

Can I Add a Washer/Dryer to a NYC Apartment?

A pre-contract checklist for co-op and condo buyers

In NYC, "washer/dryer allowed" doesn't always mean your apartment can add one.

If in-unit laundry matters to your decision, look into the building rules and the physical feasibility before you sign the contract. Here's a practical checklist for buyers considering a co-op or condo without in-unit laundry.

Before you buy, check these 8 things

Tick each one off before you go to contract.

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| ☐ | 1. Are new installations being approved? | Don't stop at "other apartments have them." Those machines may be grandfathered. Ask management whether the board is approving new installations right now. |
| ☐ | 2. What do the alteration rules say? | Get the house rules and the alteration agreement. Look for language on washers, dryers, plumbing changes, waterproofing, contractor insurance, and building review fees. |
| ☐ | 3. Where could the machines actually go? | Have a contractor, architect, or licensed plumber look at the water supply, waste stack, drainage, and electrical. A closet that looks perfect on the floor plan may not work mechanically. |
| ☐ | 4. Is there a wet-over-dry restriction? | Many buildings won't allow a new water-using area above a neighbor's bedroom or living room. Laundry is usually easiest in or next to an existing kitchen or bathroom. |
| ☐ | 5. Is a ventless dryer required? | A new exterior vent is often impractical or prohibited. Many buildings require a ventless condenser or heat-pump dryer. |

Before you buy, continued

- ☐ **6. Can the electrical handle it?** Older apartments may need an upgrade. Confirm the panel capacity and what your chosen appliance requires.
- ☐ **7. What permits and licensed trades are required?** Plumbing work may need a NYC Licensed Master Plumber and Department of Buildings filings. Electrical work needs a licensed electrical contractor. Bigger scopes can require an architect or engineer.
- ☐ **8. What's the real cost?** Budget for more than the appliances. Plumbing, electrical, waterproofing, carpentry, professional fees, building review fees, deposits, permits, and finish work can change the total a lot.

Who should be involved

Your attorney	Reviews the building documents. Tell them adding laundry is material to your decision.
Managing agent / board	Confirms current policy, alteration requirements, and whether new installations are being approved.
Architect / contractor / plumber	Tells you whether the install is physically realistic in your specific apartment.
Home inspector	Can flag visible plumbing or electrical issues. Can't tell you whether the board will approve the alteration.

If laundry is a deal breaker, say so early.

In Manhattan, I treat washer/dryer feasibility as a pre-contract due-diligence issue, not something to solve after closing. Make sure your attorney knows it matters to your decision.

Questions I'd ask the listing agent

- ☐ Is the building currently approving new in-unit washer/dryer installations?
 - ☐ Are there apartments in this line or with this layout that have added laundry?
 - ☐ Can we review the current alteration rules before contract?
 - ☐ Are there wet-over-dry restrictions?
 - ☐ Does the building require ventless dryers or specific appliance types?
 - ☐ Has the seller investigated adding laundry to this apartment before?
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The 4 phrases that are not the same thing

Listings use these loosely. Here's what each one actually tells you.

"Has a washer/dryer"	The machines are there. Confirm they were properly approved.
"Has hookups"	The apartment may have supply, drain, and electrical connections. Building approval still matters.
"Building permits washer/dryers"	Encouraging. Your individual install can still need approval.
"Might be possible"	That means more investigation. Don't rely on it yet.

Looking at a Manhattan apartment without laundry?

Call me before you go to contract. I'll ask the questions above and get the building's rules in front of your attorney.

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