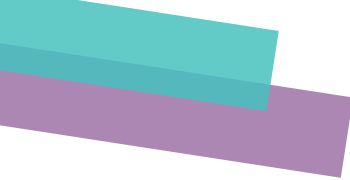


GUIDE FOR TENANTS

Do's and don'ts ...at the start and during the tenancy





Whether you're a seasoned renter or have never rented before, understanding your rights and responsibilities as a tenant is essential.

The [tenancy agreement](#) is a legally binding contract between you and your landlord. It protects both you and your landlord by clearly setting out the legal terms and conditions of the tenancy and any other expectations. It's really important to read it carefully so that you fully understand your responsibilities from the outset of the tenancy, and to discuss anything you are unclear about with your landlord. This will help avoid misunderstandings which could lead to negotiations on distributing your deposit when the tenancy ends.

The start of a new tenancy is a busy time for tenants. While you might be excited at the prospect of moving into your new home, here are some key tenant 'do's' and 'don'ts' for getting off to a good start and enjoying a smooth tenancy and a good relationship with your landlord.

Do

- Make sure you know your responsibilities which are written in your signed tenancy agreement
- Pay your rent every month, and on time
- Check your inventory as soon as possible and report any differences or amendments in condition or cleanliness, in writing, to your landlord/agent. If you don't have one, ask your landlord or agent to provide you with one
- Contact gas, electric, water companies, council tax office and broadband/telephone provider etc with your move in date and relevant meter readings
- Respect your neighbours at all times
- If you are responsible for a garden, make sure you know if gardening tools are provided or you will need to purchase them, or pay a contractor, to maintain it
- Make sure the property is secure when you go out, as you will be responsible for any damage resulting from an unauthorised person entering while you are not there
- Open windows for ventilation when cooking or showering, to prevent condensation
- Follow the landlord/agent's information for reporting problems during the tenancy and make sure to report problems without delay to avoid the issue becoming worse
- Make sure you wipe down any condensation from bathrooms and kitchens. Keep an eye on it in other rooms, and think about why it keeps appearing. Follow the advice in [Total Landlord's damp and mould tenant's checklist](#)

Don't

- Change utility suppliers without written permission from your landlord or agent
- Smoke, or allow anyone else to smoke, in the property, unless you have permission in writing
- Take any pet into the property, without permission, in writing (amend if your block lease does not permit pets at all)
- Leave food lying around which might encourage vermin
- Dry washing in the property, if there is no drying machine, as this causes condensation and damage which you will be responsible for. Please use the nearest launderette
- Use blu or white-tack on the walls. You will be responsible for making good the damage which could be repainting those walls - see our mydeposits guide [here](#)
- Make any alterations to the property without the landlord's specific permission, in writing
- Force entry if you have lost your keys as this will result in you being charged for the damage, including replacement locks and keys as happened in [this case study](#)
- Employ your own contractor without the landlord's written permission
- Report problems out of hours, unless it is an emergency

Follow the landlord or agent's guidance for reporting any problems during the tenancy and make sure to report any issues as soon as you become aware of them and to keep a record that you have done this. If any problems get worse you will be responsible for the delay.

Follow our guide to the key 'do's' and 'don'ts' and make sure that you are clear about your responsibilities during the tenancy. By doing this, you will be reducing the risks of any misunderstandings which may lead to issues requiring resolution at the end of the tenancy, and contributing to a positive relationship with your landlord or agent.

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