



Tenant's Guide



Our helpful guide for tenants

NextMoveResidential.co.uk



Contents



1

Before you
start
looking

3

References &
tenancy
agreement

2

Looking for a
property to let
& Viewings

4

Deposits

5

Moving
in

6

Repairs and
maintenance

7

Ending the
tenancy -
giving notice

8

Tenants
note

Before you start looking

Work out how much you can afford each month after regular outgoings and whether you will meet the agents' earning requirements. Most agents will require tenants to be earning 2 ½ times the monthly rent, you can calculate what your earnings need to be by multiplying the rent per calendar month of the property you are interested in by 30.

(eg £1000pcm x 30 = £30,000pa gross salary needed to be considered).

Remember you will also likely need to pay a deposit too.

Deposits cannot be above the cost of 5 weeks rent. Don't forget to budget for things like Internet, TV licence, energy bills and council tax.

Consider what you need from your new home so nothing is overlooked. Once you have your list, the letting agent will clarify anything you're unsure of.

These suggestions will get you started:

- Is there a parking space?
- Are pets permitted?
- What's the water pressure like?
- What furniture/appliances will you need?
- Do you need an outdoor space?
- What's the broadband speed like?
- What heating is in place?

Looking for a property to rent

Look for a local Propertymark Protected letting agent. They will list properties they have to rent on their website or alternatively you could browse properties via Zoopla, Prime Location etc. Draw up a shortlist of properties you like the look of and make a request to view them.

Check out the local transport links if you have a daily commute and how long your journey will take, especially if you're relying on public transport. Get a feel for the area and find out where amenities such as supermarkets are located. If you require schooling find out where the nearest school is in relation to the property, the portals will highlight this. The letting agent should also be able to answer any questions you have about the local area.

Viewings

Make sure you are on time for the viewing or alert the agent should you be running late. Check the space, safety, condition and security whilst on the viewing.

Make sure there is a working smoke alarm on every floor? Is there carbon monoxide alarm in any room with a solid fuel burning appliance? Consider asking the agent are bills included? Who supplies gas and electricity?

Does the property have a Gas Safety Certificate? What is the energy efficiency rating? How long do reported repairs take to fix? Are there any outstanding issues with the house? What are the responsibilities concerning the garden? Is the property furnished? Who is the broadband provider? Are pets allowed?

References

You will need to provide one from your employer/accountant verifying that your earnings are as you've stated.

If you previously lived in a rented property, a reference from your previous landlord is required.

You may also be asked to provide personal references - these can be from a friend or work colleague who can confirm that you are who you say you are and that they believe you will be a good tenant.

The tenancy agreement

Consider for how long you will need to rent the property. Fixed term tenancies are generally offered from six months up to seven years. At the end of the fixed term, you will be given the option to renew for another fixed term. You can no longer be charged for renewing your tenancy.

If you do not renew, your tenancy will become a periodic tenancy and roll-on month-to-month. You can continue to rent on this basis giving you greater flexibility when it comes to ending the tenancy.

However, by the same virtue the landlord can serve a Notice to Quit giving you four weeks' notice to vacate the property. You could see rent increase on a periodic tenancy too, so unless you plan to end the tenancy soon, it makes sense to renew for another fixed term.

Make sure you read through the contract before you sign and note that you will be asked for photographic ID to check you have a legal right to rent in the country. By this point you may have already paid a deposit for the property so make sure you know the law on how your deposit must be protected.

Deposits

A holding deposit reserves a property, the letting agent can only take a maximum of one week's rent which can only be held for a maximum of 15 days (or an agreed alternative deadline). The deposit must be returned to the successful tenant within seven days and—with their consent—can be put towards the first month's rent or tenancy deposit.

If you've paid a holding deposit then it must be returned to you if the landlord pulls out before the agreed deadline. If it's kept by the landlord then the reason for doing so must be outlined to you in writing. The landlord can only retain the holding deposit if you:

- Withdraw your interest in the property
- Fail a right to rent check
- Provide false or misleading information, e.g, incorrect salary
- Do not provide an answer by the deadline

The damage deposit you are required to pay serves as a security against any dilapidations to the property. This is returned at end of tenancy minus deductions for damage or if there's any outstanding rent.

Tenancy deposits are capped at five weeks' rent where the annual rent is less than £50,000, and six weeks' rent where the annual rent is £50,000 or more.

Your landlord can request deductions from the deposit for breaches of the tenancy agreement (such as damage or alterations). However, the amount deducted must be reasonable and take fair wear and tear into consideration

Moving in

Before you move in, an agent will conduct a professional inventory which records the condition of the property and its fixtures and fittings. You get 10 days from the date of move in to make sure you have a good look around the property.

If you spot anything not highlighted in the inventory, take a photo and report it to the landlord or letting agent—regardless of how minor it is. Ideally ask for the damage to be noted in writing and keep any communication you've had.

Taking the time to check the property will help to ensure that there are no deposit disputes at the end of the tenancy.

Our team will be happy to answer any questions you may have regarding the end of tenancy process



Make a note of the meter readings before you start unpacking so the relevant utility company can give you an accurate bill based on what you've used. You will need to notify them giving the readings for gas, electricity and water along with your move-in date, therefore it helps to know what the readings were on day one.

Repairs and maintenance

As a tenant, you are responsible for looking after internal decorations, furniture and equipment and externally, the maintenance and upkeep of the front and rear gardens.

There is an expectation for fair wear and tear to the property and landlords won't be able to deduct this from your deposit so long as it's reasonable.

It is your duty as a tenant to report any maintenance or repair issues to the landlord in a reasonable amount of time to prevent the problem from worsening.

The easiest way of doing this is through the Next Move Residential website and its 24/7 maintenance app Propertyfile.

Minor maintenance works such as changing light fittings and checking smoke alarms work all fall within your responsibilities as a tenant.



Ending the tenancy - giving notice

You will need to review your contract to understand if you are on a fixed-term tenancy or a periodic one. If you are on a fixed-term agreement you will have a 6 month break clause and will need to remain in the property for a minimum of 6 months.

The notice period to end the fixed term will be 2 months. If you are on a periodic tenancy then your tenancy rolls on each time you make a payment so you will need to give 1 months' notice.

The notice should be given in writing and you should always keep a copy for your own records. Include in the letter the property's address, the date you will be leaving, and how the landlord can contact you if they need to.



Tenants notes

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.