

# Memorandum

**To:** All Tenants of MSB Holdings  
**From:** MSB Holdings  
**Re:** Move-out Day, Cleaning and Security Deposits

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This time of year, I often receive many questions from my tenants regarding move-out day and security deposits. To address these questions, I'm providing you with this memo and checklist. You'll notice that the checklist is very similar to the check-in sheet that you completed at the beginning of the year, which includes items I will be looking for during the check-out process. I hope you find this a useful and helpful guide.

**!!!If you only read only one part of this note read the following few paragraphs!  
It may save you and your roommates a lot of grief!!!**

There are some common pitfalls during move out! They can be avoided very easily with a little planning and communication. Don't get caught experiencing the:

## Common problems during move out

As I describe these, remember – move out time is 12:00 noon – not midnight! I only have 24 hours to make sure all my apartments are ready for our the residents.

The most common problem I encounter is when people **underestimate the amount of time it takes to move** their belongings out of the apartment. When this happens, I'll show up at noon to inspect and clean what I think will be an empty apartment. What I find, however, is an apartment full of **belongings because the resident didn't start moving their things until 10:00am!** This leaves me with a team of people, who I am paying hourly, standing around watching somebody move. You may be wondering, "why don't you just go to another property and clean that one?" If so, that is a good question. The reason I can't is because I have other teams of people already working on our other properties. We try to start inspecting and cleaning every house as early as possible on the 14<sup>th</sup>. **It is best to assume I'll be there at 12:00 noon.**

Another recurring problem is that I'll find a house full of belongings and **nobody is there!** This is a variation of the first/most common problem but I'm mentioning it because it is the worst situation for me. When no one is there I don't know if the belongings have been abandoned or, if someone is just getting lunch. Either way, if it is past noon, nothing should be in the place at all. In this situation, I have no choice but to move the items out of the apartment because someone is moving in the next day and there is very little time to get it ready.

**Lack of, or poor communication between, residents regarding who is doing what cleaning duties.** The result of this is often really traumatic for one poor remaining soul who is still frantically moving and cleaning after all the other roommates have left. It happens like this:

Once one roommate finishes moving their things out the house, and they figure that whoever is still moving their belongings will “tidy up” when they are done. Everyone after that does the same thing until there is only one person left in charge of cleaning the entire place! They have no chance of getting it done by noon. Cleaning a house or apartment requires a lot of time and effort – that is why I have teams of people to do it. Talk to your roommates today and discuss how you are going to clean and who is going to help. It is best to have everyone there until the bitter end and the whole place is finished - that way it won't be so overwhelming for one person.

**Forgetting to use the cleaning checklist** provided below. Every year, I'll have a newly arriving tenant stop by while we are cleaning on the 14<sup>th</sup>. They'll peek at the apartment and say something like - “man, who were the slobs that lived there and didn't clean?” Those same people will move out the next year, only to have the incoming tenant remark the same thing about *their* cleaning skills! Believe me this really happens. Why? It is because the people moving out are just so overwhelmed by the process that they simply forget to clean a lot of things. Who really thinks about vacuuming bugs out of the light fixtures when they've been hauling heavy boxes all day in 90 degree heat? Nobody does! But, if it isn't done, the next tenants scheduled to move in notice right away! So it has to be done. That is why I'm providing this check list. When you're standing in your empty apartment, wondering what else to do or where to start – pull it out and use it. It really helps. I use it during inspections to determine what we need to check and re-clean if necessary. If you lose this sheet, you can download it from: [www.msbholdings.com](http://www.msbholdings.com)

**Deciding to simply let me clean and “allow” me to withhold fees from the deposit.** *Please* don't do this. Take the time to be responsible and clean your place. I much prefer to find a clean apartment and return full deposits rather than dealing with the strife generated when the final event in a landlord/tenant relationship is withholding money. Additionally even the cost for us to do simple things really adds up at \$38 per hour. Something as simple as cleaning the stove can take a couple of hours.

That's it! Those are the most common reasons I have seen that people leave their apartments a mess and lose money when deposits are returned. As you can tell, a little communication and planning can prevent these problems from occurring. If you plan, communicate, and follow the guidelines listed below, you should have few, if any, deductions from your deposit for cleaning or holdover tenancy (staying past the term of your lease).

## Cleaning Checklist

Please refer to the check-in sheet you filled out within 7 days of moving into your apartment since this is what I use to gauge cleanliness and damage (if any). Listed below are some of the most common (but frequently forgotten) cleaning duties. I provide this list for people who are unfamiliar with the cleaning process of readying an apartment for re-inspection. These are many of the things that were done to clean your apartment before you moved in.

### **All Rooms:**

- Vacuum carpeting
- Steam-clean carpeting
- Sweep and mop all non-carpeted floors
- Clean all hardwood floors using appropriate hardwood cleaner, such as Bona Hardwood cleaner
- Wash insides and outsides of all windows
- Vacuum window sills
- Put all screens and storm-windows back in the appropriate frames**
- Clean bugs and dust out of overhead light fixtures**
- Dust off top of doors and trim above windows or baseboards
- Remove ALL personal items from apartment, basement, garage and common areas.
- Replace any burned out light bulbs or fuses
- Remove cobwebs

### **Bedrooms:**

- Wipe off closet shelving and remove hangers

### **Kitchen:**

- Clean stove and broiler (Easy-Off® works well, even on surface of stove) **Do NOT get any oven cleaner on your linoleum!** It will stain the linoleum – and you may be charged a fee!
- Clean floor under stove and refrigerator**
- Clean out and disinfect refrigerator and freezer. PLEASE LEAVE REFRIGERATOR PLUGGED IN AND ON!
- Clean and sanitize dishwasher
- Remove all food items from shelves
- Wipe out all drawers**
- Wipe out below kitchen sink
- Wipe off the inside of kitchen cabinets

### **Bathrooms:**

- Clean mirrors
- Clean bathtub and toilet
- Clean the inside of bathroom cabinets
- Mop all linoleum or tile

### **Basement:**

- Remove all garbage and stored items

**Yard and Garbage:**

- Remove any debris from yard
- Everything left on the curb must be suitable for pick-up and in appropriate containers per city refuse and recycling laws. Cardboard boxes may NOT be used to hold garbage. Recyclable containers may NOT be mixed in with garbage, and must be in clear plastic bags or city-sponsored crates. If you have any questions regarding garbage collection guidelines, please call the City of Madison at 246-4532
- Repair any damage to the lawn or apartment caused by your pet

**Final:**

- Keys should be left next to the kitchen sink** on your scheduled move-out day. I will not be available to personally accept your keys.

**PLEASE VACATE YOUR APARTMENT BY 12:00 NOON** on the last day of your lease!

**Any cleaning that must be done by my staff may be charged against your security deposit at the rate of \$38 per labor hour.**

**Security Deposits**

As per Madison statutes, security deposits and a letter explaining charges against a security deposit must be mailed to the tenant within 21 days of the move-out day. I usually try and send them out sooner. I'll send this correspondence to your last known address, unless I'm notified in writing of a new address prior to mailing.

Thank you for your effort! Just as you appreciate moving into a clean apartment, so do the tenants moving into yours 😊

I have enjoyed having you as tenants. Good luck in the future!

Michael  
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