

HOW TO INSPECT A RENTAL

_____ **Leaks:** Check for signs of water damage on walls, ceilings, baseboards, and in closets.

_____ **Heat:** A dwelling is required to have heating facilities conforming to the code that was current at the time the house was built. Turn the heat on. Does it work? Is it adequate? Avoid space heaters.

_____ **Phone jacks:** The landlord is required by law to provide one operable telephone jack and wiring per dwelling.

_____ **Deadbolts:** The landlord is required to provide a deadbolt lock on each main swinging entry door.

_____ **Electrical:** There should be at least two outlets per room. Use a surge protected power strip if you need extra outlets, not extension cords.

_____ **Bathroom:** There should be either a window that opens or a fan for ventilation. Make sure the toilet flushes adequately and does not “run.”

_____ **Mildew/Mold:** Signs of mildew may suggest a leak or just that the house is damp. Remember mildew will increase during the winter season. Some people are allergic to mold, and mold can be difficult to remove and control.

_____ **Stove and Oven:** Turn on each burner and the oven to verify that they work properly and that there are no gas leaks.

_____ **Water:** There should be hot and cold running water from each faucet. Does the water heater have an insulation blanket on it? This is not required by law but can help reduce utility costs. Is the water pressure adequate?

_____ **Garbage:** The landlord must provide one outside garbage can with a lid if your garbage service does not provide one.

_____ **Safety:** Are there smoke detectors? Are there carbon monoxide detectors? Were the locks changed after the previous tenant moved out?

_____ **Neighborhood:** Drive or walk through the neighborhood at different times of day and night, especially the times when you are likely to be coming and going. Is the street well lit? Does the neighborhood feel safe to you? Check the [Santa Cruz Police Department crime maps](#).

_____ **Animals/Vermin:** There should be no signs of mice or other rodents. Check around the house to see that there are no open entrances under the house where skunks, possums, or raccoons could live.