Ask the “Right Questions” before you sign!

1. RENTAL UNIT:
   Is the contract of the rental unit “by the bed”, a private room, or the entire property unit?

2. RENTAL PRICE:
   How much is the rent each month? Does the rent ever increase?

3. UNIT AVAILABILITY:
   When is the unit available for move in?

4. DEPOSITS:
   What types of deposit do I need to provide? (Security Deposit, Cleaning Deposit, Pet Deposit, Key Deposit)
   How much is the deposit? Is the deposit refundable? What are the terms for a deposit refund? How and when will the deposit be returned to me when I leave?

5. METHODS OF PAYMENT:
   What forms of payment are accepted? (Check, Credit Card, Debit Card, Cash, PayPal, Money Order, Online Payments)

6. PAYMENT DEADLINES:
   What dates are rent payments due each month? What date is considered a late payment?

7. LATE FEES:
   Are there any penalty fees for late payments? What dates are late fees credited to my account? How much are the late fees?

8. MOVE-IN RENT:
   Do I need to provide first and/or last month’s rent?

9. APPLICATION and APPROVAL:
   Is there an application and approval process? Is there an application fee? How much? Will I be subject to a credit check or a background check? How will I know if I’m approved?

10. LEASING LENGTH:
    How long is the timeframe of the lease or contract?
    1. Month-to-Month (1 month increments)
    2. Semester (4 to 6 months)
    3. Academic Year (8 or 9 months, August – April)
    4. Year-round (12 months from signing date)
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11. **LEASE TERMINATION:**
What penalties are there for terminating the lease early?

12. **LEASE TYPE:**
Is your contract a “Standard Lease” or an “Individual Lease? If someone moves out, will the remaining roommates pay the difference and if so how will that difference be distributed? Should all of the roommates sign the lease agreement?

*Standard Lease* – Each tenant holds an obligation to the entire lease and that the landlord can hold all or just one tenant of their choosing accountable in the event of a default. Example: If you split the rent with a roommate and they bail, then you would be responsible to carry their share of the rent as well as any damages they are responsible for.

*Individual Lease* – Each tenant holds a separate and individual obligation to his or her own contract. Example: If a roommate bails and defaults on his or her individual contract, then that responsibility is solely between that tenant and the landlord.

13. **UTILITIES:**
Which utilities are included in the rental payment? 
*Electricity, Gas, Cable, Internet, Sewer, Water, Trash*  
What is the average cost of each utility?  Will I need to put any utilities directly under my name?

14. **LAUNDRY FACILITIES:**
What laundry facilities are provided? Are the facilities on-site or in the rental unit? How many laundry facilities are provided?

15. **COMMUNITY AMENITIES:**
What types of amenities are included in the rent?  
*Campus shuttle, swimming pool, hot tub, sauna, laundry facilities, fitness center, business office with Internet, private study rooms, sport court, game room, on-site theater, on-site spa, weekly programming activities*

16. **SUBLEASING:**
What options are there for subletting to others? Is there a fee?

17. **FURNITURE:**
Is the unit furnished or unfurnished? What types of furniture will I be provided?
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18. **MAINTENANCE POLICIES:**
Who handles the maintenance? What types of maintenance will be covered in your contract? How do you report a maintenance issue? Will maintenance cost me extra? What hours is maintenance available? What are my maintenance responsibilities? Can I do my own repairs? Can I hire out maintenance? What will not be repaired?

19. **CHILDREN:**
Do you allow children? What are the policies on children living here? Are there additional fees? What ages do you allow? Is there on-site childcare? Are there child safe play areas on-site? What are the nearest schools?

20. **SECURITY and SAFETY:**
What types of security are in place? (Alarms, video surveillance, on-site night security, secure entry key fobs, nighttime lock up, parking security, security inspections, and fire sprinklers)
Can I put a lock on my individual bedroom? How safe is the neighborhood? Have there been any fires, resident incidents, concerns, robberies, or violent crimes?

21. **HEALTH CONCERNS:**
Have there been any health issues in the rental unit? (Disease, ants, roaches, vermin, mold, toxins, radon, lead paint, asbestos, poor air quality, drugs issues from previous tenants)

22. **PETS:**
Do you allow pets? What types of pets do you allow? Is there a pet weight limit? Are there any property policies for pet owners? Are there any extra fees or deposits for having a pet?

23. **PARKING:**
Where can I park my car? (Street parking, uncovered parking, covered parking, assigned stalls, private garage, underground parking, visitor parking) How much parking is available? Are there parking passes? Can I have more than one vehicle? Are there parking fees? Is the parking area well lit? Have you had any vehicle break-ins in the last 6 months?

24. **STORAGE:**
What types of on-site storage are available with the rental unit? How much does storage cost? Is there extra storage available?
25. **GUESTS and VISITORS:**
Are there any policy limits for visitors? Is there a visitor curfew? Can you have guests stay overnight? Is there a limit to the number of visitors that can stay at one time? Are there any visitor fees?

26. **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION:**
Is there public transportation nearby? What services can I get to using the public transportation?

27. **BICYCLES:**
Where do I park my bicycle? Is the bicycle area well lit? Does the bicycle area have security? Can I keep my bicycle in my rental unit? Will I need a get a bicycle registration sticker?

28. **SMOKING:**
Do you allow smoking in the rental unit? Do you allow smoking on the rental property? Are there designated smoking facilities on-site and if so, where are they located?

29. **ALCOHOL:**
Do you allow alcohol in the rental unit? Do you allow alcohol on the rental property?

30. **FIREARMS:**
Are firearms allowed carried or stored on-site? What types of firearms are permitted or not permitted?

31. **MODIFICATIONS and DECORATING:**
What modifications are you allowed to make to the apartment? (Painting walls, hanging pictures, installing shelves, changing window coverings, replacing furniture, reconstruction of unit)

32. **CLEANING:**
Will the apartment be cleaned before I move in? Are there regular cleaning inspections? How frequent are inspections? Will I have to perform move out cleaning inspections? How much are cleaning fees? Do you offer cleaning services?

33. **ROOMATES:**
Do you supply roommates? Do you assign random roommates? Do you perform roommate matching or do you take roommate requests?
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Source Acknowledgements: