

CONDUCT THOROUGH INSPECTION BEFORE MOVING INTO NEW APARTMENT

Are you ready to move into your new apartment? Before you settle in, inspect your new apartment to document any pre-existing problems, this will give you a chance to get problems fixed. Ideally you should inspect your apartment before moving any of your belongings in.

Here's how:

1. Get a pad of paper or notebook and a pen or pencil.
2. Inspect all the walls and ceilings. Make a note of any dents; holes or cracks in the plaster; scuff marks that don't rub off; and tears, bubbles or peeling wallpaper.
3. Inspect all the floors: make a note of stains or discoloration in carpets; tears in linoleum; cracked or chipped tiles; and dents, scuffs or stains on hardwood floors.
4. Inspect all trim (including moldings, door and window sills and door and window frames) for stains, crack, leaks or other problems.
5. Inspect all electrical outlets and lights to make sure they are functioning; pay close attention to any two or three-way light switches and dimmers.
6. In the bathrooms: make sure all faucets (hot and cold) work without leaking; inspect for chips or scratches in fixtures and tile; inspect walls around the tub for "sponginess", and check counter tops for dents, scratches, or stains.
7. In the kitchen: make sure all faucets (hot and cold) work without leaking; inspect for chips or scratches in fixtures and tile; inspect counter tops for dents, scratches, or stains; and make sure all appliances work and are clean.
8. Make sure all exterior doors and windows work, seal properly, and have functioning locks; be especially alert to evidence of water infiltration.
9. If you have a deck, balcony or patio, inspect it for chipped flagstone, warped or cracked boards, or problems with exterior siding.
10. If you have a storage area, make sure it is cleaned out and that the locks are secure.
11. Check all smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
12. If your landlord gave you an apartment inspection sheet, complete it noting all problems, no matter how small; if he didn't, write a formal letter noting the problems you found. Make a copy and give it to the landlord within 5 days.
13. Request that your landlord repair any problems you want taken care of as soon as possible.
14. Take pictures of the apartment before you move in and any discrepancies that are found. Video taping during your check-in inspection will provide a visual accompaniment to your written notes.
15. Keep copies of all correspondence between you and your landlord. Remember to get everything in writing.
16. Have a friend help - four eyes are better than two.