Apartment Viewing Red Flags
the full 27-point checklist

Print this and take it to every viewing. Tick what you see. If several of these show up in the same place, keep looking.

1. **Water stains or peeling paint on ceilings** ☐
   Signs of a past or active leak. Ask when it was fixed.
2. **A musty smell** ☐
   Can point to moisture or mold behind walls.
3. **Large or growing cracks in walls or ceilings** ☐
   Ask what caused them and who looked at them.
4. **Droppings, traps or dead bugs in corners** ☐
   Check under sinks and behind the stove.
5. **Doors and windows that stick or won't lock** ☐
   A security problem and a heating bill.
6. **Broken entry door, buzzer or dim hallways** ☐
   Shared areas show how the building handles repairs.
7. **Weak water pressure** ☐
   Run the shower and sinks at the same time.
8. **Slow drains** ☐
   Fill the sink and the tub and watch them empty.
9. **Outlets that don't work or feel warm** ☐
   Bring a phone charger and test every room.
10. **No smoke or carbon monoxide alarms** ☐
    Required in many places. Ask who installs and checks them.
11. **Heating or AC that won't turn on** ☐
    Test it even if it's the wrong season.
12. **Old or broken appliances** ☐
    Ask who pays for repairs and how fast they happen.

13 **No laundry hookups or laundry room** ☐
Find out what the options and costs are.

14 **Weak cell signal or Wi-Fi dead spots** ☐
Check the bedroom, not just the hallway.

15 **Pressure to sign today** ☐
A real listing can wait a day. Pressure is a warning.

16 **Vague answers about fees, utilities or repairs** ☐
Ask for every answer in writing.

17 **No proof the person owns or manages the place** ☐
Ask for a name and check county records or the management site.

18 **A price far below similar places** ☐
Compare it with other listings of the same size nearby.

19 **Requests for cash, wire transfers or gift cards** ☐
Never pay before you have seen a lease.

20 **A lease with blanks or verbal-only promises** ☐
If it isn't written down, it doesn't count.

21 **Lots of unhappy tenant reviews** ☐
Search the address and the landlord's name.

22 **Very noisy at certain hours** ☐
Visit again at night or on the weekend.

23 **Unclear parking or street rules** ☐
Ask where you can park and what it costs.

24 **A long or unsafe walk to transit or stores at night** ☐
Walk it yourself after dark.

25 **No clear trash and recycling spot** ☐
Ask how pickup works and where bins go.

26 **Little or no natural light** ☐
Windows that face a wall can feel dark all day.

27 **The total cost doesn't fit your budget** ☐
Add rent, utilities, parking, pet fees and insurance.