



INSPECTION OF THE PREMISES

Whether you're moving into a new apartment or ending your current [lease](#) and checking out of one, you need to make a thoroughly **documented inspection** of the entire unit. We know you're eager to get unpacked , but this is really important.

Here's why: When you move into a new place and things aren't in proper order, your [landlord](#) is responsible for fixing them. If the landlord isn't aware of these problems when you move in, they could take the price of repairs out of your security deposit when you move out. In fact, it's probably best to get the landlord to fix these issues before you even sign your lease.

Most apartments will have a similar checklist for when you move out. Once again, you could find yourself financially responsible for any necessary repairs, so it's best to get them taken care of before arrival.

We'll take a look at 10 essential items that you need to inspect before renting or leaving your apartment.

- Make sure the **carpets** are cleaned and without snags or tears. Be certain that the carpeting is everywhere and no pieces are missing. The carpets should not be [stained](#) and should not smell bad, either.
- For kitchens and [bathrooms](#), check to see that **the floors** have been mopped and swept. Tiles should not be missing, scraped, scuffed or popping out.
- When you're moving out, make sure the floors and carpets are clean and undamaged. Run the vacuum or steam clean if you have to. You may also want to invest in some stain remover.
- Check every **wall** carefully before you move in. First and foremost, the paint should not be chipped and it should be consistent throughout the [apartment](#). Make sure there are no stains on the walls. Also, make sure the paint isn't comprised of poisonous materials. Look for holes where posters or pictures once decorated the walls. When you're moving out, you'll have to fill in the holes that you've added. You can use caulk or spackle to fill in the holes. Check the [baseboards](#) to see if they are

damaged as well.

- When inspecting **the windows**, make sure you can actually open them. You face a huge safety hazard if the windows do not open properly. Every room should have at least one window that can open.
- Make sure the windows aren't leaky and that the glass isn't chipped or broken. You don't want any missing panes of glass, either. The windows should operate normally and lock from the inside.
- Check the blinds as well. They should work properly. Also, make sure they aren't dirty or stained.
- Flick all of **the light switches** in your apartment. Do they work? Make sure none of them appear damaged or have loose wires hanging out. Each switch should have a faceplate as well.
- If the lights don't go on, check the **bulbs**. Usually, you're responsible for changing those in your apartment if they're burned out.
- Now it's time to check out your **apartment's heating and air conditioning** unit.
- Make sure that the **thermostat** works and gives an accurate representation of the temperature in the apartment. Check to see if there are any loose wires or hoses sticking out of the unit itself. It should not be leaking water either.
- Also, make sure the filters have been replaced recently and are not clogged or dirty. The previous tenants may not have put them in at all, so it's going to be your job to put new ones in.
- **Smoke detectors** are vitally important to your safety when living in an apartment. Even if you're extremely safe when it comes to fire, your neighbors might not be. Fire can spread quickly through roofs and other shared areas at the complex, so a smoke detector is often your best bet for protecting yourself.

- Go into the **bathroom** and turn on the shower. First of all, does the water flow, and does it get hot and cold? Does the water look less than clear in any way? Look at the walls of the shower to see if there are any missing or damaged tiles or if **mold** is present.
- Check out the toilets. Are they clean, and do they flush properly? Do they run when they aren't in use? Take a look at the sinks. Check to see if the **faucets** run hot and cold here as well, and that water drains properly. Note any damage to the faucets or the porcelain. Also, be sure to check the cabinet under the sink to note any leaky water, mold or strange smells.
- Now let's take a look at all **the doors** in the apartment. All of them

should shut tightly and fit properly in the frame. There shouldn't be any problems with the doorknobs or any **locks**. Check to see if any paint is missing or mismatched as well. Also, make sure that you have two sets of keys to the apartment the front door should have a normal lock as well as a deadbolt you can secure from within.

- In the bedrooms, check out all the closets and make sure the shelves aren't loose. If you haven't checked any of the above items in the bedrooms, now's the time to do so.
- Most apartments have a **kitchen**, and there's a lot to look for here. First, check out the **stove**. Most stoves and **ovens** are electric (rather than gas) in apartment complexes. Do all of the switches work, and do all of the burners get hot when you turn them on? Do you see any frayed wiring around the oven? And if you do happen to have a unit with a gas stove, does it ignite properly?
- Also, take a good look at the **refrigerator**. Is it cold? Is it clean, and did the last tenant throw out all of the remaining food?
- This is also the time to check for any mold or **mildew** that might be in the kitchen, especially inside cabinets. You should also look for animal droppings that indicate a pest problem.
- Look at gaps or cracks in **walls** and ceilings, near the tub and plumbing, around utility wires, behind the stove and in the cabinets.