

Maintenance – Who is Responsible for What

Lesson 8

Rental Condition Checklist

Types of Things to Look for in the Inspection

1. Missing Items– Ice cube trays, window screens, and broiler pans are examples of items that should typically come with the apartment, but may be missing.
2. Damaged Items– Cracked window glass, burned or cracked counter tops or bath fixtures, and holes in plaster are examples of damage.
3. Dirty Items– Ovens and stove tops may have a build-up of baked-on dirt and grease. Bathtubs may have a layer of grime on the bottom that can be hard to remove.
4. Excessive Wear– Normal wear and tear should not result in deductions from security deposits. However, there can be disputes about what is normal wear and what is excessive wear. It is a good idea to be sure you understand how the landlord defines “normal wear” and to be alert for items that seem to show excessive wear. Carpeting, vinyl flooring, and window treatments are items with which wear and tear can be an issue.

*Start the Rental Condition Checklist in the living room. Here are the main things to look for:

Living Room/Dining Room

Floors

- Is there excessive wear particularly near outside entrances?
- Are there stains?
- On vinyl floors, are there cracks, gouges, or discoloration?

Walls and ceilings

- Are there holes in walls, particularly where door handles might hit them?
- Are there scratches, gouges, and stains on walls and ceilings?
- Is paint chipping or peeling?

Doors and lock

- Are there gouges or scratches on doors, particularly the back sides?
- Do doors close properly?
- Do outside doors have deadbolt locks, and do they work easily?

Woodwork

- Are there gouges, cracks, or stains?

Windows

- Is the glass cracked?
- Do they operate easily?
- Do windows have locks, and do the locks operate easily?
- Are there dark stains on window frames? (These can indicate moisture damage.)
- Are there screens on all of the windows, and are they in good condition?

Curtains or blinds

- Are there window coverings on some windows, but not others? (Note the ones that do not have coverings.)

Closets

- Are they clean?
- Do the doors work properly?

Electrical fixtures and switches

- Do all switches work properly?
- Do outlets work?
- Are outlet plates broken or scorched?
- Are globes for all lights present and undamaged?

Note: For the kitchen and the rooms that follow, only things are not previously covered will be listed.

Kitchen

Range hood

- Does it work?
- Is the grease filter present, and is it clean?

Range top

- Do the burners heat?
- Are the reflector bowls clean?
- Is the cook top stained or scratched?

Oven

- Is it a manual clean, continuous clean, or self-cleaning oven?
- Does it look reasonable clean?
- Are there racks for it, and are they clean?

Repairs & Government Regulations

Landlord Responsibilities:

1. Correct building or housing code violations affecting the unit to be rented or common areas.*
2. Provide hot and cold water and operational sewage drains.*
3. Maintain heating equipment so that it is safe and capable of keeping temperatures at least at 67 degrees at all times.*
4. Keep electrical system in safe operating condition.*
5. Correct other defects that could cause a “substantial” safety risk to tenants.
6. Notify applicant in writing of deductions made from the previous tenant’s security deposit for damage or defects, if requested by applicant.
7. Make repairs required by normal wear and tear.
8. Maintain common areas in reasonable condition.
9. Maintain equipment, (i.e. as heating system, water heater, elevators, and air conditioning) that serves the unit and common spaces.

*If any of these conditions are not met in the home or in the common areas of the building, the landlord must disclose the problem to the tenant before renting.

Tenant Responsibilities:

1. Make repairs required because of tenant negligence or improper use. Landlords may choose to make such repairs at tenant’s expense.
2. Carry out maintenance required to keep plumbing, electrical wiring, and other equipment in working order if repairs can be made at relatively low cost.
3. Report problems to landlord as soon as they are noticed.