

What To Expect When Renting an Apartment in Boston

Welcome to Boston! We are here to help you navigate the journey of finding a home in this bustling, beautiful city of Boston. Searching for a rental property can be a daunting and sometimes frustrating task if you are not prepared. Please read the information below to acquaint yourself with what will be expected during the rental process. We are here to make this experience as pleasant as possible!

What happens first??

Once contacting an agent, we will need to know several criteria in order to narrow down what your options will be.

1. What is your move-in date?
2. Will you be a student or employed while in Boston?
3. If a student, will you be an undergraduate or graduate student?
4. What size apartment do you need? (Studio, 1BR, 2BR...)
5. What is your monthly budget?
6. What are your ideal locations/neighborhoods?
7. Do you need to be close to public transportation?
8. Do you have a car and will you need parking?
9. Do you have any pets?
10. How long of a lease do you need?

These details are very important and will dictate what buildings/properties are available for you. Please relay this information as soon as possible when discussing your needs with an agent.

Viewing Apartments

Agents typically need to give 24hr notice to set up appointments for viewings, so please plan ahead! It is often difficult to view apartments the same day that you speak to an agent. They may have other appointments already lined up or need to give notice to the tenants. Many apartments that you will be viewing will be occupied, which means we will need to give the current tenant notice of the showing and the standard amount of notice is 24hrs.

You've chosen the apartment- now what??

Great! You've seen your options and made a decision! Now comes the paperwork.

1. You will need to fill out an application. Sometimes this is a standard application, but sometimes buildings have their own specific paperwork. Your agent will provide you with whatever is needed.
2. You will need to give a check for a one month deposit.
3. You will need to provide a Photo ID.
4. You will need to show proof of employment. This can be a hiring letter on company letterhead stating your job title, start date and salary. This can also be paystubs.
5. You may need to show proof of funds. This can be paystubs, bank or investment statements.
6. Either our office or the listing office will run your credit report.
7. If you do not meet the financial or credit requirements, you may need a guarantor.

What is a guarantor? A guarantor is a parent or friend that can prove enough funds to pay for the apartment if you cannot. They will co-sign the lease and will be responsible for the terms of the lease and payment of rent if you default.

If you are a student:

1. You will need to show proof of enrollment- acceptance letter or class schedule.
2. If international- you will need to show your I20 and valid Visa/Passport.
3. You will need a guarantor. What is a guarantor? A guarantor is a parent or friend that can prove enough funds to pay for the apartment if you cannot. They will co-sign the lease and will be responsible for the terms of the lease and payment of rent if you default.

You've been approved! Congratulations! Time to sign and pay up!

Ok, the owner has approved your application! The next step will be to sign the lease. Again, many owners will use standard leases, however, some buildings require their own specific paperwork. There will be many documents to sign and fill out.

You will also need to pay the rest of the funds due at the lease signing. Most owners in Boston and Cambridge require the maximum amount of funds upfront from their tenants. This includes:

- First Month's Rent
- Last Month's Rent
- One Month Security Deposit One Month Broker Fee

You should be prepared to pay four month's rent upfront when signing a lease for an apartment. The state mandates that this is the maximum an owner can collect from a tenant (not including move-in/move-out fees, key/lock fees...). Every once in a while we see a landlord not requiring the last month's rent or the security deposit, but it is rare.