

Screening to move-out

The NRI landlord's tenant checklist

My tenant paid late and left lakhs of damage. The deposit covered it; the arguing across time zones didn't. This is the checklist I wish I'd used.

BEFORE YOU SAY YES

- ☐ ID, PAN and an employer letter or 3 recent payslips
- ☐ A reference from their previous landlord
- ☐ Police verification of the tenant (required in Mumbai; can be done online through the city police portal)
- ☐ A deposit of at least 3 months' rent, to cover unpaid rent or damage

THE AGREEMENT

- ☐ Registered leave-and-licence agreement (registration is compulsory in Maharashtra and can be done online)
- ☐ Rent due date, a late-payment charge, and the lock-in and notice periods
- ☐ Clause saying the tenant deducts TDS on rent paid to an NRI
- ☐ Who pays what: society maintenance, minor repairs, utilities
- ☐ Owner's right to inspect with 48 hours' notice; no subletting

MOVE-IN DAY

- ☐ Inventory of fittings and furniture, with dated photos of every room, signed by the tenant
- ☐ Meter readings and number of keys, written down
- ☐ Society informed of the new tenant, with a copy of the agreement

EVERY MONTH AND QUARTER

- ☐ Rent by bank transfer only, checked by day 3
- ☐ Quarterly TDS certificate from the tenant
- ☐ Quarterly inspection with photos
- ☐ Renewal or exit decision 60 days before the agreement ends

MOVE-OUT DAY

- ☐ Joint inspection against the signed move-in photos
- ☐ Final meter readings; utility and society dues cleared
- ☐ Deductions listed in writing, with repair quotes attached
- ☐ Deposit balance refunded within the agreed number of days; all keys returned

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