

Apartment Living Safety Tips

Door Locks, Door Chains, Dead Bolts and Door Viewer

Always lock your deadbolt-both when you leave and after you get home. A deadbolt provides the most security available by a standard lock when used properly. The deadbolt should be at least an inch long. Do not prop your door open or leave it open for friends or roommates. Never leave your door unlocked, even while taking out the trash. Always use your door viewer before you open your door for someone. If the door viewer is broken or not provided, notify the landlord immediately.

Window Locks and Ventilation Locks

Always lock your windows. All first floor windows or windows accessible by a platform or fire escape are required to have both regular locks (which do not allow the window to open at all) and ventilation locks (which allow the window to open a few inches for ventilation but not wide enough to allow entry). These locks, when installed and used properly, will not allow entry without breaking glass. If locks are missing or don't work, request repairs.

Key Use Policy

Never label your keys or key chain with your house or unit number. If you lose them, your residence will be at risk. If you need extra sets of keys, ask the landlord. (You may be required to pay a small deposit for extra keys.) If the locks were not rekeyed before you moved in, you may ask the landlord to do so. (You may have to pay this expense yourself, however, as the landlord is not obligated to change the locks between tenants.)

Security Locked (Controlled Access) Entrances

Controlled access buildings are only secure if the common doors remain closed and locked when not in use. Remember, if you prop them open, you are compromising the safety of the whole building. Unknown or suspicious persons trying to get into the building should be referred to the Management, Security, or the Superintendent. Do not buzz anyone into the building whom you don't know.

Sliding Door Locks and Secondary Security Devices

Unsecured sliding doors are a common target for unauthorized entry. Be sure your patio door-lock mechanism locks securely when closed. A secondary locking device such as a stick or piece of wood can be placed in the sliding track to prevent the door from opening.

Common Area Lighting

Be sure common areas have adequate lighting. If bulbs are burned out, notify the landlord right away.

Window Coverings

Keep your curtains or blinds closed if you are away from home for an extended period of time. Open window coverings make it easy for an intruder to see that you are either not home or home alone. If window coverings are not provided, ask the landlord if he or she will provide them.

Elevator Safety

Look to see who's in the elevator before entering. Do not enter the elevator if you do not feel comfortable. When in the elevator, stand by the control panel. If a suspicious person enters the elevator, exit before the doors close. If accosted on an elevator, hit as many floor buttons as possible.