

Quiz helps renters know rights

At some point, everyone rents a house or apartment. To avoid the legal and financial headaches associated with the tenant-landlord relationship, understanding your rights is important. Test your renters' rights quotient.

1. What responsibilities does the landlord have to keep a rental in good condition?
 - a.) the plumbing must work
 - b.) there must be adequate heat
 - c.) lights should work
 - d.) clean building and grounds
 - e.) all of the above

2. What types of safety precautions must a landlord take to ensure a tenant's safety?
 - a.) monthly fire drills
 - b.) working smoke detector with working batteries
 - c.) drop-in pop quizzes on general household safety procedures
 - d.) working locks on all dwelling entrances
 - e.) both b and d

3. Who is responsible for paying the utility bill?
 - a.) the landlord pays for heat, water and power
 - b.) the tenant pays for heat and electricity; landlord pays for water and garbage
 - c.) the tenant pays for all utilities
 - d.) responsibilities vary from landlord to landlord; this is something to be clear on before beginning a tenancy
 - e.) both a and b

4. How long does a landlord have to return any security deposit?
 - a.) two weeks
 - b.) 30 days
 - c.) 60 days
 - d.) 90 days
 - e.) the landlord is not required to return the deposit

5. What should a tenant do when a landlord does not make requested repairs?
 - a.) try to negotiate with the landlord to do the repair and adjust the rental payment
 - b.) consider court action if the landlord refuses to take care of the problem
 - c.) withhold rent
 - d.) write a letter to the landlord stating the problem and ask that it be repaired within a reasonable time
 - e.) a, b and d; not c

6. What must a landlord do if he or she decides to keep any part of a security deposit?
 - a.) provide the tenant with a statement showing the use of that money within 30 days after termination of the rental agreement
 - b.) nothing; the landlord is the best judge of how the money should be used
 - c.) provide the tenant with a statement showing the use of the money within two weeks after termination of the rental agreement
 - d.) nothing; most students don't know enough about the law to know they are entitled to the money

7. How often may a landlord raise the rent?
 - a.) as often as the landlord wishes, as long as he or she provides the tenant with at least 30 days written notice
 - b.) as often as the landlord wishes, but the amount should not exceed the market amount for comparable dwellings
 - c.) once a year
 - d.) no more frequently than every other year

8. When can a landlord enter a rental unit?
 - a.) after the tenant has received a 24-hour notice
 - b.) after the tenant has received a 24-hour written notice
 - c.) as long as the landlord has a key, whenever it is deemed necessary
 - d.) in cases of emergency, when it is impractical to contact the tenant
 - e.) both a and d

9. Can a landlord lock out a candidate from a rental unit?
 - a.) yes, if the tenant has trashed the unit
 - b.) yes, if the tenant's rent is overdue
 - c.) no matter what the tenant has done to the rental unit or to the landlord, the tenant cannot be locked out of the unit or have essential services stopped
 - d.) both a and b

10. Can a landlord charge a tenant a screening fee?
 - a.) yes, as long as the fee is not greater than the customary amount charged by a tenant screening service or consumer reporting agencies for a comparable level of screening
 - b.) as long as the landlord provides a receipt for the applicant screening fee
 - c.) as long as the potential tenant is notified
 - d.) screening fees are illegal
 - e.) a, b and c

11. How much notice must a landlord give before the tenant can be forced to leave?
 - a.) the landlord can give a tenant a 30-day notice to move and not state why
 - b.) if the tenant is seven days late in paying rent, the landlord can give 72 hours notice to pay or move
 - c.) a landlord can give a tenant 24-hour notice to move if the tenant has committed an "extremely outrageous" act
 - d.) all of the above

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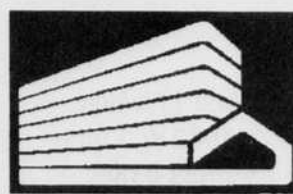
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