

## Questions to Ask About a Rental

Rental ads are generally brief and may not provide enough information about the rental. Below you will find examples of questions that you can ask a landlord over the phone or at an open house.

This list is by no means exhaustive and questions should be tailored to your specific concerns. Read the rental advertisement thoroughly before calling a landlord to avoid wasting both the landlord's and your time. Focus on any holes in the information. For example, if the rental is listed as being in a neighborhood you are unfamiliar with, ask for the cross-streets or local landmarks.

### Financial questions:

- How much is the deposit?
- Can it be paid over two or three months?
- Is the deposit negotiable?
- Are any utilities included?
- Has there been a recent rent increase? This is relevant if the landlord would like a month-to-month agreement.
- Do you accept multiple rent checks or do you require the entire amount in one check?
- How much do the utilities for this property usually run?
- How are the utilities split? This is relevant in shared housing or if there is only one meter for more than one rental.

### Tenants:

- How many tenants are allowed in the unit?
- Do you allow small pets such as turtles and fish?
- Is subletting permissible?
- How long do tenants usually rent here?

### Amenities:

- What appliances are included? Are there washer/dryer hookups?
- Does the unit have off-street parking? How many parking spaces? Are parking permits required for street parking?
- Is the unit furnished?
- What type of heating does the unit have? Gas or electric?
- Do appliances run on gas or electricity? This will impact your gas/electric bill.
- Is there a back yard?

### Other:

- Where is the rental located? What is the address including the zip?
- Is there a bus stop near by?
- Did the house have any noise violations in the past 12 months? This would mean that in the event that you receive a noise violation, it would not count as the first one and would be more expensive. Check the [Santa Cruz Police Records](#) to find out if the rental has been flagged in the last twelve months.
- Are the tenants responsible for the upkeep of landscaping?
- How long will the rental be available? Some landlords may only plan on renting during the school year while you may want to keep the rental over the summer. It is best to know this up front.