



Pre-Search Checklist: Getting Ready to Apartment Hunt

Before you start scrolling listings or touring, make sure you've got your bases covered.

1. Know Your Numbers

- ☐ My total comfortable monthly budget (rent + utilities + parking/internet) is: _____
- ☐ I've gathered income verification (recent pay stubs, offer letter, or benefit statement).
- ☐ I have funds ready for move-in costs (first month, deposit, application/admin fees).

 *Pro tip:* Aim for rent around 30–35% of your gross monthly income — enough room left for brunch, bills, and breathing.

2. Know Your Non-Negotiables

- ☐ Top 3 must-haves: 1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____
- ☐ Top 3 deal-breakers: 1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____
- ☐ Pets? Parking? Laundry? LGBTQ+ friendly management?

 *Say it now, not later.* Your deal-breakers are valid, not “too picky.”

3. Gather Your Paperwork

Bring or save digital copies of:

- ☐ Government-issued photo ID
- ☐ Proof of income (last 2 pay stubs, offer letter, etc.)
- ☐ Rental history or landlord reference (if available)
- ☐ Credit score snapshot (optional, but helpful)

 *These documents show you're serious and organized — two things landlords actually like.*

4. Location & Lifestyle

- ☐ Preferred neighborhoods or commute radius: _____
- ☐ How I want my new place to *feel*: quiet / social / artsy / historic / other: _____

 *Your vibe matters — you're not just picking four walls; you're picking what surrounds them.*

5. Timing & Transition

- ☐ Desired move-in date: _____
- ☐ Notice period at current place: _____
- ☐ Need storage or overlap time? ☐ Yes ☐ No

 *Give yourself a realistic runway — the goal is “stress-less move,” not “sleep on air mattress week.”*

Before You Tour

- ☐ I've checked availability and schedule ahead (don't just pop in).
- ☐ I'll bring my ID — you need it to tour!
- ☐ I've made a short list of questions to ask each property.

 *Compare at least 2–3 options before you apply — don't panic-apply just because something's “cute.”*

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