

Understanding Rental Agreements

Rental agreements can be confusing and overwhelming because they often include complex language, legal jargon, and small details that vary depending on the province and housing provider. For many Neurodivergent renters, this can create barriers to understanding expectations, asserting their rights, or feeling confident in the decisions they're making.

Using clear, plain-language explanations and taking the time to walk through key points can go a long way in building trust, reducing misunderstandings, and supporting successful tenancies.

Here is an example of how common details in most rental agreements can be communicated in a clear, simple way.



What you'll pay and what's included:

- Rent is usually due on the 1st of each month.
- You may be asked to pay first and last month's rent upfront before moving in.
- Landlords can't ask for extra deposits for things like pets or cleaning fees.
- You can ask for a rent receipt at any time.



What landlords are responsible for:

- Keeping the home in good repair, for example, maintaining heat, plumbing, and smoke alarms.
- Making sure important services like hot water and electricity are working.
- Giving at least 24 hours' notice before entering the home (unless it's an emergency)



What you are responsible for:

- Paying rent on time and in full.
- Keeping the home clean and avoiding damage.
- Letting the landlord know if something breaks.
- Following basic rules like quiet hours or no smoking areas.



Moving out or being asked to leave:

- You usually need to tell the landlord in advance if you plan to move.
- Landlords need a legal reason to ask you to leave and must follow a formal process.
- Landlords can't lock you out or shut off your utilities.
- You have the right to a hearing if an eviction is being considered.

Need help or have questions?

- Have another person go over the lease too, just to make sure everything makes sense
- Contact a legal clinic or tenant support line for free advice
- Visit the provincial Landlord and Tenant Board website to learn more