

# Security Deposit Lifecycle Checklist

**From verifying the cap before you sign to collecting the refund after you move**

Run this checklist alongside the free security deposit calculator at [clearlegaltips.com/security-deposit-calculator/](https://clearlegaltips.com/security-deposit-calculator/). It pairs with the Security Deposit Worksheet.

## BEFORE YOU SIGN

- ☐ You ran your state and rent through the security deposit calculator and know the legal maximum
- ☐ The deposit the landlord is asking for is at or below that maximum (or your state sets no cap)
- ☐ The lease states the deposit amount, what it covers, and how it comes back

## AT MOVE-IN

- ☐ You got a dated receipt for the deposit you paid
- ☐ You took dated photos or video of the unit condition, room by room
- ☐ You noted any existing damage in writing and gave the landlord a copy

## DURING THE TENANCY

- ☐ You know whether your state requires interest on the deposit and, if so, that it is being paid
- ☐ You kept the lease, the receipt, and the move-in photos together

## AT MOVE-OUT

- ☐ You took dated move-out photos matching the move-in set
- ☐ You gave the landlord your forwarding address in writing
- ☐ You calendared the return deadline your state allows

## IF THE DEPOSIT DOES NOT COME BACK

- ☐ You checked the itemized statement against your photos and the worksheet
- ☐ You sent a return or demand letter citing the amount, the deadline, and the statute
- ☐ If it stays unresolved, you looked into small claims court for the balance

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

This checklist is general information, not legal advice. Security deposit rules vary by state and change over time; confirm your state cap, return deadline, and interest rule against the statute before you rely on them. Full guide, the calculator, and official sources: [clearlegaltips.com/security-deposit-calculator/](https://clearlegaltips.com/security-deposit-calculator/)