

Move-In and Move-Out Tips for Students

The tips in this document are intended to serve as just that—tips. This should not be considered legal advice. It is provided based upon experiences we know landlords and tenants have had and issues we have helped students try to navigate. Each situation is different, and there are many factors that may impact it.

Communication between roommates and between landlords and tenants is key. Documenting conversations (who was involved/what was said/when it happened) and/or communicating in writing can assist should a situation escalate to a legal matter.

Moving In

1. Many leases do not begin until August 15. For some who may be switching apartments or complexes, this means that they may not have a home for a couple of weeks. A best case scenario would involve residents being able to stay and/or store items with a local friend or family member on a temporary basis. Storage units in the area fill quickly, but students may call around to check availability. For the most part, the shortest term available is 1 month. If students must find a place to stay for a couple of weeks, there are several hotels in the Mankato area with extended stay options.
2. Be sure to check with the landlord/property manager about **move-in protocol**. Some require a scheduled appointment in order to go over final paperwork/expectations before they hand over keys. Others may have a walk-in/check-in policy. Check with them in advance of the date you plan to move in. If an appointment is required, schedule one as soon as possible, as there are a lot of people trying to move in at one time. Scheduling could be more difficult if you wait.
3. Some property managers require that you tenants have **renter's insurance**. Check ahead of time to see if this is a requirement. A policy may typically run between \$10-15 per month. Sometimes, a parent's homeowner's insurance policy may provide limited coverage for dependent students who are renting while in school. If you need insurance, check with parents, first, then check with your own car insurance company to see if they offer a discount for bundling policies. If neither of those works, there are many companies who offer policies, or landlords may work with a company who can provide the policy.
4. When moving in to a new apartment or house, before carrying in the first box or piece of furniture in, go through the whole unit thoroughly to **inspect for damages**. Document them on the report your landlord provides, and take photos for evidence. Things to be particularly aware of: holes in walls, chipped paint, missing or broken light switch or electrical outlet covers, mold on ceilings/walls and under sinks, carpet stains or burn marks, dirty or malfunctioning appliances, damaged blinds, broken/malfunctioning doorknobs or locks, broken or cracked windows, damaged closet or bedroom doors, broken mirrors, broken cabinets or drawers, etc. When moving out, residents are likely to be charged for any damages they do not document when they first move in. There is no such thing as being too picky. It can save money at move-out time.
5. If residents are responsible for **setting up their own utilities**, call ahead of time, and set them up for move-in day. Helpful phone numbers can be found on our [Renters' Resources page](#). The person whose name the utility bills will be in should be the one taking care of this. A social security number will likely be requested at the time the account is being set up.
6. **Work out any financial arrangements** between roommate(s) before the first bills become due. It is helpful to know when money will be needed and how the bills will be shared. Get an agreement in writing, and make sure all roommates have a copy. If someone fails to meet their obligations, this will help if any of the roommates need to seek legal assistance. This can also be helpful in the case of a joint lease. Keep in mind that, in a joint lease, all roommates are responsible for making sure the full rent amount is paid. If one person falls behind in their rent payments, this can cause problems, including possible eviction, for the other roommates. Verify the payment policy with your landlord, and know what may happen if someone fails to pay their rent.

7. **Talk about other things with roommates** early in the tenancy. Some things that have caused avoidable roommate conflicts include: cleaning responsibilities, noise levels/quiet hours, acceptability of overnight guests, whether or not groceries/electronics/other personal belongings are shared, paying one's fair share of utility bills, alcohol or other substance use, etc. The more that can be agreed upon early, the better off roommates will be.
8. **Read the lease** and know what it means. Landlords are required to provide you with a copy of it.

Moving Out

1. Follow your landlord's instructions regarding **utilities**. Some will handle disconnecting or reconnecting. Others will leave it up to residents to handle these things.
2. Check with your landlord/property manager about **move-out/check-out protocol**. Some will require an appointment and a walk-through. Others may just tell residents to turn in keys. There may be fines or fees for not following the proper procedure. Check ahead of time to avoid any problems.
3. You will likely have extra trash or boxes that need to be picked up. **Be sure to check with your trash service about what can and cannot be picked up.** Larger items, such as couches, may not be left by the curb. Resources for disposal of larger trash items include:
 - a. Minnesota Waste Processing (processes larger trash items for a fee): 507-625-5746
 - b. Ponderosa Landfill (processes larger trash items for a fee): 507-625-7301
 - c. Green Tech (offers heavily discounted appliance recycling for Mankato residents and processes larger trash items for a small fee): 507-344-1315.
4. **Settle all final financial arrangements** with roommates before you disperse. Trying to track each other down after move-out can be a pain. Roommates may not be aware that they still owe anything unless that is figured out before they leave.
5. **Please make sure any pets are cared for.** Mankato residents begin to see a large number of stray cats and dogs in conjunction with student move-out, and there are oftentimes abandoned pets found in the campus area. Please do not simply release pets to be strays. If you have a pet that you are unable to take with you, please find the animal a home. If you're unable to do that, please contact the Riverside Regional Pet Shelter at 507-625-6373. The shelter is located at 1250 N. River Drive in North Mankato (near the Hwy 169 and Hwy 14 interchange). www.benchs.org.
6. If you are expecting a **deposit refund**, this will likely not be processed until the end of the lease term and after move-out/check-out has taken place. Be sure your apartment or house is in as good of shape as it was when you took occupancy. Take pictures of the condition in which you leave your unit. Also, save any pictures you have of damage that may have been present in your unit when you moved in. If you have not done this, it is likely that a landlord will charge you for the damages, and they are within their right to do so. Check with your landlord about their timeline for deposit refunds. According to the [Minnesota Landlord and Tenants Rights and Responsibilities](#), landlords have 21 days from the end of occupancy/end of lease. Because of the large number of move-outs being processed at one time right now, have patience if there is a slight delay.

If you have further questions or concerns, consult the [Minnesota Landlord and Tenants Rights and Responsibilities](#), visit our website www.mnsu.edu/activities/housing, or contact the City of Mankato's Resident help line at 311.