# 7 Top Rental Housing Scams

## #1 Phantom Rentals

An ad for a place that does not exist or is not for rent. Their goal is to get your money before you find out. A good reason to see before you sign!

## #2 Hijacked Ads

A fake landlord posts an ad for a real place, with altered contact information. Perform a search on the owner and listing. If you find the same ad listed under a different name, that's a clue it may be a scam.

## #3 Already Rented

A landlord uses an ad to collect deposits or application fees for a place already rented. Always Google a property’s address as a start to your review process. It just might help. And the last thing you want is to show up on move-in day only to find out someone else lives there!

## #4 Missing Amenities

An ad for a real place that lists amenities it does not have (to get a higher rent). If you cannot visit a unit yourself, ask a rental agent or someone you trust to go and confirm that it includes what was advertised.

## #5 Bait-and-Switch

The landlord tries to get you to sign a lease or collect a deposit for a different property than the one advertised. If they offer up another unit, be sure to go through the same process to verify the legitimacy of the unit and the landlord.

## #6 Suspicious Money Requests

You are asked to send money when you haven’t seen the apartment or met anyone. You are asked to pay an illegal security or holding deposit, a full year’s worth of rent, or other upfront fees. It’s never a good idea to send money to someone you’ve never met in person for an apartment you haven’t seen. If you are asked to wire money, that is a sure sign of a scam.

## #7 Identity Theft

An ad that is really a trick to get you to hand over confidential info such as a Social Insurance Number (SIN) or banking information. Be protective of your personal information and only provide what is required by law.

## Wrap up!

So, now you’ve learned about the most popular types of scams. For ways to prevent yourself from being scammed, check out our **12 Tips for Preventing Scams!**

Last update: 17 December 2019 by Housing Services, a Student Life Department