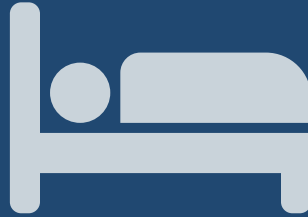
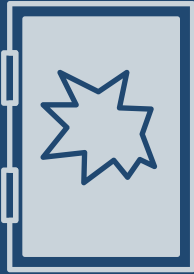


# Moving into a rented property





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## Deposits

### Deposits

This flyer explains more about renting a home in the private rented sector, how to look after your home and where you can get advice and help from.

### Deposits

If you pay a deposit, it should be protected in a deposit protection scheme.

You should get a deposit protection scheme receipt by email, text or post. If you don't get a receipt, get in touch with your landlord/agent and ask for one.

Or you can look for your own deposit through one of these websites:

- Deposit Protection – [www.depositprotection.com](http://www.depositprotection.com)
- The Dispute Service – [www.thedisputeservice.co.uk](http://www.thedisputeservice.co.uk)
- My Deposits – [www.mydeposits.co.uk](http://www.mydeposits.co.uk)

You will need the following:

- deposit amount
- the family name of the person who paid the deposit
- moving in date
- property's postcode.

### If you realise your deposit is not protected

When your tenancy is coming to an end you may realise your deposit is not protected.

If so, you are entitled to have your deposit returned in full. You may also be entitled to compensation, up to three times the deposit.

You should speak to a solicitor, Citizens Advice or another legal advice agency.

### Inventories

An inventory is a document produced by your landlord or someone on their behalf. It lists all the parts of your home that were broken, damaged or marked before you moved in.

A good, accurate inventory protects you from any false claims against your deposit. It means you cannot be blamed for damage that was already there.

You may not be at the property when the inventory is taken. If so, your landlord should go through the inventory with you when you move into your new home.

Check everything on it and look around the property carefully. If

you see anything that isn't on the inventory, point this out and take a photo of it. This will help if you ever get into disagreements with your landlord/agent about the inventory.

Do not sign the inventory before confirming that it is correct and complete.

## Once you have moved in

### Your obligations

After your move you have certain responsibilities as a tenant.

#### *Pay your rent on time*

If you fall behind with the rent, your landlord can evict you and claim the money you owe them. You must keep paying the rent even when you are away.

#### *Pay bills on time*

This might include council tax, gas, electricity and water bills.

#### *Look after the property*

Get your landlord's or agent's permission before doing repairs or decorating.

#### *Be considerate to the neighbours*

You could be evicted for antisocial behaviour if you don't consider your neighbours.

#### *Keep to the rules of your tenancy*

Check your tenancy agreement. In particular, check rules about running

a business from the property, smoking, pets and sub-letting.

#### *Report repairs needed to your landlord/agent*

You risk losing your deposit if a minor repair turns into a major problem because you didn't report it.

### Your landlord's obligations

As a tenant you also have certain rights. Your landlord/agent must:

- maintain the structure and outside of the property
- fit smoke alarms on every floor and carbon monoxide alarms in rooms with appliances using solid fuels such as coal and wood – ask your landlord to install them if they're not there
- make sure smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms are working at the start of your tenancy
- deal with any problems with the water, electricity and gas supply

- maintain any appliances and furniture they have supplied
- carry out most repairs – if something isn't working, report it to your landlord/letting agent as soon as you can
- arrange an annual gas safety check by a Gas Safe engineer (if the property has gas appliances)
- give at least 24 hours' notice of visits or repairs – the landlord/agent cannot walk in whenever they like
- get a licence for the property if necessary
- ensure the property is at least EPC energy efficiency band E
- insure the building to cover the costs of any damage from flood or fire.

## Repairs

Not everything that goes wrong is your landlord's responsibility. You will need to sort out day-to-day things like changing lightbulbs or changing the battery in a doorbell.

Your landlord must fix most things that go wrong with your home. They also have to make sure that your home is safe to live in.

Your landlord has to fix:

- walls, doors and windows
- roof

- gutters and downpipes
- internal and external plasterwork
- staircases
- pipes and wires that supply electricity, gas and water to the property
- toilets, sinks, showers and baths.

## Requesting repairs

You have to tell your landlord that something is broken or dangerous before they have to fix it. This is called 'putting them on notice'.

You should always do this in writing: text, email or letters. Keep copies of these, in case you need to prove that you told them.

You must report your repairs to the landlord/agent as soon as you notice them. This gives your landlord the chance to sort things out quickly and stops the problem getting worse.

Your landlord must carry out repairs within a reasonable period of time. This will depend on how serious the problem is. For example, if your boiler stops working, it's reasonable to ask your landlord to repair it within 48 hours.

If your landlord fails to carry out the repairs, contact us:  
 pshe@lewisham.gov.uk  
 020 8314 6420

## Damp and mould

Damp can cause mould, which is easy to recognise. It looks like blue, green and grey dots that spread across walls, ceilings and windowsills. It has a distinctive stale smell.

One sign of damp could be water pooling on colder surfaces such as windowsills and floors. Sometimes this is caused by something being wrong with the building, such as a leaking roof or blocked gutter. Sometimes the way people live can cause damp or make it worse.

Here's what you can do to stop this being a problem:

- Keep your property heated. If you have a thermostat in your property, use it to keep your home at a constant temperature. 18 degrees will deal with most damp problems.
- Try to avoid sudden rises and falls in temperature. If you have a timer, don't set any heating to come on very high when you get up in the morning. It's better to set the temperature low and the timer to come on earlier.
- Make sure the radiators aren't blocked by clothes or pieces of furniture, so the property can be heated properly.

## Ventilation

Try to keep your windows open. Even the smallest gap will allow the condensation to escape and should help to avoid damp and mould. This is especially important during the colder months.

## Cooking

Cooking on the stove and using kettles produces steam. Cover pans with a lid to minimise condensation.

Always use an extractor fan while cooking if there is one fitted. Leave this on for five minutes after you've finished. This will help ventilate the property.

If there is no extractor fan, open the window. Leave the window open after you have finished cooking for enough time to allow steam to disperse.

## Drying clothes

Drying washing indoors can create a lot of condensation. If possible, dry laundry outdoors or use a tumble dryer. If this is not possible, you should ventilate any room you are using to dry clothes.

## Bathroom

After using the shower or bath, try to ventilate the bathroom. Use the extractor fan (if there is one) or open a window.

Always keep the bathroom door shut until the steam has dispersed. If you leave the door open, the steam will

settle on colder surfaces and may cause damp and mould.

## Ending your tenancy

If you want to move out, you must end your tenancy properly.

If you don't end it as stated in the tenancy agreement, you will still be liable for the rent. This applies even if you are no longer living there.

You need to bear the following in mind:

### Giving notice

Normally there will be a certain notice period that you need to give your landlord/letting agent.

You can only end your tenancy immediately if the landlord agrees to this in writing. They have the right to refuse.

### Deposit

Your landlord will inspect the property to see if any of the tenancy

deposit should be deducted to cover damage or cleaning costs. Try to be there when this happens.

If you don't agree with proposed deductions, contact the relevant deposit protection scheme.

### Rent

Make sure your rent payments are up to date.

### Bills

Don't leave any unpaid bills.

### Condition of the property you are leaving

It's your responsibility to:

- clean the house
- remove all your possessions
- take meter readings
- return all the keys
- give a forwarding address.

# Help and advice

## **Citizens Advice**

[www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

Free, independent, confidential and impartial advice on your rights and responsibilities.

## **Shelter**

[www.shelter.org.uk](http://www.shelter.org.uk)

Housing and homelessness charity who offer advice and support.

## **Crisis**

[www.crisis.org.uk](http://www.crisis.org.uk)

Advice and support for people who are homeless or facing homelessness.

## **Lewisham Council**

[www.lewisham.gov.uk](http://www.lewisham.gov.uk)

To make a complaint about your landlord or agent, or about the condition of your property.

## **Money Advice Service**

[www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk](http://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk)

Free and impartial money advice.

## **The Law Society**

[www.lawsociety.org.uk](http://www.lawsociety.org.uk)

To find a lawyer.

## **Gas Safe Register**

[www.gassaferegister.co.uk](http://www.gassaferegister.co.uk)

For help and advice on gas safety issues.

## **Electrical Safety First**

[www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk](http://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk)

For help and advice on electrical safety issues.

## **Marks Out Of Tenancy**

[www.marksoutoftenancy.com](http://www.marksoutoftenancy.com)

Information for current and prospective tenants.