

Your rent is going up

Moderate · 1 hour to do · Free

Check that the notice follows your state's rules, run the new number through your budget, then decide: negotiate, sign, or move. Ask about two months before your lease ends, so you have time to choose.

YOU'LL NEED

- ☐ Your current lease and the renewal offer
- ☐ Your budget
- ☐ Rents for similar places nearby (from listing sites)

DO IT LIKE THIS

- 1 **Check the notice.** Some states require advance written notice. In New York, for an increase over 5% on a non-regulated unit, it's 30, 60 or 90 days depending on how long you've lived there.
- 2 **Check for a cap.** Under California's Tenant Protection Act, covered rentals can go up by no more than 5% plus inflation, or 10%, whichever is lower, in 12 months. Some cities have rent stabilization. Whether there's a cap depends on your state and city.
- 3 **Run the new rent through your budget.** See Can I afford to move out? for the 30% guideline and the costs of moving.
- 4 **Look up what similar places nearby really rent for.** Moving has costs too: a new deposit, movers, time off and utility setup fees.
- 5 **Ask, politely, in writing.** Point to your record (on time, no problems), what similar places cost, and what you can offer: a longer lease, a flexible move-in date or taking the place as-is.
- 6 **Get any new number in the signed lease before the old one ends.** A verbal "we'll keep it the same" isn't a lease.

Watch out Read the renewal for other changes too: new fees, new parking or pet rules, or a switch from a year lease to month-to-month. Rules here vary by state, and some cities add their own. The examples come from the official tenant guides for California, New York and Texas. Find yours in the list of state guides below, or call legal aid.

DAD NOTE *The worst they can say is no, and asking costs one email. Just ask early enough that no still leaves you time to move.*

Full lesson: aptkeys.com/your-place/when-something-goes-wrong/your-rent-is-going-up/

Checked October 3, 2026. Sources: New York State Attorney General; California Department of Real Estate; Legal Services Corporation.