

Guides to Applying for a Rental Property

Tips to get your rental application accepted

If you have found a property you would like to rent, the next step is to complete an application form. The application form is your way of showing the landlord and agent that you are the best candidate for the property, that you are able to pay the rent and that you will look after the property as specified in the tenancy agreement. Your application is reviewed against all the other applicants so making sure yours stands out is important.

There are a number of documents that are often required to accompany your application, therefore before you go house hunting it's worthwhile ensuring everything is up to scratch. By being able to produce this information promptly when required can prove to be the clincher in a rental race.

What should be included in the rental application:

Rental Resume

To help save time and to show you are super keen to rent the property, consider compiling a rental resume and bringing a printed copy to the viewing. Make sure you include your personal details, your education, current employment details, salary, rental history, references and contact details. Making a good first impression with a document such as this may help your application.

Photo Identification

This may be one of the more obvious pieces of paperwork, but it's also one of the most important. Put yourself in the landlord's shoes - would you allow a tenant to live in your home, despite having no way of proving they are who they say they are?

Your driver's license or passport will normally suffice.

Reference Letters

Any reference letters you may have had from past landlords and employers are suitable. Having positive feedback straight from the horse's mouth can really sway the decision in your favour.

Pay Slips

Significant scope is placed on your ability to pay rent, as most often landlords will prefer tenants that have a constant and reliable source of income.

Adding a few recent pay slips and bank statements to your application will not only show proof of employment, but should also allay any fears a landlord may have over missed payments.

Rental History

Rental history is information on your past rental arrangements, which includes former addresses, late rent payments and evictions, as well as criminal history, your credit score and other data to help a landlord judge whether or not you're a good fit as a tenant. This information is to renting what your credit score is to getting a finance for a loan. If you have a good rental report you are more likely to be approved for a rental than if you have a poor rental history report.

With your permission landlords and agents can access this information quickly and easily and assess whether or not you are suitable tenant for their property. Make sure you understand what is in your rental history report so you are not faced with any surprises. Download and review it and be prepared to discuss any issues it may highlight.

This can be a crucial addition to your application.

Cover Letter

If you really want to put off a good first impression, you should attach a cover letter to your application form.

Not only will this differentiate you from other applicants, but the piece of paper detailing your application and supporting why you should be considered will add a more professional feel.

Just like a job interview, wearing your best clothes and getting a new trim for the inspection might help too!

Follow up

If you have submitted an application and have not heard anything 48 hours later, we recommend following up with the agent either via email or via phone. Let them know you are super keen to rent the property and ask if they need any more information from you. If they receive a pleasant message from you it may help you be approved.

Are you a First time Tenant and Need a Reference?

You have spent all week poring over homes for rent in your area and then arrive at the open for inspection to find 40 other people as keen to rent the property as you are.

The agent greets you at the door and asks for your rental history, but what do you do if this is your first rental home? Just don't panic, fortunately, every tenant has been a first-time renter at some point and there are a number of things you can do to strengthen your application.

An agent or property manager will be mainly concerned with an applicant's ability to pay the rent, as well as their ability to take care of the property and comply with the terms and conditions of the lease. While references from previous landlords are requested, there are other ways you can demonstrate your trustworthiness, that you can pay your rent on time and take care of the property.

The information you should supply will vary depending on your previous circumstances - for example, if you were previously living in student accommodation, you may wish to provide the details of the person who was in charge of managing the complex.

If you previously owned your own home and have sold the property, the agent who handled the sale may be able to act as a reference for you.

And if you are currently living with your parents, you will require personal references. In some situations, you may also choose to have a parent co-sign your lease with you.

Examples of documentation you can provide that will help a property investment manager make these decisions include:

- Verification of employment

- Verification of income

- Reference from employer or fellow staff member

- Reference from neighbour/teacher/business person/doctor/accountant

Photo identification driver's licence/passport/student ID

Three personal references - these should not be from relatives

Last gas/electricity/phone bill or rates notice

Build a relationship with the agent

Spend time getting to know the agent - visit them at their office, talk to them at the viewing and always look presentable. They want to ensure the tenants they place in the property they are managing, are reliable and easy to deal with - so show them that you are. Ask them what you should put in your application as they assess it before it goes to the landlord having built up their trust may help you get approved.