

Questions to Ask a Landlord/ Mangement Company

Before signing a lease, it's important to ask the landlord or rental company questions about the unit. We have outlined some potential questions or considerations below.

Safety

- What exterior lighting exists?
 - Street lights?
 - Porch lights?
 - Garage/alley?
- Who has access to the basement or storage areas (if there is one)?
 - Is it locked?
 - Is the storage area secure?
- If the rental unit is on the first floor, are there bars on the windows or extra security measures?
- Is the garage/parking secure?
- Do all smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors work?
 - How many are there?
 - How often are the batteries changed?
- Are there window locks on all windows?
 - Do they all work?
- Are there screens and storm windows on all windows?
 - Are window coverings included?
- Will the door/key locks be changed before I move in?
- Is there a locked lobby (if applicable)?
 - Are there deadbolts on all doors?
 - Do they all work?
 - Do the bolts stick out at least one inch?
- Are there fire extinguishers?
 - Where are they located?
 - When are they charged?
- Are there sprinklers?
- Will you feel safe in the rental?
- Will you feel safe while walking to and from classes during the day and at night?
- How is the cell phone reception in the unit?
- Can you send and receive calls and texts?

Amenities

- Are appliances included?
 - Do all of the appliances work?
- Are window coverings included?
- Is there a washer and dryer on premise?
- Is there a dishwasher?
- Is the electrical wiring up to code?
 - Do all outlets work?
 - Do the lights work in all the rooms?
- Does the plumbing work? Check all faucets and showers, and flush all toilets.
- What is the water pressure like?
- How is the water temperature?
- Do the fans in the bathrooms work?
- How is the unit heated?
- Do we have our own thermostat?
- Is there a garage?
 - How much does it cost to park there?

Location and Services

- How close is the nearest:
 - Post Office?
 - Grocery Store?
 - Bank/ATM?
 - Laundromat?
 - When is garbage day?
 - When is recycling day?

Structure

- Is this rental unit accessible?
 - Is there a ramp?
 - Is there an elevator in the building?
- How many entrances to the rental unit exist? *There must be at least 2 to be a legal unit.*
- Can I paint?
 - If I paint, do I have to paint it back?

Noise

- Has the unit had previous noise complaints?
- Who do I contact if noise becomes a problem?

Other

- How much is the monthly rent?
- How much is the security deposit?
- Do you require 60 days notice for non-renewal of my lease?
- Are there more students or long-term residents living in the building/area?
- What is the manager's contact information?
 - Email
 - Phone
- Are there any items that need to be repaired or replaced?
- What is the maintenance contact information?
- How long does maintenance usually take?
- Does this apartment allow pets?
 - How much is the pet deposit?
- *Consider asking the current tenants about their experiences with the owner or management. Are they pleasant and professional? Do they respond quickly to maintenance and repair requests?

Other Important Things to Keep in Mind

- Always take a friend – never tour a rental unit alone.
- Make sure you see the actual unit you will be renting, not a model.
- Check out the area at night with friends to see if it's well-lit and to get a feel for the neighborhood.
- Check your cell phone reception in the unit to see if you can send and receive calls and texts.
- Check for damages from current tenants, pets, rodents, insects, water and fire throughout the unit, especially on the floors, walls, ceilings, and inside drawers or cabinets.
- If there are any items that need to be repaired or replaced, discuss them with your landlord and write them in your lease.
- If you are seriously considering a rental property:
 - Ask for a copy of the lease and addendums.
 - Read the lease carefully. *Pay special attention to "Non-standard Lease Terms."*
 - Consider asking current tenants about their experiences with the owner or management.
- Most importantly, trust your instincts!