



# Landlord Checklist

## What should my checklist consist of?

Prior to renting out your property, there are a number of checks that should be made to ensure that you are acting legally and responsibly as a landlord. With this in mind, we have compiled the following landlord checklist with the aim of simplifying the process of letting your property.

1. Referencing
2. Right to Rent check (England only)
3. How to Rent guide (England only)
4. Energy Performance Certificate
5. Landlord's Gas safety Inspection Report
6. Tenancy agreement
7. Personal data fair processing notice
8. Inventory and schedule of condition
9. Tenancy Deposit Protection Certificate and prescribed information
10. Insurance
11. Smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors
12. Council Tax
13. Licensing
14. Waste management
15. Good state of repair

## Landlords' legal requirements

It's important that you comply with the law even before a tenancy begins – otherwise not only will you be acting illegally, but you may not be able to regain possession of your property at a later date.

For all tenancies in England and Wales before the tenancy begins you must:

- Issue any 'prescribed information' – these are documents which the law requires you to provide to the tenant:
  - A valid Gas Safety certificate
  - A current Energy Performance Certificate, where required

**In England only**, before the tenancy begins, you must also:

- Conduct a Right to Rent check to ensure the tenant is legally allowed to live in the UK
- Issue the tenant with a copy of the Government's How to Rent guide.

You must also provide the tenant with:

- a tenancy deposit protection certificate and the required information about the tenancy deposit protection scheme, within 30 days of receiving a security deposit

- a personal data privacy notice before you ask for any data, to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). As a landlord, you will be handling your tenant's personal data and will be responsible for keeping it safe.

Legally, you don't need to provide a written tenancy agreement, but we would always advise that you do so to protect yourself and your tenant.

## **Providing a landlord's energy performance certificate**

An Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) indicates the potential energy efficiency and carbon footprint of a property. It rates properties based on a scale of A to G, with A being the most efficient and G being the least efficient.

Since April 2018, landlords have an obligation to ensure that their properties achieve a minimum rating of E for all new tenancies (and for all existing tenancies from April 2020) or risk a penalty of up to £4,000.

An EPC is issued by an accredited domestic energy assessor after inspecting the property.

## **Cleaning a property prior to letting**

Prior to letting a property, landlords should consider whether they wish to rent out on a furnished or unfurnished basis. If letting on an unfurnished basis, they should ensure that the property is well lit, professionally cleaned and in a state of good repair. This will enable potential tenants to better visualise how best to optimise the space.

For furnished lettings, landlords should make sure that the fixtures and fittings are in a good state, and it is also worth getting a professional cleaner prior to viewings if possible. Once let, there should be a plan in place to replacement goods due to fair wear and tear.

You may also include a requirement in your tenancy agreement that the property must be returned in the same condition as it was let, except for 'fair wear and tear'. Providing a professionally cleaned property ensures there's no dispute over the original condition when the tenant leaves.

## **Arranging an Inventory**

An inventory details what items were in the property at the beginning of the tenancy and what condition they were in. This helps landlords protect themselves and their property, as well as making clear what the landlord's expectations are of the tenant. A signed and dated inventory at the beginning of a tenancy ensures that both the landlord and tenant are in agreement about the property's condition and helps to avoid disputes about damage or loss at the end of the tenancy.

You can compile the inventory yourself or you can pay for an independent professional inventory clerk to undertake it.