

Ready to Rent: Moving In



Moving In

There can be a lot to think about when you move into a new property. We've set out the key things you need to do before and after moving into a new home.

A month before you move in:

- Check your paperwork to make sure you've done everything you have to do to get the keys e.g.
- Paying deposit
- Paying first month's rent / rent in advance
- Providing signed guarantor form
- Completing standing order forms for future rent payments

If it's a joint contract make sure all of the other joint tenants have done what they need to do too, especially if you signed up several months in advance.

Move in day:

Make sure you have a record of the condition of the property and what's provided. It might feel like hard work to collect the info when you move in, but it will be crucial in the event of any deposit dispute when you move out.

The landlord should complete an **inventory** i.e. a list of what is in the property and importantly, what condition it is in. They should give you a copy to check and sign. Make sure you:

- Mark any changes.
- Sign and date.
- Send the amended version back to your landlord.
- Keep a copy.



If your landlord doesn't do an inventory, you could make your own. Shelter has [templates](#) you can use and Shelter Scotland have an inventory app called [HouseMate](#). Make sure you:

- Take photos of any damage.
- Report any issues in writing (e.g. email) to the landlord/agent and keep a copy. Even if the damage isn't bad or isn't something you need the landlord to fix, still make a note of it just to be clear that you didn't cause it.
- If things do need fixing/replacing, give the landlord a reasonable period of time to put things right after you've written to them.

Your landlord must provide you with:

- A gas safety certificate. The landlord must provide one each year if there are gas appliances in the property.
- Energy performance certificate. This may affect your energy bills and the landlord must provide one before you move in (except in Houses in Multiple Occupation and a few other types of properties, like listed buildings).
- In **Scotland**, your landlord must provide you with a copy your Tenant Information Pack, if they haven't by the time you move in, contact your local authority.

Your landlord should also provide you with:

- A record of any electrical inspections. All appliances must be safe and check every 5 years are recommended.

Can I walk away if the property isn't up to standard?

- In most circumstances, problems with the condition of the property will not stop the contract being binding.
- Seek advice before walking away from a contract as you may remain liable for rent.

Sorting out the utilities

- Take meter readings and contact the utility suppliers to get the bills in your name (put all joint tenants on the bill if applicable). There is lots of helpful advice on how to find out your current supplier on the [Citizens Advice website](#).



- Even if bills are included in your rent, still take readings if you have access to the meters.

First week in the property:

- Make sure you have all of your refuse and recycling bins, if not you can order replacements from the local authority. Find out from your local authority when your bins get emptied and how your local recycling schemes work.
- Introduce yourself to your neighbours. This can help reduce risks of future disagreements and can also help reduce the risk of burglary.
- Make sure you know how to use your boiler and central heating system (if you have one) and other appliances. Most kitchen appliances have instruction manuals that you can access for free online if you are unsure.
- Find out where the stop cock and fuse box are located.
- Test your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detector at least once a month.
- Report immediate repairs or maintenance to your landlord or agent as soon as you can, in writing, and keep a record.

Make sure you have also received the following legally-required information:

Check your deposit is protected

Your landlord must put your deposit in a government-backed tenancy deposit scheme if you rent your home on an assured shorthold tenancy.

In **England** and **Wales**, they must notify you within 30 days that your deposit is protected and which scheme they have used, there are three schemes:

- Deposit Protection Service (Custodial and Insured)
- MyDeposits - including deposits that were held by Capita
- Tenancy Deposit Scheme

You can find more information on the Gov.uk website (<https://www.gov.uk/tenancy-deposit-protection/overview>)



In **Scotland**, your landlord must notify you within 30 days of receiving your deposit and let you know how it is protected. In Scotland there are three schemes:

- Letting Protection Service Scotland
- Safedeposits Scotland
- My Deposits Scotland

You can find more information on the Gov.Scot website <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/privaterent/landlords/tenancy-deposit-schemes>)

In **Northern Ireland** the landlord or agent must notify you within 28 days of receiving your deposit that it is protected, and let you know which of the three following schemes they have used:

- Tenancy Deposit Scheme Northern Ireland (TDS)
- My Deposits Northern Ireland(external link)
- Letting Protection Service NI (LPSNI)

You can find more information on the NI Direct website (<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/tenancy-deposit-scheme-introduction-tenants>)

Also in Northern Ireland, within 28 days of your tenancy start date, your landlord must also provide you with:

- Statement of tenancy terms
- Rent book

Contact the local authority if the landlord/agent hasn't provided these.

