

<https://englishlanguagebits.com/rent-and-renovation/>

Pre-listening Discussion

How do rent payments usually change from month to month or from year to year where you live(d)?

Does the payment usually stay the same for a long time?

How often does rent go down (decrease)?

How much can it increase?

Who makes decisions about the price?

What can the decision depend on?

Pre-listening Vocab Bits

Write the words next to their meanings.

renovation - innovation - transportation - maintain - unit - major - notice - inconvenient

to keep something in good condition by checking and repairing it regularly -

large or important -

causing problems -

apartment -

a new idea -

moving people or things from one place to another -

repairing a building so that it looks better and/or is more convenient -

information about something that is going to happen -

putting or keeping something in a special place when it is not used -

As You Listen...

Try to find answers to these questions.

How does the cost of rent change after a renovation in a unit or a building?

What are some general rules on rent increase in Ontario?

How often can rent increase?

How much can it increase?

Who decides on the maximum limit for the increase?

Why can increases sometimes go over the limit?

What are some other rules that landlords need to follow?

What does Ralph like about their apartment building?

How was the heating system recently updated in the building?

What other function does the new heating device have?

How likely is Ralph to move to another apartment in the near future? Why?

Transcript - 1

Fill in the missing words in the text. Check your answers by reading with a partner or by listening to the recording again.

innovation - unit - major - leak - maintain

(P1) Yuliya: You mentioned renovation... Do they increase rent when they do those renovations?

(P2) Ralph: Yes, if the renovation is major, if it's like a really serious repair to the building or, for example, when they put that door into the basement, when they repaired all of the balconies and did _____ repair work on all of the balconies, the company that owns the building, they apply to the government to raise the rent more than normal.

(P1) Normally the rent, the percentage increase of the rent is decided by the government of Ontario. For this older building they decide the rate for all the rentals. It depends on inflation, so normally we're paying about maybe 2% more every year. But if

they did major repair work, we could be paying 3.5% or one year we were paying 4% more, so that was not great.

(P2) But they do _____ the building really well. It's very clean.

(P1) Everything is by the book, so they're always following the rules exactly. When they want to enter your apartment, they give you the proper notice ahead of time. When they need to inspect things, they do all the inspections on time, and they let you know.

(P2) Recently they installed heat pumps. A heat pump is a type of heating and cooling unit. So in the past we just had baseboard heaters to heat the unit, and if you wanted to cool the _____, you needed to buy a window air conditioner, but they installed new units in the wall, and these units are... They can heat the main room in the winter and they can cool it in the summer.

(P1) Y: Can you control the temperature in your unit, in your room?

(P2) R: Yes.

(P1) Y: Oh, that sounds great!

(P2) R: It's an energy saving _____, energy saving device. And, so, they always seem to be doing those kinds of things. Of course, our rent is going to increase to pay for this. But, if we moved somewhere else, our rent would increase much much more. We've lived here for a very long time, and when you move out of a unit, the new tenant has to pay a much higher rent. So if we moved, we would have to pay much higher rent. So we will probably stay here for a while.

(P1) Y: Yeah, it sounds like a really nice building.

(P2) R: Ehh, it's OK. It's a bit old, but we did have some problems with our windows, and we had two windows replaced. They cracked, [I] don't know why. And we did have some water _____ing at one point, from a pipe, but they were very quick to fix that. So generally, pretty happy, we'll see.

(P1) Yeah, it would be nice to have a washer and dryer in the unit, and it would be nice to have another bedroom, but our balcony is so great, and the light is so great, and the location is so great, that I think we'll stay here for a while.

For discussing or writing practice

After listening: What about you?

Do they often do any renovations at the place where you live?

Why may they start renovations?

Who usually pays for renovations - landlords or tenants?

What would you like to see renovated?

What would happen to the rent cost?

Would you like to move?

How would the new place be different from this one?

Who may think that limits on rent increase are good?

Who may have a different opinion? Why?

After-listening Vocab Bits

Find the best sentence for each of these words:

renovation - innovation - transportation - maintain - unit - major - notice - inconvenient

Landlords are responsible for _____ing their buildings.

If you want to quit the job, employers usually expect a two-weeks' _____.

Climate change is a _____ problem that we need to address as soon as possible.

Friday is _____ for me. Could we meet on another day?

We need _____ in our factories to keep producing the best quality product.

I do not want to live here during the _____. There will be too much noise and dust for a month or two.

Major Canadian cities have good public _____ systems.

Our apartment building is a small one, there are only 12 _____s.