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Apartment Viewing Checklist

You and your roommates should always play the role of discerning clients when viewing an apartment. Remember, you are probably making a year-long commitment that will cost thousands of dollars. Consequently, feel free to ask as many questions necessary for you and your roommates to feel comfortable about the decision. The property manager should respect your diligence when evaluating the apartment. If they are short or difficult, this is usually an indication of how they will respond to maintenance requests or general service during your lease.

Before you and your roommates arrive for the apartment viewing, make sure you have a checklist of things to look for, and a list of questions to ask about the apartment and management company. Stay focused during the viewing, and make sure that you and your roommates have covered everything you set out to.

At Roommateclick, we believe you and your roommates should have three checklists to cover before, during, and after the apartment viewing. Please use these checklists as a guide and feel free to edit, or add, to the list to best suite your needs.

Before the Viewing

Cover the most important questions over the phone to make sure the apartment is even a potential candidate before the viewing. Here are some big questions for you and your roommates to consider:

- How many bedrooms in the apartment/house?
- Where is the place located?
- What is the rent?
- Does the landlord allow pets?
- Does the place offer X or Y that we must absolutely have?
- Is the apartment located close enough to work, or school?

If time permits, you and your roommates should drive by the place to get a feel for the neighborhood, and see if you like the building before the actual viewing.

During the Viewing

You and your roommates should view the apartment together, so you can all stay on the same page. Dress neatly and show up well-groomed for the occasion. The property manager is going to be checking you and your roommates out based on your appearance to try to figure out what type of people you are. Making a good first impression can give you and your roommates an advantage when competing with other people for the apartment.

You and your roommates should bring the following things with you to the viewing:

- A pen and notepad
- Driver's Licenses
- Names and contact information for previous landlords
- Your checkbook
- A digital camera to take pictures of the space for review later

When you and your roommates are visiting the apartment, make sure to check out the following:

- Are the apartment door locks stable and functional?

- Do all of the windows have functional locks, screens, and do they open and close easily?
- Do the oven and all the burners on the stove function properly?
- Is the refrigerator frost free?
- Are there any major cracks in the walls or ceilings?
- How is the water pressure for both hot and cold water?
- Look underneath the kitchen sink, behind the stove and refrigerator, and low level kitchen cabinets. Are there any rodent droppings, or holes where rodents/insects could come in?
- Do you see any mousetraps, or bait, indicating a current or previous rodent problem?
- Do you see any signs of water stains, swelling, or warping along the baseboards? Does the apartment smell of mildew?
- How many electrical outlets are in each room?
- How many telephone jacks are in the apartment and where are they located?
- Is there a cable television hookup?
- Are there smoke detectors in the apartment, and are they all working?
- Is there a fire extinguisher in the apartment?
- On the exterior of the property, how do the grounds look? Is the grass neatly mowed? Is the snow shoveled away? Is there any trash or debris on the sidewalks or lawns? Is the building facade neatly painted and well-maintained?

While you and your roommates are meeting with the property manager, here are some questions to ask:

- What is the average utility bill?
- Are any utilities included in the monthly rent?
- What is the monthly rent?
- What is the pet policy for the building?
- Is there any parking provided?
- How are regular and emergency maintenance issues handled?
- What is the policy for subletting?
- How is trash disposal handled?
- Has the apartment building been broken into in the last few years?

Before leaving, you and your roommates should make sure that you have a clear understanding of the application process and the date the apartment will become available.

After the Viewing

After you and your roommates have seen the apartment, you should have an open conversation to determine if this place is a potential candidate. If there are doubts, continue your search. If you and your roommates are still interested, but would like to keep looking around, it's a good idea to find out how many more showings the property manager has. This way, you will be able to gauge your competition, and determine how much time you have to comparison shop.

If you and your roommates are not interested, politely let the property manager know, and thank them for their time. Be aware, this manager may end up showing you, or your roommates, another apartment in the near future, so don't burn any bridges.

If you and your roommates are interested, ask the manager how to proceed with the application process. Make sure to provide all of the necessary documentation right away to secure the apartment before someone else comes along.

If it is not possible for you, or your roommates, to view the apartment personally, try to get a friend, or family member to handle the viewing. Also, ask them to take digital images of the place to send to you and your roommates for inspection.

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