



Rent in Peace: Avoiding Common Rental Horrors

69 Percent of Renters Willing to Crash with Casper for the Right Price

Santa Monica, Calif., September 21, 2009 – A new survey commissioned by Wakefield Research on behalf of Rent.com gets Americans to identify their worst rental horror stories. Among the scares found within the survey, renters included poltergeist problems, broken locks on the front door and someone still living in the apartment when it came to move-in day!

Nightmare Roommates

There are several ways for an earthly roommate to wear out his or her welcome. According to the survey, 35 percent of renters said the worst quality in a roommate is leaving the living room or kitchen messy. More than a third (34 percent) of renters considers someone using their things without asking to be one of the worst qualities to have in a roommate. For more than one in eight (13 percent), the worst roommate is someone who blasts loud music (AC/DC is not for everyone). Lastly, another 11 percent complain that it really bugs them if their roommate's significant other is always around, and 6 percent say the worst roommate is someone who eats their food. So, what can you do to avoid nightmares like these?

Avoid Roommate Horrors By Following A Few Simple Rules:

- 1) **Commit to Clean.** Some people are inherently tidier than others. If your roommate is on the messier side, be sure to discuss expectations prior to moving in together. Talk about who will clean what, when and how often you will clean and what's acceptable in terms of daily and weekly up-keep.
- 2) **Communicate.** Make sure to communicate your needs and expectations to each other and always be thoughtful. For example, if your roommate is a student and would like to use the kitchen table to study, agree not to watch TV loudly in the same room during study hours or blast loud music from your bedroom. Likewise, if you are hosting the occasional date night at your place, give your roommate fair warning to make other plans.
- 3) **Respect Each Other's Privacy and Property.** Bedrooms should generally remain off limits to the other roommate, and personal property should not be borrowed without permission. Make sure you are both in agreement in terms of what is meaningful to you. Is your food off limits; is your bedroom off limits, what boundaries work for both of you?

Playing Host to a Ghost

While the survey found 11 percent of renters believe they have lived in a home inhabited by ghosts, others would be willing to do so in order to save money. In fact, 69 percent of renters would be willing to crash with Casper for the right price. More than half (51 percent) of renters would share their home with a ghost in exchange for free rent, and over one quarter (27 percent) would do it for half-price.

Three in 10 people who have rented (30 percent) said they'd bunk with the boogeyman if they received free utilities, while nearly one in four (23 percent) would do it in exchange for a free flat-screen TV with cable.

Overall, 31 percent of renters said no deal. Nothing, "not even a million bucks," would convince them to conquer their phasmophobia (fear of ghosts). However, a greater percentage of males than females are willing to live with ghosts for any given tradeoff (74 percent vs. 64 percent).

Frightful Affairs

When asked about their most devilish problems, nearly four in 10 people (39 percent) who have ever rented a home or apartment have endured "creepy or annoying neighbors." And, thirteen percent have had problems with the front door being broken or not locking properly. However, neighbors and broken doors aren't the only things haunting renters these days – more than a quarter (26 percent) report having experienced a problem with bugs or mice.

Avoid Fright Night With These Proactive Tips:

- 1) **Ghastly Neighbors.** To ensure your neighbors don't hail from the Night of the Living Dead, do a little digging. Ask the landlord if you can talk to other tenants about what life in the building is like and ask them who specifically occupies the surrounding units to the one you would be renting. Understanding the general profile of your neighbors will help you make the best decision about where to live and avoid potential neighbor nightmares.
- 2) **Security Concerns.** To avoid problems with broken doors or windows make sure to do an apartment walk-through with your landlord before signing a lease and moving in. If possible, stop by your new place a few days in advance of your move-in date to ensure that everything is secure and ready for move-in. This will give you time to notify the landlord if anything has broken since your walk-through and will give them time to get important safety concerns fixed.
- 3) **Pests Problems.** Before signing a lease, ask if extermination is a part of regular maintenance and make sure any potential costs for pest problems will be covered by the landlord. You might also check with your local health department to see if there have been any complaints on the building. If creepy critters begin making your home into theirs, call your landlord immediately but also put your extermination request in writing.

Scared Away

Eighteen percent of renters have chosen to move from a rented apartment or house because of problematic neighbors, while frustrating Jekyll and Hyde roommates have forced 17 percent of renters to look for new apartments. If you've been sufficiently spooked by neighbors, roommates or ongoing pest problems in your building, and have exhausted the options for improving your situation, then let Rent.com help you find a new rental. With the most online traffic, the largest inventory of contracted property listings, and a free robust search tool, Rent.com helps renters end their nightmares and find the home of their dreams. Renters are able to search the site's detailed rental listings, which include contact information, pricing, photos, floor plans, and virtual tours – all for free. Plus, Rent.com rewards renters with a \$100 prepaid Visa® debit card if they: (1) find their property using the Rent.com website, (2) tell the property owner or manager they found their rental home using Rent.com, and (3) report to Rent.com signing a lease with a property that participates in the \$100 Reward Program.

Survey Methodology

The Rent.com Rent in Peace survey was conducted by Wakefield Research among 1,000 nationally representative Americans ages 18+. The interviews were conducted online between September 4th and September 10th, 2009, using an email invitation and an online survey. Quotas were set to ensure reliable and accurate representation of the total U.S. population ages 18 and older. Results of any sample are subject to sampling variation. The magnitude of the variation is measurable and is affected by the number of interviews and the level of the percentages expressing the results. In this particular study, the chances are 95 in 100 that a survey result does not vary, plus or minus, by more than 3.1 percentage points from the result that would be obtained if interviews had been conducted with all persons in the universe represented by the sample. The margin of error is higher for sub-audiences.

About Rent.com

Rent.com is the nation's #1 Internet listing site (ILS) in the rental housing industry enabling renters to find a residential rental property online using a free robust search tool. Rent.com has the most online traffic and the largest inventory of contracted property listings. As the only national ILS with a pay per lease business model, Rent.com allows property managers to cost-effectively fill their vacancies. Prospective renters can search the site's detailed property listings, including contact information, pricing, photos, floor plans, and virtual tours. With the ability to directly contact property managers, finding the rental housing of your dreams is as easy as 1-2-3.

In addition to providing renters free access to detailed property listings and robust search tools, Rent.com rewards renters with a \$100 prepaid Visa® debit card if they: (1) find their property using the Rent.com website, (2) tell the property owner or manager they found their rental home using Rent.com, and (3) report to Rent.com signing a lease with a property that participates in the \$100 Reward Program. Rent.com is dedicated to giving renters a convenient way to find the perfect place to live.

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