Clinics**: Free help — [legalaid.on.ca/legal-clinics](http://legalaid.on.ca/legal-clinics)
- **Human Rights Info**: [ohrc.on.ca](http://ohrc.on.ca)
- **Ontario Standard Lease**: [ontario.ca/standard-lease](http://ontario.ca/standard-lease)