

Negotiating a Lease for Your Dog by Brandi Brown

How to Convince a Skeptical Landlord



You have found the perfect apartment, and you are ecstatic. The apartment has that little alcove you love, a fireplace, and a nice-sized bathroom. Then, your heart breaks when the owner tells you that she does not permit dogs on the premises. While you should have checked for this provision before you started looking, all may not be lost. All building owners do not have absolute pet policies. There are ways you can work to convince a skeptical landlord that you will be responsible about your dog.

Offer An Additional Security Deposit The first tip to securing a lease for your dog is to put your money on the line. Be sure to explain to the skeptical landlord that you will offer to make an additional deposit to cover pet damages. If the landlord allows a lease for your dog, add a clause indicating that you will pay for all damages. You can be specific at this point by stating that you will steam clean the carpets and specifying the amount of the security deposit that will be additional because of your dog.

Bring Your Dog To the Rental Visit When you first speak to the landlord, mention that you are a pet owner. If the landlord is unsure, then ask if you can bring pooch along with you. The landlord may be convinced if your dog is well-behaved on the visit. Also bring along references for your dog. Previous landlords or neighbors who can attest to your dog's good behavior and to your pet owner acumen will make a positive impression on any potential landlord. **Place Voluntary Restrictions On Your Dog** If you have yet to convince the landlord that a lease for your dog is a viable option, find out why and then address those issues. Adding clauses to the leasing agreement regarding your responsibility as a pet owner will help your case. If noises bothering the neighbors cause concern, then add a clause indicating that you will keep your puppy inside during certain nighttime hours.

If poop is the concern, put in a requirement for cleaning up after your pet. Should the landlord have issues with his liability should your dog sink his teeth into someone, get liability injury coverage for your pooch.

Know When To Give Up On the Lease After trying these methods, you still may sense a bit of skepticism. If you do, back out of the leasing plan. Getting involved with a landlord who does not approve of a pet owner for a tenant is a huge mistake. You may move out to find that the landlord wants to blame any conceivable problem in the apartment, even routine maintenance issues, on your dog. Getting back any money from your security deposit will be difficult, if not impossible. Do not put yourself in this situation. Move on to the next landlord who will be willing to grant a lease to your dog.