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# MOVE-IN, MOVE-OUT CHECKLIST & GUIDE

## **Included:**

Overview

Dos and Don'ts Checklist

Sample Move-In, Move-Out Checklist

## 1. Overview

Successful property management begins with good documentation. A well-crafted move-in, move-out checklist records the condition of your property, notes any existing problems, and allows you to assign responsibility for any changes over the course of the rental term.

A move-in, move-out form is simply a checklist that itemizes the important elements of your rental unit, and groups these elements together by room. Next to each item are two additional columns. The first column is for the move-in category. The second is for move-out.

As a landlord, you need documents you and your tenant can trust. Your tenant needs assurance that he or she will not be blamed for conditions that predated his occupancy. The enclosed document, together with a reliable real estate lease and other essential documents, reduces your liability risk and helps protect your investment. It also helps avoid disagreements down the line if you need to withhold funds from the security deposit to cover damages. In every way, this builds a strong foundation for the ongoing relationship between you and your tenant.

## 2. Dos & Don'ts Checklist

- About a dozen states now require a move-in and/or a move-out checklist for all residential rentals. Even where not strictly required by law, it's always a good idea to complete this form to protect your interests (and those of your tenants).
- Before the start of the rental term (or before the tenant's move-in date), walk through the property with your tenant. Conducting this review together will limit any disagreements later about the report. During your walkthrough, point out each listed item to your new tenant. Make sure the two of you agree on the condition of each item before moving forward.
- When describing the unit, clearly identify all of its features, from window treatments to flooring. Skip any item on the attached checklist that does not pertain to the unit being rented. Next, identify the condition of each feature. List every scrape, scuff, and imperfection, as well as any upgrades you've made to the unit. Are there new appliances? Have you repainted or re-carpeted? Did you install a new garbage disposal?
- Take photographs of the unit before the tenant moves in. By documenting improvements and existing features, you can easily identify any changes, including damage to the unit at the time of move-out.
- Here are some things to look for before the move-in date:
  - Scratches in hardwood floors
  - Burn marks or tears in carpets
  - Missing tiles in bathroom
  - Ripped screens or missing glass

- Holes or scratches in the walls (pinholes, patched-over areas, etc.)
  - Faded or rubbed off paint
  - Burn marks or scratches on counters
  - Loose fixtures (ceiling, wall, etc.)
  - Covers and receptacles for outlets
  - Working heaters and air conditioning units
  - Working and clean kitchen stove; is there exhaust above it? Are the filters clean?
  - Working and clean refrigerator
  - Scratches, dirt, or grime on kitchen cabinets
  - Working toilet
  - Toilet paper holder
  - Working bathtub and shower. Both hot and cold water? Good water pressure? Mold, cracks, or grime?
- After he or she has moved out, you and your former tenant must again do a walkthrough on the rented property. Review all of the items on the checklist. If there is any significant damage (i.e., not normal wear and tear) to any equipment, fixture, or other property item, you can deduct the cost of repairs or replacement from the security deposit. Review your state's laws governing security deposits for additional information about how quickly this must be done after the end of the tenancy, and if there are additional regulations that you must follow.
- You and your tenant(s) should complete and sign the checklist when the tenant moves in. Mail a copy of the signed and completed form to your tenant. At the time of move-out, you and your tenant should complete and sign another copy of the checklist. Mail a copy of the signed and completed form to your tenant at his or her new address.

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# Form Sample

## MOVE IN / MOVE OUT CHECKLIST

Street Address	Apartment No.
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GENERAL ITEMS			SAFETY-RELATED ITEMS		
	Condition at Move In Date:	Condition at Move Out Date:		Condition at Move In Date:	Condition at Move Out Date:
Thermostat			Door Knob Locks		
Cable TV			Keyed Deadbolt Locks		
Master Antenna			Keyless Deadbolts		
Washer			Keyless Bolting Devices		
Faucets			Sliding Door Latches		
Hoses			Sliding Door Security Bars		
Dryer			Sliding Door Pin Locks		
Garage Door			Door Viewers		
Ceiling Fans					
Exterior Doors					
Locks					