

# How to complete a Standard Lease Agreement in Ohio

Fixed-term residential lease with rent, deposit, term and standard tenant/landlord clauses.

## What this form is for

This form establishes a legally binding rental agreement between a property owner (landlord) and a tenant for residential space in Ohio. Small-business owners use it when renting commercial property for mixed-use purposes or when documenting employee housing arrangements that affect business expenses and tax filings.

## Before you start

- Property legal description and full street address including unit number
- Exact lease term dates (start and end) and monthly rent amount you've agreed upon
- Security deposit amount and details of any pet deposits or additional fees
- Tenant's full legal name, contact information, and emergency contact details
- Utility responsibility breakdown (who pays water, electric, gas, trash, internet)

## Step-by-step

1. Fill in the date at the top and complete the landlord and tenant identification sections with full legal names and current addresses for both parties.
2. Enter the complete property address in the premises section, specifying any parking spaces, storage units, or other included areas.
3. Record the lease term with exact start and end dates. Ohio allows any term length, but most lenders prefer to see six-month or one-year terms for stability documentation.
4. State the monthly rent amount in both numbers and words, the due date each month (typically the first), and the grace period if any. Specify the payment method and where rent should be delivered or sent.
5. Document the security deposit amount, which Ohio law does not cap but requires be returned within 30 days of lease end minus itemized damages.
6. Complete the utilities and services section, clearly marking which party pays each utility. This affects your operating expense documentation for lenders.
7. Review and initial the standard clauses covering maintenance responsibilities, property alterations, subletting restrictions, and default conditions. Ohio requires landlords to maintain habitable conditions and allows tenants to withhold rent for serious violations.

8. Add any Ohio-required disclosures, including lead paint notices for pre-1978 properties and any known flood-zone designations.

9. Both parties sign and date at the bottom. Consider having signatures notarized, though Ohio doesn't require it for lease validity.

## What lenders look for

- Banks reviewing business loan applications scrutinize lease agreements as proof of stable occupancy costs. Ensure the monthly rent figure here matches exactly what appears on your profit-and-loss statements and Schedule E if claiming rental expenses.

- Underwriters flag missing signatures, ambiguous term dates, or rent amounts that seem disproportionate to market rates. Have a licensed appraiser or real estate professional confirm your rent is within 15 percent of comparable properties.

- Keep a fully executed copy in your loan package. Partial or unsigned leases create documentation gaps that delay approval or trigger additional verification requirements.