HOME

Prepare your inspection

Bring a method, not assumptions.

RENTER MOVE-IN INSPECTION GUIDE

MAKE A RECORD KIT

Inspect as close to move-in as practical and keep one dated folder for photos, notes, lease documents, and messages. Use the landlord's required form if one exists.

- [ ] Charged phone, light, and outlet tester used only as instructed
- [ ] Copy of move-in form and lease
- [ ] File names that include room and date

EXAMPLE

File: ·2026-09-03_bedroom_north-wall_scuff.jpg.· The photo is paired with a note describing its location and size.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

What reporting deadline is in my lease or form?

Where will I back up the original photos?

This guide is general household information, not legal, insurance, financial, or safety advice. Follow your lease and local rules. For urgent hazards contact local emergency services or the appropriate building contact; seek qualified local help for tenant-rights questions.

HOME

Start outside and at entry

Document access and visible condition.

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CHECK THE ARRIVAL PATH

Photograph the unit number, entry door, mailbox, visible steps, and any assigned outdoor areas. Test locks and access devices normally; do not force damaged hardware.

- ☐ Note keys, fobs, remotes, and mailbox access received
- ☐ Check door, frame, peephole, and weather stripping
- ☐ Record existing marks, loose items, or blocked access

EXAMPLE

Note: ·Front-door deadbolt turns, but the strike plate is loose; photographed at 4:10 p.m. and reported through the portal.·

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

What access item must be returned later?

What issue limits normal entry or exit?

HOME

Inspect each room

Use the same sequence everywhere.

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LOOK HIGH TO LOW

Move clockwise through each room: ceiling, walls, windows, lights, outlets, floor, closets, and fixtures. Describe conditions rather than guessing at their cause.

- [ ] Marks, cracks, stains, chips, or holes
- [ ] Window operation, screens, coverings, and visible seals
- [ ] Lights, switches, vents, and flooring condition

EXAMPLE

Instead of ·water damage,· write ·yellow stain about the size of a hand near the bedroom ceiling vent; photo attached.·

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Can someone find this issue from my note alone?

Which room needs a second daylight photo?

Check kitchen and bath

Observe ordinary use carefully.

RUN A BASIC FIXTURE CHECK

Briefly run faucets, flush toilets, and look under accessible sinks for drips. Check appliances according to the provided instructions and report concerns instead of attempting repairs.

- [ ] Cabinets, counters, seals, and appliance interiors
- [ ] Water flow, drainage, and visible leaks
- [ ] Exhaust fan, GFCI labels if present, and caulking condition

EXAMPLE

·Kitchen faucet has normal flow; water collects slowly in the left basin after two minutes. Photo and short video saved.·

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

What should be reported before daily use makes the condition harder to show?

Which appliance manual or building contact do I need?

HOME

Test home basics safely

Know how the home functions.

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LOCATE KEY SYSTEMS

Find smoke and carbon-monoxide alarms, thermostat, electrical panel, water shutoff if accessible, exits, and building contacts. Use test buttons only as directed and never alter wiring or gas equipment.

- [ ] Record alarm status and visible expiry information
- [ ] Find emergency exit route and building procedures
- [ ] Note heat, cooling, or ventilation concerns factually

EXAMPLE

·Living-room smoke alarm test button sounded. Hallway alarm did not respond; notified management immediately.·

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Who is the urgent maintenance contact?

What system should I not attempt to repair?

HOME

Report and follow up

Make the message usable.

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SEND A CONCISE CONDITION REPORT

Submit issues through the required channel and retain a copy. Separate urgent safety concerns from cosmetic notes, and include unit, room, date, and supporting files.

- [ ] State what you observed and where
- [ ] Attach selected, readable photos or video
- [ ] Ask for receipt and next steps

EXAMPLE

·Hello, attached is my move-in condition report for Unit 4C. Please confirm receipt. The bathroom leak and unresponsive alarm need guidance on next steps.·

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Which concern needs immediate escalation?

What confirmation will I save?

HOME

Keep records through move-out

A clear file helps later.

RENTER MOVE-IN INSPECTION GUIDE

CREATE A MAINTENANCE TIMELINE

Keep the signed condition form, dated media, repair requests, responses, and receipts in one place. Update the file when work is completed and avoid altering original images.

- [ ] Move-in report and acknowledgment
- [ ] Maintenance request dates and outcomes
- [ ] Lease notices and approved changes

EXAMPLE

After a repair, Lee adds: ·2026-09-10: manager confirmed sink gasket replaced; photo shows dry cabinet on 2026-09-11.·

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

What document needs a second backup?

What future date should I place on my calendar?