



How to Find a Rental Property that Meets Your Needs

Finding the perfect rental home can be exhilarating if you are quick to locate and secure a property that meets your needs. But the process of finding a rental can be exhausting for those who scour numerous newspaper and online ads and fail to find an ideal home to rent. Renters complain about competing with other renters who often take the best rental properties and make negotiating a lower rent ultimately disappointing. Although high-quality rentals are often found in the San Francisco Bay Area, the key to securing a perfect rental involves four steps: make a budgeted list of essentials, visit neighborhoods, consider amenities and consult with professional property managers.

1. Make a Budgeted List of Essentials

To keep you on track during your search, start by making a list of essentials—such as the number of bedrooms needed, budgetary limits and proximity to work and school. Make it a comprehensive list, knowing that you may have to compromise some items to meet your needs, timeline or budget.

Your must-have list will most likely include a maximum price point and enough bedrooms to accommodate your family. However, since total expenditures matter most, remember to budget for electricity and gas, water, sewer, trash, renters insurance, pet expenses and transportation expenses.

2. Visit Neighborhoods

Once you've established your price range and other parameters, visit the neighborhoods surrounding your potential homes. This process may be dictated by what school district you want your children in and whether the location is close to your office. However, if you can maintain flexibility, you could find a better deal on a rental home if you are willing to move to an adjacent neighborhood.

Visit neighborhoods at various times to ensure that quiet, serene areas by day don't come to life with parties on the nights and weekends.

3. Consider Amenities

Whether you are looking for a detached home or a high-rise apartment, don't fail to consider the other amenities. For example, the parking situation for you and your guests is crucial. Indoor parking can be a real bonus during the rainy months and street parking permits and restrictions determine how easy it is for your guests to visit you. Before making a final decision on a rental, confirm the accessibility of public transit, rail access, taxi service, shops, restaurants and schools to ensure you're making the best choice of where to live.

4. Consult with Professional Property Managers

Finding the perfect rental home is within your reach. Whether you are new to the area, looking for a change in location or searching for better amenities, working with a professional property manager is an efficient way to focus your search on homes that are the best fit for your needs. You need access to rentals that are just coming on the market and an intimate knowledge of the city to find the best rentals. Property managers help you compare rental rates, amenities and neighborhoods without you wasting time and money exploring options that do not fit your budget or your lifestyle.

Renting can be a complicated process, but once you've unloaded your boxes and unpacked in your new home, you'll relax and start exploring your new neighborhood. If you make your list, plan and know what to expect you'll simplify the process of securing your perfect rental home.