

Tips:

- If you are to pay for heat, water, electricity, and other bills, find out what they usually cost. The utility company can give you the past bills.
- To keep heating costs down close drapes and keep heat below 65 degrees at night.
- Regular care of appliances, bathroom, and floors will keep the place in good repair and help in getting entire security deposit back.
- Homestead Tax Credit is available to some renters in Wisconsin.
- “Keeping A Roof Overhead” (B3459-5) and “HomeWise” are fact sheets from your UW-Extension office that can help you get the most for your housing dollar.

Prepared by Carolyn Krueger and Laurie Boyce, Family Resource Management Specialists, University of Wisconsin-Extension. This information is published by the University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension Service in cooperation with the USDA and Wisconsin counties. UW-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title IX and ADA requirements. 8/96



Family Living Programs

MM05: Making Wise Rental Decisions



Afford Healthy Food Choices with DOLLAR SENSE

How do I know what it will cost?

Before signing any rental agreement or lease be sure to check on these costs:

Monthly Rent \$ _____

Do you pay extra for?

Heat \$ _____

Electricity \$ _____

Garbage \$ _____

Water/sewer \$ _____

Parking \$ _____

Security deposit \$ _____

Snow removal/lawn mowing \$ _____

Extras \$ _____

Other costs when moving in:

Phone Installation \$ _____

Utilities Deposit \$ _____

Mailbox \$ _____

Moving Costs \$ _____

How can I be sure to get my security deposit back?

- Be sure it is refundable.
- Carefully write down the apartment condition when moving in. Take pictures if possible.
- Do an inventory list (sometimes provided by landlord). Make a copy for landlord and yourself.
- Return property to condition you found it in.
- Security deposits, by law, must be refunded within 21 days—provided there is no damage.

What should I know about the *lease* (or rental agreement) before signing it?

What is the length of contract? _____

How many days notice are needed before moving? _____

When is the rent due? _____

Any special rules?

pets _____

children _____

parking _____

waterbeds _____

other _____

Can I sublet or let someone take over my lease? _____
If so, what do I need to do? _____

Is there any help available for paying housing costs?

Fuel or rental assistance may be available from the housing authority or social services.

If there are any problems, call or write:

Consumer Protection (WATCP)
1-800-422-7128