Landlord Verification Checklist (Avoid Scams)

A practical 10-step verification process for Kenya renters.

> Use this checklist to reduce scam risk. It is not foolproof, but it will catch most common rental fraud patterns.

Verify the person

[ ] Ask for the landlord's/agent's full name, phone, email, and ID/passport. Take a photo with permission.

[ ] If dealing with an agent, ask for agency name and written authority to let (or a management letter).

[ ] Confirm the payment recipient name matches the landlord/agency. Avoid personal numbers with unrelated names.

Verify ownership / authority

[ ] Request proof of ownership (title deed/lease document) and compare names.

[ ] Request the latest land search / official search where possible (or confirm via the relevant Land Registry process).

[ ] If the property is in an apartment, ask for the unit number and check it matches the owner/landlord details.

Verify the property listing

[ ] Do a reverse image search of listing photos to detect recycled/fake listings.

[ ] Insist on viewing the exact unit before paying anything; verify keys and access.

[ ] Check consistency: rent amount, deposit, location, and photos match the actual unit.

Verify payments and paperwork

[ ] Never pay cash. Use traceable payments (bank transfer/M-Pesa) with a clear reference.

[ ] Demand a written receipt showing amount, date, unit, and purpose (deposit/rent).

[ ] Do not pay 'viewing fees' or 'goodwill' payments to unlock access; treat as a red flag.

Extra safety steps

[ ] Meet in daylight and bring a friend; avoid isolated locations.

[ ] Call the building caretaker/management to confirm the unit is available and who manages it.

[ ] If anything feels off, pause and verify before paying. Scammers rely on urgency.