



California Tenants -- Letter to contest security deposit deductions

Instructions:

1. [Click here to open a Microsoft Word version of this sample letter](#)
2. The Microsoft Word-version will have the same blank spaces as this version, but will not have the comments in the margin. Fill out the blanks in the Microsoft Word-version using the comments on the margins of this version as a guide.
3. This sample letter is intended to be used to contest security deposit deductions.
4. Please note that you should **tailor this letter to the facts in your case**. This template is **not a substitute for legal advice**. If you need help finding a tenant attorney, please see the [Tenants Together Directory](#).
5. Once filled out with your information, keep a copy for your records.

Sent via Certified Mail- Return Receipt Requested

( )

**Comment [AI1]:** Date

( )  
( )

**Comment [AI2]:** Full name of landlord and/or property manager

**Comment [AI3]:** Address of landlord and/or property manager

Dear ( ),

**Comment [AI4]:** Full name of landlord and/or property manager

We ( ) were tenants at ( ) from ( ) until ( ). A security deposit of ( ) was paid on ( ).

**Comment [AI5]:** Name(s) of tenant(s)

**Comment [AI6]:** Address, city, state, zip

**Comment [AI7]:** Move-in date

**Comment [AI8]:** Move-out date

**Comment [AI9]:** Amount of security deposit

**Comment [AI10]:** Date paid, or "upon move in" if you do not have a date

**Comment [AI11]:** Security deposit amount

Please be aware that you are required to return the security deposit within TWENTY-ONE (21) days after we have vacated the premises. Any deduction from the ( ) should include an itemized statement specifying repairs or cleanings that form the basis of the deductions from the security deposit. California Civil Code § 1950.5. This statement should include copies of documents showing charges incurred or deducted to repair or clean the premises. California Civil Code § 1950.5(g)(2).

When we moved out, we left the unit cleaner than it was when we moved in. We repaired ( ) and cleaned ( ). We have photos of the unit to show that it was in clean, undamaged condition when we left.

**Comment [AI12]:** List any repairs made to the unit

**Comment [AI13]:** Describe in detail what you cleaned

As we are entitled to the return of our full security deposit, please send the full security deposit of ( ) to us at ( ).

**Comment [AI14]:** Security deposit amount

**Comment [AI15]:** New address, City, State, ZIP

Failure to return the security deposit as required by law will be considered a bad faith retention of the deposit and may subject you to statutory damages of up to twice the amount of the security deposit, in addition to actual damages. California Civil Code § 1950.5(l). Please be aware that we will pursue our legal rights to return of our full security deposit, if necessary, and are prepared to sue you not only for the ( ), but also for twice that amount, as allowed by California Civil Code § 1950.5 of the Civil Code.

**Comment [AI16]:** Amount of deposit

Sincerely,

( )  
( )

**Comment [AI17]:** Your signature

**Comment [AI18]:** Your full name