



BE AN INFORMED TENANT

What to Do Before Move In

Read Your Lease

Leasing agreements include important information like payment due dates, community rules, maintenance obligations, terms for breaking your lease, and more. Keep in mind that rental agreements are legally binding, so ignoring a critical part could result in having to deal with hidden costs and fees. If there's anything you're not sure about when reviewing your lease, ask the landlord or apartment manager and have them walk you through it.

Budget

Ideally, your rent should be at or under 30% of your after-tax income. But that's not the only cost you must factor into your budget. One of the biggest mistakes first-time renters make is not accounting for other rental costs and living expenses, such as:

- **Advanced Rent:** Some rental companies may require you to pay a stipulated amount of rent—like the first and last month's payments—in advance when you sign your apartment lease.
- **Rental Deposits & Fees:** Including but not limited to leasing fees, damage deposits, community fees, pet rent, and utility fees.
- **Utilities:** Depending on the apartment you choose utilities like electricity, water, gas, trash, and cable/internet may or may not be included in your rent.

Renters Insurance

Renter's insurance can help you cover the loss of items due to fire, theft, water damage, and natural disasters. It's readily available and relatively inexpensive with the average around \$17 per month. Even if it's not required by your landlord, it's worth considering.