



# *Renter's Logbook*

This Book is a Gift to You from  
Housing Rights, Inc.

1-800-261-2298





## The Story Behind Housing Rights, Inc.

Housing Rights, Inc. originated in 1979 as the Housing Rights for Children Project, sponsored by BANANAS, Inc. Our focus at that time was to combat the pervasive discrimination suffered by families with children seeking housing. While that battle continues, our services have expanded to include comprehensive fair housing services and housing information and referral. In 1997, we expanded our services even further to include tenant/landlord conflict resolution and eviction prevention. And in 1999 we added the Affordable Housing Advocacy Project (AHAP) a tenant organizing effort. In 2001 we added the Homeownership Information Center.

### Why the Renter's Logbook

It could be argued that the single most important thing a renter can do to protect themselves is **DOCUMENT, DOCUMENT, DOCUMENT**. Documenting can help you, as a renter recall important dates, facts and conversations between you and your landlord. This will enable you to better advocate for yourself and to have evidence of your interactions if the need ever arises. Even if your best friend is your landlord, it is a good idea to document every and all interactions. Be sure to keep this notebook confidential. Your landlord need not ever see it

### Checklist

We suggest you include the following items in your logbook:

- **A copy of your lease, or rental agreement**
- **Any receipts for payment of rent or deposit**
- **A copy of your signed and dated move-in checklist**
- **A Copy of written correspondence (letters, notes etc) between you and your landlord**
- **We have provided several pages for you to write down any conversations, agreements, important observations between you and your landlord**
- **Any other information you wish to document concerning your tenancy.**



## What is a Move-in Checklist

A move-in checklist is protection for both the renter and the landlord. Before you move in, but if necessary done two or three days later, you should write out a list of household items that come with the rental and their condition upon arrival. Be sure to include floor coverings, wall and ceiling condition, cupboards and closets, counter surfaces, stove, refrigerator and other furniture, windows, doors and locks, light fixtures, plumbing fixtures, sink, toilet, shower, heat and air conditioning, yard, patio, fencing and hallway. Sign and date the checklist, and have your landlord sign and date it as well. Keep a copy for your records. Pre-printed checklists are available as well. Call us if you would like one.

Be sure to check the condition of your unit carefully, look for dirt, grease, stains, burns, damage and wear.

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Prior to moving out, arrange with your landlord a final inspection. The law (in California) requires the landlord to notify you of your right to a pre-move-out inspection so that you can have a chance to remedy any cleaning and/or repairs necessary before they are deducted from your security deposit. Sign and date this as well, and keep a copy when you leave. Careful documentation in this form should help avoid disagreements about the condition of the unit when you move out.

Here is an example of a short checklist. Yours will be much longer. Be sure to initial each page.



### Inventory Checklist

Apartment Name and Address and Unit # \_\_\_\_\_

Item	Condition upon Arrival	Condition on Departure
Living Room Carpet	Worn near door and stained under window	Same
Stove	Back left pilot not working	All burners working fine
Refrigerator	None provided	
Sink	Chipped near drain	Same
Kitchen Drapes	Good	Good, faded
Front door	Deadbolt inoperable	Good
Light Fixtures	Light in master bedroom doesn't work	Light still doesn't work

Beginning Inventory Date \_\_\_\_\_ End Inspection Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Tenant \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Tenant \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Owner or agent \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Owner or Agent \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Take It With You...

Housing Rights, Inc. receives many calls from people asking if we help people find housing. Though we do not offer this service, we have a few suggestions that will improve your chances of finding the right apartment:

1. Bring a copy of your credit report with you
2. Fill out the model Rental Application in the envelope in the back of this booklet so that you have all the information you will need to provide to a landlord when you arrive
3. Know what discrimination looks like and document it if you suspect you are being discriminated against
4. If you have any evictions or poor credit history be prepared to provide a good explanation
5. Bring a copy of your ID and a pay stub
6. Read the example of a Lease in the envelope in the back of this book to know what to expect

## Sample Logbook Documentation

May 2, 2000: Moved into apartment. Landlord came by to drop off keys. Stated we could park in the space in front of the dumpster with the no parking sign. I asked him to put it in writing so there would be no confusion. We did an inventory checklist. Copy included. I asked landlord to fix the porch light. Landlord said he would do it as soon as he had some free time.

May 3, 2000: Landlord called to say he would come by in the afternoon and fix the porch light.

May 4, 2000: Landlord did not come by, did not call. I wrote a letter reminding him of his agreement to fix porch light. Copy included in notebook.

May 9, 2000: Landlord called and said he had a family emergency and would come by this afternoon. Landlord came by and installed a working porch light.

June 1, 2000: Landlord came by and asked to be allowed to come in and check the plumbing under the sink. I paid my rent and asked in the future if he could give 24 hour notice before coming in unless it was an emergency.

June 10, 2000: Landlord came by and asked to get some paint out of our storage closet. I said that I had to go out and per our conversation he was to give 24 hour notice. He apologized. I wrote him a letter asking that he observe the California laws regarding landlord access and proper notice time.

Now its your turn. The following Pages provide space for you to keep your own renters' logbook.





















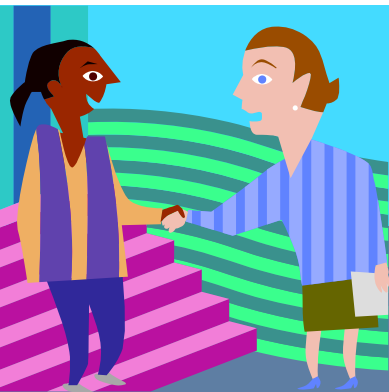




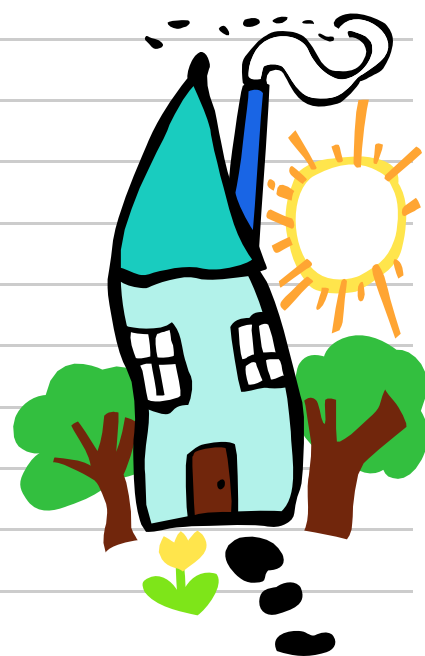






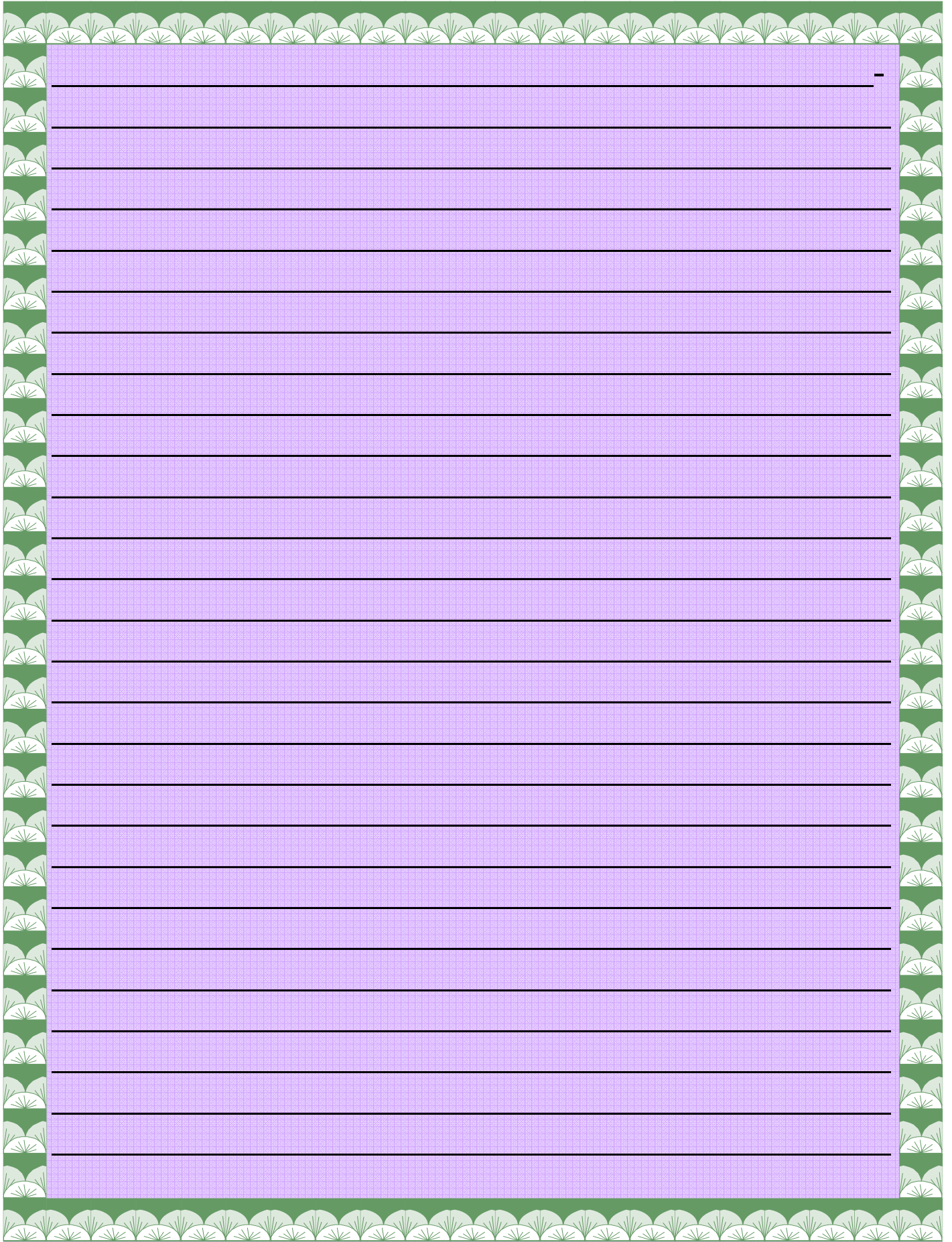














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