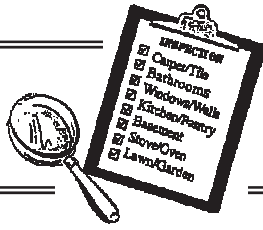

MOVE-IN INVENTORY



Within 5 days after you move in, Kansas law requires that you and your landlord go through the property together and make a detailed, written list describing the condition of the premises. This is commonly known as a move-in “inventory” or “checklist.”

This list can be done on a printed form or a plain piece of paper. What is important is that, when it is signed, it contains all the details of what condition your place was in and what was in it when you moved in. Either by writing two copies exactly the same, by using carbon paper, or photocopying the list when you get done, both you and the landlord must, by law, have copies of the list signed by both of you.

Check the property from top to bottom. Are there cigarette burns in the carpet? If so, where? How many? How big are they? Are there nail holes in the walls? Is the carpet stained or dirty or has it been cleaned? Is the oven clean? The stovetop? Do the burners work? Note furnishings and appliances provided by the landlord and their condition. If there is a basement, you should inspect there. Walk around the outside of the place and note the condition. If a garage or storage building is part of your rental, check it as well. If you will be responsible to take care of the yard, note the condition. A move-in inspection should cover all of the property included in your rental agreement.

Don't sign your name to a list the landlord has filled out before you check for yourself! The law says you and the landlord are to do the inspection together. Don't sign a list that just says “Okay” or “Clean.” “Okay” or “Clean” isn't going to do much good at move-out time when you need to prove that a window was already cracked or a door handle was already broken when you moved in.

Now is a good time to ask the landlord if he has a check-out list or a list of things he or she will expect to be done and will inspect when you leave. These are things you want to look at closely when moving in. You are to return the unit in as good a condition as when received except for normal wear and tear.

As you inspect, if you discover things that need repairs, put the landlord's promises down in writing right on your checklist. If the landlord says he or she will replace that sagging closet rod within two weeks write down, “Bedroom closet rod bent. Landlord will replace in two weeks.” When you and your landlord sign the inspection sheet, you will have signed promises from your landlord for hopefully all of the repairs that are needed.

If you can't get the landlord to do an inspection with you, do one yourself anyway. Get someone reliable to be a witness and inspect with you. Make the written list, you and your witness sign it, then send a copy to your landlord. If you later discover something you missed on your list (like the bathtub drains slowly or the towel bar has been pulled from the wall and not fixed correctly), send the information to your landlord in writing right away, ask that it be added to your original checklist. Make a copy of what you wrote and keep it in your Rental File.

Take pictures or a video if you can. Have someone with you to verify when you took the pictures. Don't rely on the date the camera prints on the pictures. When taking pictures, be sure to use something to show the size of whatever you are photographing. If you don't have a measuring tape or ruler, use your hand or a book or something to show the size of the damaged area.

When you move out, you can request your landlord re-inspect the home with you and sign a move-out checklist or a statement that the rental unit is in satisfactory condition. Although this is desirable, Kansas law does not require the landlord to complete a move-out inspection with you, only the move-in inspection is required. (See Security Deposit section in this chapter for return of deposits.)