ELEVATEFLORIDA

TENANT GUIDE

Move-In & Move-Out Playbook

Protect Your Deposit & Your Peace of Mind

Education · Expertise · Elevation

SECTION 01

Before You Move In

What you do before you bring a single box inside determines whether you get your deposit back when you leave.

— Schedule a walkthrough with your landlord before move-in day

— Photograph every wall, floor, ceiling, appliance, and fixture

— Record a video walkthrough with audio narrating what you see

— Note every scratch, stain, dent, and imperfection in writing

— Submit a written move-in inspection report to your landlord within 24 hours

— Request written acknowledgment that the landlord received your report

> Use your phone date/timestamp on all photos. This is your legal proof.

SECTION 02

Move-In Day Checklist

Do not skip this step even if you're excited and eager to start unpacking.

Test everything on day one:

— All light switches and ceiling fans

— Every outlet (use a phone charger to test)

— All appliances: oven, refrigerator, dishwasher, microwave

— Hot and cold water in every sink, shower, and bathtub

— Toilet flush and drainage in every bathroom

— Air conditioning and heating — even in summer, test the heat

— All doors and windows — do they lock properly?

— Garage door, gate, and any electronic entry systems

> Report anything that doesn't work on day one in writing — not weeks later.

SECTION 03

Maintaining Your Unit

Taking care of your rental protects your deposit and your relationship with your landlord.

— Report maintenance issues in writing as soon as they occur

— Never attempt major repairs yourself — always notify the landlord first

— Keep drains clean and clear — hair and grease buildup is typically tenant responsibility

— Change HVAC filters every 1–3 months — many leases require this

— Keep the unit clean and free of conditions that attract pests

— Do not hang heavy items on walls without permission

> A quick text or email about a small issue protects you from being blamed later.

SECTION 04

Before You Move Out

Start preparing 30 days before your move-out date. Do not wait until the last day.

— Give proper written notice — check your lease for required notice period (usually 30–60 days)

— Review your move-in photos and address anything that changed

— Patch small nail holes with spackling paste and touch up paint if allowed

— Deep clean the entire unit — baseboards, inside appliances, bathroom grout

— Have the carpets professionally cleaned if required by your lease

— Remove all personal belongings — including from storage areas and garages

> Leave the unit in the same condition you found it — ideally better.

SECTION 05

Getting Your Deposit Back

Florida law is on your side — if you follow the process.

— Do a final walkthrough with the landlord if possible — ask for it in writing

— Photograph everything again on your last day — same rooms, same angles

— Return all keys, remotes, and access devices and get written confirmation

— Provide your forwarding address in writing so the deposit can be returned

— Florida law: landlords have 15 days to return full deposit or 30 days to send an itemized claim

— If you dispute deductions, send a certified letter within 15 days of receiving the claim

If a landlord misses the deadline, you may be entitled to the full deposit regardless of damages.

For questions or guidance, visit elevateflorida.rent or follow @elevateflorida