

# RENTER'S GUIDE TO PRIVACY, ENTRY RULES, AND NOTICE REQUIREMENTS

Save this guide to your phone or email so you can quickly check your rights if something feels off.



# INTRODUCTION



This guide helps you understand when your landlord can enter your rental unit, what notice you should expect, and how to protect your privacy if boundaries are crossed.

Ontario tenancy laws set clear boundaries around when a landlord can enter a unit, the notice they must provide, and what renters can expect if those rules are not followed. Knowing these rules as a tenant helps you feel secure and prepared for uncomfortable situations.



## **1. Your Right to Privacy as a Renter**

Renters in Ontario have a legal right to privacy and reasonable enjoyment of their home from the start of the tenancy until the day it ends. This right includes quiet use of the space and control over who enters the unit. Even though a landlord owns the property, they cannot treat the unit as accessible whenever they choose.

Landlords are also not allowed to install cameras or monitoring devices inside a rental unit. Any form of monitoring must follow privacy laws and cannot intrude into a tenant's private living space.

## **2. When a Landlord Is Allowed to Enter Your Unit**

A landlord can only enter your rental unit for specific reasons allowed under Ontario law. Entry must relate to a legitimate purpose connected to the property or tenancy.

- Common permitted reasons include:
- Repairs or maintenance
- Health or safety inspections
- Unit tour to prospective tenants or buyers
- Appraisals or insurance inspections
- Responding to emergencies

Entry for casual check ins, curiosity, or routine visits without purpose is not allowed. If a landlord cannot clearly explain the reason for entry, that is often a sign the entry may not be lawful.



### **3. Notice Requirements for Landlord Entry**

Most landlord entries require at least 24 hours of written notice. It must include the reason for entry, the date, and a time window between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. Verbal notice alone does not meet legal requirements unless previously agreed to in writing.

### **4. Situations Where Notice Is Not Required**

Notice is only waived in limited circumstances, such as emergencies, tenant consent at the time of entry, or when a unit has been abandoned. Outside of these situations, landlords must provide proper notice before entering.

### **5. Showing the Unit to New Tenants or Buyers**

Once a tenant has given notice to end the tenancy, landlords may show the unit to prospective tenants or buyers. Although 24 hours notice is not required, landlords must still make a reasonable effort to inform the tenant before entering and avoid unnecessary disruption.

### **6. Entry for Repairs and Maintenance**

Landlords are responsible for keeping rental units in good condition and may enter to complete required repairs or inspections. A notice is still required unless the repair is urgent. As a tenant, you cannot refuse necessary entry but may request reasonable scheduling.



# What Is Considered Improper or Illegal Entry?

An entry may be improper if the landlord enters without notice when notice is required, enters for a reason not permitted by law, shows up outside allowed hours, or repeatedly enters in a way that feels disruptive.

Repeated improper entry may qualify as harassment under Ontario tenancy rules.

# What Do I Do If Entry Rules Are Not Followed?

If a landlord enters your unit improperly, start by documenting the incident. Write down dates, times, reasons given, and what occurred. Keep copies of notices, messages, or emails.

**In some cases**, a calm written reminder of entry rules resolves the issue. If the problem continues, renters can file an application with the Landlord and Tenant Board for interference with reasonable enjoyment or illegal entry.



# Can a Renter Change the Locks?

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Tenants cannot change the locks without landlord consent. Altering locks without permission may violate tenancy rules. Privacy concerns should be addressed through documentation and formal processes rather than physical changes to the unit.

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