

# Paying rent

When you first move in, your rent can be any amount that you and your landlord agree on. There is usually a limit on how much and how often your landlord can raise your rent. Read more about rent increases at [cleo.on.ca/rentincs](https://cleo.on.ca/rentincs).

Your rental agreement should clearly say what is included in your rent and what day it is due. Read more at [cleo.on.ca/rentagmts](https://cleo.on.ca/rentagmts).

## What your landlord cannot charge you

A landlord cannot require:

- pet deposits or damage deposits
- advance payments
- interest on unpaid rent
- automatic rent payments
- late fees

## Deposits

When you rent a new place, your landlord is only allowed to ask for a rent deposit and a key deposit.

A **rent deposit** cannot be more than one month's rent on a yearly or month-to-month rental, or one week's rent on a weekly rental. Your landlord must only use the deposit for your last rent payment. It cannot be used to pay for damage or other costs.

A **key deposit** cannot be more than the actual cost to replace the keys. If you return the keys when you move out, your landlord must give you back the deposit. The rules for keys also apply to entry cards, fobs, and other devices that open doors.

### Interest on deposits

Your landlord must pay you interest on your rent deposit each year. The interest rate is the same as the rent increase guideline for that year.

If your rent goes up, your landlord can keep the year's interest and add it to your rent deposit to make the deposit the same amount as your new rent.

### Getting your rent deposit back

Sometimes you can ask your landlord to return the rent deposit. For example:

- you already paid your last month's rent in full
- your landlord refused to let you move in

If your landlord does not give back your deposit or uses it for something other than your last month's rent, you can apply to the Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB). You can also apply if you paid an illegal deposit or charge. You must apply within one year. Try to get legal help from a lawyer or a community legal clinic before you apply. See **Where can I get legal help** on [page 4](#).

### What your landlord can charge you

Your rent might cover things like electricity, parking, storage space, or laundry.

## NSF charges

Your landlord can charge you a fee for writing them a cheque when you do not have enough money in your bank account to cover the cheque. This is often called an **NSF** or bounced cheque. But the most your landlord can charge is \$20 for each bounced cheque, or whatever amount their bank charged them.

## Ways to pay your rent

You can agree to pay rent by:

- cheque or money order
- debit or credit card
- email money transfer or e-transfer
- cash

## Get rent receipts

The law says that your landlord must give you a receipt if you ask for one. Your landlord cannot charge you for this. And, after you move out, your landlord must give you past receipts if you ask for them within 12 months.

Get a receipt each time you pay your rent or a deposit. Rent receipts can be very important if you have a dispute with your landlord.

Your receipt should have:

- your name and the address of your rental unit
- the landlord's name
- the amount you paid

- the date you paid
- what the money was for

## Lower your rent

You can apply to the LTB to **lower your rent**, or to order your landlord to pay back part of your rent. You might do this if your landlord does not do proper maintenance or if they reduce or stop services that you pay for as part of your rent. Read more about maintenance and repairs at [cleo.on.ca/mainreps](https://cleo.on.ca/mainreps).

You might also be able to get a **discount** on your rent. Find out more about how rent discounts work at [stepstojustice.ca/discounts](https://stepstojustice.ca/discounts).

## Where can I get legal help?

If you have a low income, your community legal clinic can help. To find your local clinic, contact Legal Aid Ontario at **1-800-668-8258** or [legallaid.on.ca](https://legallaid.on.ca).

You may also be able to get legal help from Pro Bono Ontario's free legal advice hotline at **1-855-255-7256**.



Visit [stepstojustice.ca](https://stepstojustice.ca) for more information about housing law. This is general information for people in Ontario, Canada. It is not intended to be used as legal advice.

Vous pourriez avoir droit à des services en français devant les tribunaux ou auprès d'organismes gouvernementaux. Visitez [justicepasapas.ca/droits-linguistiques-des-francophones](https://justicepasapas.ca/droits-linguistiques-des-francophones).