

When living in a rental there is a fine line between wanting to make your space feel like your home, but also not wanting to upset your landlord and lose your security deposit. Luckily Sharrah has lived in her fair share of rentals and knows all the ways to make your rental personal to you and your style!

In this Design Session there are three segments:

1. What to look for in a rental
2. What to do once you're in the rental
3. What to do when you're moving out of the rental

## What to Look for in a Rental

Below are some key factors you want to keep in mind if you are in the process of looking for a rental. These things will help you further down the line when you go to decorate your rental!

### **Key Factors to Look for in a Rental**

- Layout options
- Existing furniture you have
- Natural light
- Personal preferences
  - Kitchen appliances
  - Character
  - Style of the home compared to your style
  - Street parking
  - Storage space

# What to Have in Your Home Toolkit

This is the ultimate checklist to make sure you are fully prepared no matter what repair, mess or problem comes your way!

## TOOLS

- Tape measurer
- Hammer
- Screw driver
- Nails
- Flashlight
- Level
- Laser level
- Stud finder
- Utility knife
- Set of pliers
- Adjustable wrench
- Allen wrench
- Cordless drill
- Screws & drill bits
- Sandpaper
- Spackling paste
- Putty knife
- Masking tape
- Duct tape
- Mounting putty
- Paint brushes
- Painter's razor blades
- Extension cord(s)
- E6000 glue
- Ladder

## CLEANING SUPPLIES

- Broom
- Dustpan
- Hand duster
- Toilet brush
- Plunger

- Vacuum cleaner
- Swiffer
- Swiffer refill pads
- SOS Sponge
- Sponge(s)
- Microfiber clothes
- Paper towels
- Rags
- Dish gloves
- Bucket
- Garbage bags
- Wood cleaner
- All-purpose cleaner
- Glass cleaner
- Toilet bowl cleaner
- Wood finish stain marker
- Dish soap
- Disinfecting wipes
- Bleach
- Baking soda
- White vinegar
- Magic erasers
- Air freshener

## MISCELLANEOUS

- Goo gone
- Command hooks
- Extra iPhone chargers
- Poo pourri
- Box cutter
- Wine aerator
- Wine out
- Outlet key magnets

# What to do Once You're in a Rental

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Once you are in your rental it is time to get to decorating! We are going to go through each of the different areas of decorating with a rental in mind. If you want even more tips, don't forget that most of these topics have full Design Session episodes about them already in your content library!

## 1. **Layout**

Having a functional layout is so important, rental or no rental! Let's break it down by room:

### Bedroom

- The most optimal wall to place your bed on is the wall opposite of the door. If that isn't possible, place your bed on the longest uninterrupted wall.
- Achieve symmetry on the wall your bed is on by having matching nightstands and lamps.

### Dining Room

- Make sure your table isn't so large that it is difficult to navigate around when people are seated

### Living Room

- Ensure you have walkways in and around your furniture and in and out of the room

## 2. **Paint**

Our motto for painting a rental is to ask for forgiveness not permission! Most likely if you choose a neutral paint color your landlord won't even mind that you painted because you upgraded their apartment for free. If you do however don't want your landlord find out that you painted just commit to painting it back the same color it was before you move out. Ask your landlord when you move in what the paint color in your place is and buy a small can of it so you are prepared for when you move out!

## 3. **Window Treatments**

The first thing you need to know when adding window treatments is if you have plaster walls or drywall. If you have plaster walls, never use a hammer and always use a drill with a masonry drill bit to carve out your entry hole. If you have drywall you have the option of hammering or drilling. Once you know how to hang your beautiful window treatments, here are some general tips to keep in mind:

- Always hang your window treatments a couple inches below the ceiling, not right above the window sill
- Extend the rod a few inches past the window so your window treatments hang outside of the window instead of in front of it
- For a fuller look, use two panels on either side of the window
- Opt for neutral window treatments so they always go with whatever the style or decor of your home is at the moment

#### 4. **Lighting**

Updating the light fixtures in a rental makes it really start feeling like it is personal to you and your style. If your rental allows for it, install hardwire over plug-in fixtures for a more finished look. Make sure if you do swap out any light fixtures that you keep the originals somewhere safe so you can put them back before you leave!

#### 5. **Area Rugs**

Area rugs are a rental's best friend! They are great to cover up ugly floors or even ugly carpets. They also ground your furniture and help create different zones within one room. A good rule of thumb for deciding what size area rug to get is to make sure that the rug extends the majority of the way underneath the furniture that sits on top of it. For example, in a living room you want your rug to extend underneath your sofa either all the way or only so the back legs of your sofa are off of it. In a dining room, you want to be able to pull out your chair without the back legs going off of the rug.

#### 6. **Wall Decor**

In a rental, one large piece of art means less holes in your walls. However, large art pieces tend to be pricer than several small pieces of art. Gallery walls are completely possible to do in a rental, just know that you will have to patch and paint all of the holes before you move out.

#### 7. **Removable Upgrades**

We have found a couple removable upgrades that are perfect for rentals and are Kinwoven approved! The first is peel and stick backsplash. [Click here for the subway tile Sharrah used in her home.](#) This is a great option to cover up backsplash you don't care for or to do a feature wall like Sharrah did in her laundry room. It looks like real tile, but can peel right off when you move out! Our next find is marble contact paper. [Click here for the brand Sharrah suggests.](#) This contact paper works wonders on ugly countertops and just like the peel and stick backsplash, it peels right off when you move out!

## 8. Extras

To really make your rental feel custom, here are some additional things you can do (remember to keep the originals so you can put them back when you move out and take yours with you to the next place):

- Swap out or spray paint your cabinet and drawer knobs and pulls
- Swap out doorknobs
- Swap out bathroom and/or kitchen faucets

## 9. Maximizing Storage Space

Maximizing your storage space no matter if you are in a rental or not is so important! Here are some of our best tips:

- Utilize the space underneath furniture (i.e. sofa, bookshelves, bed, etc.) to slide bins under
- Buy decorative bins to store things out in that open and disguise clutter
- Use the wall space or behind doors for additional storage

# What to do When Moving Out of a Rental

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It is completely possible to make your rental feel like a home while you are living there you just have to commit to putting it back the way you found it when you move out. Follow these steps and your rental will probably look better than when you moved in!

1. Remove everything off the walls
2. Patch and sand all of the holes
3. Paint the walls back to the original color
4. Remove all the removable stuff
5. Put back the original hardware and light fixtures
6. Get magic eraser and wipe off any scuffs on the walls
7. Deep clean

