

Apartment move-in inspection checklist (California)

Free template from certrent.com – replace the [bracketed] parts with your details. This is a template, not legal advice.

MOVE-IN INSPECTION CHECKLIST – [address, unit] – Date: [date]

For each item: note condition and photograph anything damaged, worn, or not working. Do this before you move in furniture, and keep copies of every photo with a timestamp.

Entry & living areas

- [] Walls, ceiling, paint Notes: _____
- [] Floors / carpet Notes: _____
- [] Windows, screens, locks Notes: _____
- [] Doors and locks Notes: _____
- [] Outlets, switches, lights Notes: _____

Kitchen

- [] Stove / oven Notes: _____
- [] Refrigerator Notes: _____
- [] Sink, faucet, under-sink Notes: _____
- [] Cabinets and counters Notes: _____
- [] Dishwasher / garbage disposal (if any) Notes: _____

Bathroom(s)

- [] Toilet Notes: _____
- [] Sink and faucet Notes: _____
- [] Tub / shower, tiles, caulk Notes: _____
- [] Ventilation / fan Notes: _____

Safety & systems

- [] Smoke & CO detectors work Notes: _____
- [] Heat / A/C Notes: _____
- [] Water heater Notes: _____
- [] Signs of pests, mold, or leaks Notes: _____
- [] Other habitability issues (per Cal. Civil Code § 1941.1) Notes: _____

Deposit on file

Security deposit amount: \$[amount] (capped at one month's rent for most tenancies – Cal. Civil Code § 1950.5(c))

Tenant signature: _____ Date: _____

Landlord/agent signature: _____ Date: _____

Keep a copy with your photos. Send a copy to your landlord by email or text so there's a timestamped record both sides can point to. If your landlord later claims damage you didn't cause, this checklist and your photos are your evidence – California law requires landlords to give you an itemized statement of any proposed deductions and, if you request it, a pre-move-out inspection during the last two weeks of your tenancy so you can fix small issues yourself first (Cal. Civil Code § 1950.5(f)).

This is a template, not legal advice. California landlords may only deduct for unpaid rent, damage beyond normal wear and tear, or cleaning needed to restore the unit to its move-in condition (Cal. Civil Code § 1950.5(b), (e)). If your unit is in Los Angeles and covered by the Rent Stabilization Ordinance, keep this checklist with your other tenancy records – HCIDLA may ask for it if you file a habitability or deposit complaint.