

Landlord Guide

British Columbia · 2026 edition · Updated by Central Rentals Canada

A field guide to running rentals in British Columbia. Every section is calibrated to the Residential Tenancy Branch (RTB) and the latest provincial guideline. Cite, sign, or skip-read — it's your call. Always confirm with the provincial board for edge cases.

1. Lease basics

Authority: Residential Tenancy Branch (RTB).

Lease form: RTB-1 Residential Tenancy Agreement. Required for every new tenancy.

Deposit limits: Half a month's rent (security + pet, each). Collect it before move-in, hold it in trust, and return it within the statutory window after move-out.

Entry notice: 24 hours written notice. Emergency entry is allowed without notice.

2. Rent collection + 2026 increase rules

Rent-increase cap (guideline 2026): 3.0%. Issue a written notice at least 90 days before the new amount takes effect. Keep a copy stamped with the date you delivered it.

Late-rent process: Issue the proper provincial notice the day after rent is due. Set up Stripe pre-authorized debit through Central Rentals so most arrears never start.

3. Ending the tenancy

Notice periods: 1 month (tenant); 2 months (landlord, with reason).

Use the exact provincial form. Hand-delivery + an email backup with read-receipt is the safest combo. Keep proof of delivery — the board will ask.

4. Maintenance — who fixes what

- **Structural integrity.** Roof, foundation, load-bearing walls and major plumbing — landlord's responsibility. Respond within 24-72 hours for anything weather-tight.
- **Heating systems.** Provide adequate heat (minimum 20-21°C in most provinces) from Sep-May. Furnace + ducting service required annually.
- **Plumbing & water.** Repair leaks, blocked drains, water heater failures, and frozen pipes within 24 hours. Hot-water minimum 49°C.
- **Electrical & smoke.** Test smoke + CO detectors at every tenancy turnover and at least once per year. Replace batteries on landlord visits.
- **Pest control.** Treat infestations (rodents, bedbugs, cockroaches) within 7 days unless caused by tenant negligence.
- **Common-area cleaning.** Hallways, stairwells, exterior — kept clean + safe. Snow + ice removal within 24 hours of accumulation.
- **Appliances supplied.** If included in the lease (fridge, stove, washer, dryer): repair or replace within 7 days of failure.

- **Locks & security.** Re-key between tenancies. Repair broken exterior doors / windows immediately. Smart-lock batteries every 6 months.

5. Quick fixes that prevent a board hearing

- Test smoke + CO alarms — replace any battery older than 6 months.
- Run hot water for 60 seconds at every fixture. Anything not reaching 49°C → call plumber.
- Inspect under-sink + behind-toilet plumbing for slow leaks (stick a paper towel under the trap).
- Tighten loose handrails, door hardware, and cabinet hinges with a \$10 multi-tool.
- Check window seals: condensation between panes = failed seal, schedule replacement.
- Clean dryer lint trap + the exhaust hose (#1 cause of preventable rental fires).
- Inspect baseboard heaters for dust — vacuum, do not paint over.
- Walk the unit's perimeter: foundation cracks > 3 mm = call a structural engineer.

6. When to call the board

Authority: Residential Tenancy Branch (RTB). File an application online with photos, written notices, and a clear timeline. Most disputes resolve at mediation before a hearing.

Trigger points for a landlord: 14 days past due on rent, repeated late payment, unauthorized occupants, substantial damage, or interference with other tenants.

7. Run the whole thing inside Central Rentals

Generate provincial-compliant leases in 90 seconds, collect CAD rent via Stripe, run tenant screening, dispatch maintenance with smart triage, and export tax-ready statements (T776, NR4) for your accountant. Free 14-day trial, no credit card.

Open <https://centralrentals.ca/for/landlords> to start, or scan the QR sticker on your unit's lease packet.

This guide is an educational summary. It is not legal advice. Always verify provincial rules at the Residential Tenancy Branch (RTB) for your specific situation. ©2026 Central Rentals Canada — Made in Canada.