Module B
Rent Smart
Checking Out the Rental Property and the Landlord
References and Resources:

- propertymanager.com/october-2019
- How will you prepare for talking to the landlord?
- How will you compare rental units?
- realestate.com.com/rental
- What resources can you use to help locate potential housing?
- How will they affect the way in which you shop for housing?

Questions to Consider:

- clubs that limit occupancy to members.
- and housing operated by organizations and private housing sold or rented without the use of a broker.
- building with no more than four units, single-family circumstances, the act examples: owner-occupied
- handicap (disability).
- custody of children under the age of 18,
- legal circumstances, pregnant women, people securing
- family members, religious, sexual, familial status (including
- housing-related transactions based on race, color,
- rules, rental and housing discrimination in the
- The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in the

Remember:

- talking to the landlord/property manager—building a
- Major items to inspect prior to making a decision to rent
- How to locate rental housing—list resources you may
- Determine your housing needs.

Module Notes:

Checking Out the Rental Property and the Landlord
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
<th>Moderately Important</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Other</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internet Connection</td>
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<td>Air conditioned</td>
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<td>Pool</td>
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<td>Factories</td>
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<td>Utilities Included</td>
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<td>Near bus line</td>
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<td>Neighbors</td>
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Preferred location (area, zip code, neighborhood, etc.):

- Boarding home
- House (single family)
- Apartment
- Duplex
- Other
- No preference

I prefer to live in the following type of housing:

Looking for rental property is much easier if you know what is most important to you. Read the list and decide how important each item is to you.
Some communities have non-profit agencies which were created to make affordable housing

Non-profit Housing Developers

The Housing Authority of the Greater St. Louis Area Inc. is one example. These agencies provide information for subsidized housing in Missouri. Some agencies provide more substantial aid to families who meet income guidelines.

Families may also choose to receive funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development or the Missouri Housing Assistance Commission's local housing authorities to help with the payment of rent. These agencies may be able to help you find an affordable rental unit or a home in a more desirable area.

Finding a decent and affordable rental unit can be difficult, even in the same way that more expensive rental housing is advertised. You may need to search out the most desirable rental housing options. The above mentioned non-profit agencies may have information that can be very helpful. The main message is to never overspend.
## Rental Property Checklist

**Module B: Checking Out the Rental Property and the Landlord**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Rental A</th>
<th>Rental B</th>
<th>Rental C</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Near work</td>
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<td>Near bus line</td>
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<td>Noise level in neighborhood</td>
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<td>High speed internet</td>
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<td>Number of phone jacks</td>
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<td>Cable TV, internet</td>
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<td>Amenities (pool, gym)</td>
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<td>Recreational facilities</td>
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<td>Availability of a garage</td>
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<td>Length of lease</td>
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<td>Late payment charges</td>
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<td>Pet deposit</td>
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<td>Pet allowed</td>
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<td>Deposit</td>
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<td>Date rent is due</td>
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<td>Monthly rent</td>
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<td>Terms and conditions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Address/Name of unit</td>
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</table>
Heat and Cooling
- Even in the winter, run the air conditioner to make sure it works.
- Even in summer, push the thermostat up to see if the furnace works.

Open cabinets and immediately shine in flashlights to detect leaks. Look for leaks.

Rodents and Other Pests
- Do windows open and close?
- Very gently push on the windows to see if they are secure or loose in the frame.
- Are there storm windows and screens?

Windows
- Are there deadbolt locks on the rental unit doors and building’s exterior doors?
- Does the rental unit have carbon monoxide detectors?
- Does the rental unit have smoke detectors?

Safety
- Look at the water heater to see if it is leaking.
- Are ceiling and/or walls stained or cracked? These may indicate a leaking roof, defective rain gutters, or defective plumbing fixtures. Water damage could cause the ceiling or walls to collapse.
- Do drains operate properly?
- Flush the toilet to see if it operates properly or leaks.
- How long does it take to get hot water?
- Turn on the sink and bathtub faucets to see if they work or leak.

Plumbing
- If outlets or sockets don’t work, there could be dangerous defects in the electrical system that could cause a fire.
- The dryer must run on a circuit separate from the clothes washer.
- Check every outlet by plugging in your hair dryer and turning it on. There are problems if a fuse blows out or the circuit trips.
- Turn on each switch to see if it works. If it is not working, using the circuit breaker, see if the one you plugged in.

Electrical
- Pen/pencil and paper to take notes of the property
- Hair dryer
- Light bulb
- Flashlight

Don’t Rent Trouble

Module B: Checking Out the Rental Property and the Landlord
3. Neighborhood

- Concerned about crime prevention or neighborhood improvement?
- Does the landlord/property manager mention neighborhood meetings in any neighborhood group?
- Is the landlord/property manager familiar with the neighborhood?
- If the rental premises are destroyed, does the rental agreement allow my right to move?
- If it is possible to end, terminate the rental agreement before the stated date? When fee, if any, is charged for early termination? How much notice is required for early termination? In what
- Alternatively ends (leases), will I have the first right to renew?
- For another year? When must notice be given and in what form? If the rental agreement
- Is the rental agreement to terminate or renew the rental agreement or will it automatically renew?

Rent Agreement Terminating

- What is the rental agreement duration?
- Will the rental agreement be written or oral? What rules and regulations must I follow upon

Rent Agreement

- Which financial institution will hold my security deposit?
- Do I owe my security deposit refund in full?
- How much is the security deposit? When must it be paid? When is it refunded? What must I
- Does the act of giving you an application commit me to signing a rental agreement?
- Is a fee required with my application? If so, what happens to that money?
- Must prospective tenants submit an application for a rental agreement?

Rent Agreement Applications

2. Rules and Policies

- Do as assaults?
- Is crime an issue in this neighborhood? Has this property experienced any break-ins, thefts?
- What payment methods do you accept for rent?
- How soon are you looking to fill the unit?
- What are you looking for in a prospective tenant?
- How long have you been a landlord/property manager?

1. General Information

Here is a list of things to ask regarding the landlord/property manager and current tenants.
5. Unit Inspection

- How much notice is given prior to entering a property?
- Is there a procedure for notifying you about entering the rental unit?
- What is the policy for maintenance personnel entering the rental unit? Your landlord should
- Are there regular inspections?
- What is the process for dealing with emergencies or maintenance issues?
- Is there property management on-site?