

MAKING A GOOD IMPRESSION

Students

“You only have one chance to make a good first impression.”

There is always competition for the best rentals and it is worthwhile to make the best first impression possible. As a student you may face discrimination and due to negative stereotypes about student renters. It is up to you to demonstrate that you are the best applicant. The following suggestions are based upon interviews with landlords.

- **It starts with the phone call.** Be polite, speak slowly, and be succinct with your questions. Since most people have very busy lives, you may reach a message machine. Do not get frustrated. It shows in your voice and can make a bad impression. Speak clearly, repeat your name and phone number at the end of the message and leave a time that would be best to reach you.
- **Dress for the occasion.** When you meet with a prospective landlord, you are potentially entering into a business relationship. Present a neat and clean appearance; consider dressing as you would for a job interview.
- **Be prepared.** Bring a clean copy of your Rental Application Packet with you. It shows a potential landlord that you are responsible, motivated, and organized by presenting them with everything they need to know in one concise packet. Visit the Community Rentals Office or our website, communityrentals.ucsc.edu for samples, help, and a checklist of what information to include. If you plan to share the rental with housemates, make sure to include their information as well.
- **Keep your appointments and be on time.** If you cannot make an appointment, call to reschedule or cancel. Everyone understands that emergencies arise, but no one likes to be stood up without an explanation or apology. This landlord or property manager may also have other rentals available.
- **Consider offering a co-signer.** If you have no established credit history, and/or insufficient income to support the rent, consider offering a willing and credit-worthy family member as a co-signer on your rental agreement. Co-signing is a serious legal responsibility, but it may allay a landlord's concerns about your financial dependability. Look for the Parental Letter of Guarantee on the Rental Forms and Resources page of our website.
- **Be prepared financially - have the money available!** Owners and managers typically ask for first month's rent and a security deposit equal to at least a month's rent in advance. Be prepared to pay the deposit and the first month's rent when you sign the rental agreement. Always get a receipt for any financial transactions.