

October 16, 2009
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Ron's Apartment Living Blog

By [Ron Leshnower](#), About.com Guide to Apartment Living

Higher Vacancy Rates Bring Benefits to Renters

Friday October 16, 2009

Over 70% of property owners are experiencing higher vacancy rates, according to a recent [Rent.com](#) survey of property owners representing 3,900 communities and 987,450 rental units.

This comes as good news to renters, because it has prompted many of these owners to offer breaks to make [apartment expenses](#) more affordable, with the goal of attracting and retaining good tenants.

The survey found that, among these owners:

- 69% are reducing their rents;
- 65% are providing free rent for at least one month;
- 35% are reducing the amount of required deposits;
- 16% are offering complimentary apartment upgrades;
- 14% are showing tenants leniency for breaking leases early;
- 10% are offering reduced-rate storage or parking;
- 6% are relaxing their pet policies; and
- many are promoting move-in specials, lease renewal programs, and tenant referral programs.

Have you benefited by the economic downturn and higher vacancy rates? If you've tried to negotiate with landlords, have you found them to be more flexible than you might normally expect?