



When You Arrive to the Property

Tip 1: Assess the environment. This is where you may be potentially living, so take time to look around for bus stops, metro stations, convenient stores, a post office, daycare centers, etc.

Tip 2: Know your knobs. Make sure the doorknobs have the standard thumb-locks. While you may prefer the deadbolts that lock from the inside, this can be very hazardous if there is an emergency. If you're more comfortable with a top and bottom lock, make sure you talk with the prospective landlord about that; even though it is not mandatory to have both, he or she might accommodate your request.

Tip 3: When in doubt, walk it out. Walk around to see if there are any cracks or damages to the floors and walls. Be sure to look at all countertops to ensure that they are properly leveled.

Tip 4: Ring the alarm. Check all of the smoke detectors to ensure that they are working. Even if the landlord tries to persuade you that they work, ask to have them tested while you are in the apartment so that you can hear for yourself.

Tip 5: Socket to 'em. Look around for all of the electrical sockets. Check the wall around the outlet to ensure they are properly secure with a wall plate and that paint is not covering the holes of the sockets. Any outlets near or beside running water (like in the bathrooms and kitchen) should be GFI outlets with wall plates. Check with your landlord if you're not sure.

A GFI/GFCI, or ground fault circuit interrupter, is an automatic device that offers personal protection against electrical shock. It has a black and red push button. One button is appropriately labeled TEST, and one is labeled RESET.

Tip 6: Space in the place. Make sure there is enough space for you and your family to be comfortable. Ask yourself: Can I be comfortable in this unit? Is there enough room in the bedroom for a full size bed? A twin size? Will I need to put some of my stuff in storage?

Tip 7: Check the plumbing. Flush toilets to make sure they work and run three or four different faucets at the same time to make sure the water runs smoothly. Also, check the shower and bath faucet for temperature and water pressure. When you run the sink faucet open the cabinet underneath and look at the pipes to see that there are no leaks.

Tip 8: Examine utility closets and appliances. Check in the utility closet for any exposed wires, damages or possible outages, and locate your fuse box. Inquire about how old the appliances are and how long they have been in the unit. Also, look in the refrigerator to see if additional cleaning is needed by the landlord and if there are any leaks. If there is a washer/dryer in the unit, be sure to check that out too.

Tip 9: Ask questions. If there's something you feel is damaged or you feel unsure about, ask questions. Don't be afraid to inquire about the neighborhood, the building or the property you are viewing.



DASH DISTRICT ALLIANCE FOR SAFE HOUSING

Tip 10: Leave no stone unturned. You might want to do a final walk through just to make sure you feel comfortable about your decision. Look at the overall condition of the place and make sure you're satisfied.