

# 5

# THINGS TO CHECK OFF ON YOUR NEXT RENTAL

## THE EPIC HOMES RENTERS' GUIDE FOR COMFORT, HEALTH AND ENERGY SAVINGS

This checklist includes questions you can ask a prospective landlord or property manager to see how different rental options stack up. You can also refer back to it after move in for actionable tips.



1

## WINDOWS

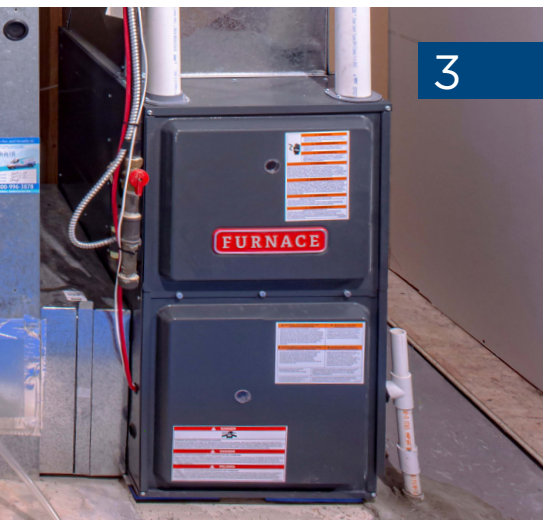
- QUESTION:** Are there double pane windows without metal frames throughout the whole house?
- FACT:** Window heat gain and loss is responsible for up to 30% of residential heating and cooling energy. Metal window frames conduct heat rapidly, making them a poor insulating material.
- THINGS TO LOOK FOR:** Signs of moisture, including icing on the inside of the window and/or water stains on the sill, can indicate that the windows are not efficient.
- TIP:** For inefficient windows, consider adding shades, blinds or window film to improve efficiency and comfort.



2

## INSULATION & AIR SEALING

- QUESTION:** How old is the home? Has any insulation been added to the walls, attic or basement/crawlspace since the home was built?
- FACT:** Homes built before 2005 can be significantly under insulated and air sealed compared to homes built after 2005, which makes them less comfortable and cost more to heat and cool.
- THINGS TO LOOK FOR:** Moisture stains on walls and ceiling drywall indicates poorly insulated framing. See if doors are weather stripped and have a good seal when closed.
- TIP:** If weather stripping needs to be replaced, ask your landlord or property manager if they will replace it.



3

## HEATING & COOLING (HVAC)

- QUESTION:** Will the HVAC system be serviced before moving in? How often is it serviced? Is it the tenant's responsibility?
- FACT:** Regular tune ups of the HVAC system are important to ensure proper functioning.
- THINGS TO LOOK FOR:** HVAC company label on the furnace or air conditioner with dates of service to see that the equipment has been serviced recently.
- TIP:** Change the air filter at least every three months to increase efficiency and indoor air quality.



4

## OVEN & STOVE TOP

- ❑ **QUESTION:** Do the oven and stove top use natural gas or electricity? Is there a range hood or microwave above it that is vented to outside?
- ❑ **FACT:** Unvented gas stoves and ranges are a source of carbon monoxide and combustion byproducts and contribute to poor indoor air quality from cooking.
- ❑ **THINGS TO LOOK FOR:** A range hood above the stove top that vents to outside is ideal for gas ranges and to remove cooking pollutants. Microwaves are commonly installed above electric ranges and can be used to remove cooking odors and smoke if vented to outside.
- ❑ **TIP:** Keep burners clean and use an exhaust fan while cooking. Never use a gas range or stove to heat your home.
- ❑ **BONUS THINGS TO LOOK FOR:** For homes with natural gas, make sure there is a carbon monoxide detector in the house.



5

## RADON

- ❑ **QUESTION:** Has there been a recent radon test? What were the results?
- ❑ **FACT:** Radon is an invisible, odorless, radioactive gas created during the natural decay of uranium in the soil. It is drawn into homes through cracks and openings in basements, crawl spaces and slabs. The EPA action level is 4 pCi/L or above.
- ❑ **THINGS TO LOOK FOR:** Thick, plastic barrier over the ground in a crawlspace that is sealed to the surrounding foundation and/or a mitigation system with a suction pipe inserted through the plastic and vented to outside. In basements, a pipe is installed through the floor slab and runs to the outside of the home. Active systems have a fan to remove radon gas.
- ❑ **TIP:** Free radon test kits are available from Fort Collins Healthy Homes program and can also be found at the public library or senior centers.

If the rental you are considering doesn't check off the items on this checklist but meets your other criteria, there are efficiency resources available for renters and landlords after you move in, including free assessments, LEDs and water efficiency products.

**Do you own a rental that could use energy efficiency upgrades?** Epic Homes is Fort Collins Utilities' one-stop shop for home and rental property energy efficiency upgrades with discounted energy assessments, substantial rebates and attractive financing options.

For more information, visit [fcgov.com/epicrentals](https://fcgov.com/epicrentals)

Learn more at [fcgov.com/epic-homes-renter-guide](https://fcgov.com/epic-homes-renter-guide)

