

1. Useful definitions

Tenant

You! The person or people renting a property are known as the tenant(s). You'll be the person who will sign a tenancy agreement to occupy a property.

Guarantor

Is an adult who lives and works in the UK and can vouch for your financial obligations under the Tenancy Agreement: namely unpaid rent, bills and any damages not covered by the deposit.

Landlord

The person who owns the house. This is the person who receives the rent you pay for living in the property. They will be responsible for looking after the maintenance of the house and expect you to be careful with their property.

Letting Agent

The person in the middle. They'll show you around the house, answer questions and deal with the administration of moving you into your new home

7. Moving in

Arranging moving day

What time can you get keys to the house?

Using a van? Do you need to hire one, and where can you park? Do you need to pay for parking?

Consider how you're going to physically move everything in – if there's lots of stairs don't overfill boxes you can't then carry. If your friends or family are helping, politely remind them to be careful of knocking into/scratching walls etc. when moving furniture – excessive chips/scratches can cause issues with deposit returns.

Documents

The important stuff to pay attention to...

All the tenants and guarantors will need to have signed their parts of the contract before keys can be taken – if some tenants are moving in later than others, you'll all still need to have signed the contract before the first people can get their keys!

Contract – you should have already read through this but if not, don't be rushed into signing. This is the important bit: This is a legally binding document. Once signed you can't walk away from your contractual commitments – regardless. If, for example, you decide to move out of the house due to a fallout with your housemates you will not be released from your contract so read it to find out what your obligations are.

Passport and visa – by law your landlord/agent must check and record that you have the right to rent in the UK. You will need to show your original passport (and visa if applicable) so a copy can be taken.

Prescribed information – how your security deposit is registered and the process at the end of the tenancy for its return. It is a legal requirement that the landlord/agent gives it to you within 30 days from the start of the tenancy.

9. Property management

You should be told who manages your property. If the landlord

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11. The inventory

Make this work for you

A powerful document that often isn't treated with the importance it deserves. If you're provided with one - pay attention to it! If you are not provided with one, create your own and take photos.

The inventory will list the contents and condition of each item and each room (including décor). Think of it as representing the value of your deposit. If there is a dispute at the end of the tenancy over the condition of the property, the inventory is crucial evidence to support an argument from either the tenant or the landlord. So, it must be accurate!

Example scenario

You move in and the hallway carpet has a stain on it, but it's not listed on the inventory, and you don't change it. At the end of the tenancy there's a dispute as the landlord believes you've caused the stain and wants to claim for a contribution toward replacing the hallway carpet - the inventory doesn't show it was there at the start of the tenancy, so how do you support your argument?

On the day of moving in, you might meet your landlord/agent who will check you into the house and go through the inventory with you. Or you might be given it and asked to check the house yourself before signing and returning it. Either way, ensure you take time to do it and record any damage to structure and/or furnishings for the avoidance of doubt at the end of the tenancy. If something is a little unclear on the inventory it's ok to add more detail. If anything is missed, add it, and make sure you send a copy to the landlord/agent immediately.

You usually have 7 days in which to make amendments to the inventory and you are strongly advised to check it at the very beginning before unpacking your belongings.

Setting up utility

usually pay slightly more for these services, but they can be great if there are concerns about people moving out down the line or not being able to pay their share of the bills.

Council Tax

If everyone is a full-time student, you're exempt from council tax.

Replacing the door / window, plus lock and frame if you've damaged those too (which is very likely).

If you are locked out, try calling your housemates to see if you can borrow their keys or call the landlord to ask if they've a spare set (or they might have a set with a friend / neighbour locally). If you're managed by an agent, they should have a spare set of keys you could borrow.

Moving out

You can clarify with your landlord/agent, but the general rule is that the property should be left in the same condition as you received it, with FAIR wear and tear accepted.

That means if 5 people have lived

Useful links

Higher Education Accommodation Team

+44 (0)020 3627 6101

[-budgeting-planner/](#)

[Student Accommodation in the UK](#)

Money Protection

Property Ombudsman

Return Schemes for end of tenancy

Deposit Scheme

Protection Scheme
