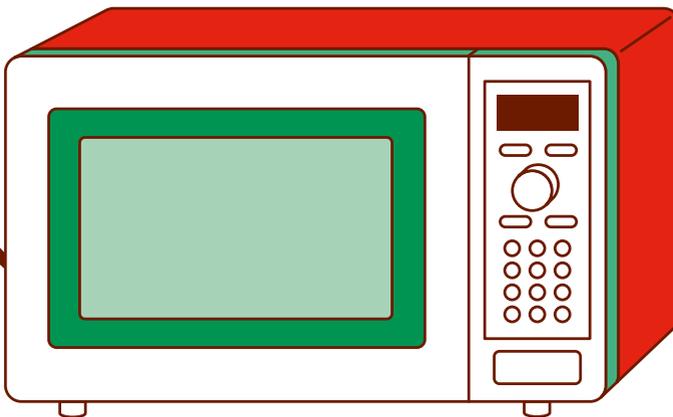


Electrical safety for tenants

Protect yourself in your rented home



Every year around 70 deaths and 350,000 injuries in UK homes are caused by faulty electrics and electrical equipment.

Almost half of all domestic fires are caused by electricity. And if you live in a privately rented property, statistics show that you are at a higher risk of electric shock*.

There is confusion among landlords and tenants over who has responsibility for electrical safety in rented properties. By law, landlords must ensure that electrical installations and wiring are maintained in a safe

condition throughout the tenancy. And tenants should feel obliged to flag electrical problems as soon as they appear, as well as maintain any electrical items they bring into the house.

This simple guide will help you to talk to your landlord about electrical safety, and show you what to look out for in your rented home.

* Ipsos Mori: Electrical Injury Survey 2010. Figures refer to adults only (18+)

The warning signs

If you see any of these in your rented home, they show that the electrical installation is old and may not have had the proper safety checks:

1

Cables

Cables are coated in black rubber, lead or fabric.

2

Fuseboxes

The fusebox has a wooden back, is made of cast iron or there are a number of them in the same area.

3

Sockets

Old round-pin sockets and round light switches, cables covered in fabric hanging from ceiling roses, brown and black switches and sockets mounted in skirting boards.

4

Switches

Light switches mounted on the wall in the bathroom.

Ask your Landlord for:

- **A report** confirming that the electrical installation has been assessed and is safe to use (called an Electrical Installation Condition Report, previously referred to as a Periodic Inspection Report or PIR). Electrical Safety First recommends that a periodic inspection and test of the electrical installation should be carried out by a registered electrician at least every five years or on change of tenancy.
- **Certification** confirming that any recent electrical work meets the UK national standard BS 7671.

Things to check

Protect yourself and those you live with by following these simple steps:

- **Check** that sockets, switches and light fittings are in good condition with no signs of damage such as cracking or burn marks.
- **Check** that leads (flexible cables) on appliances aren't damaged or frayed.
- **Check** that any electrical appliances provided by the landlord have up to date PAT (Portable Appliance Test) stickers on them. This is not a legal requirement, but something that we recommend. It will have been filled in by the electrician who inspected and tested the appliance. Testing is not generally required if the appliance is under a year old.
- **Check** that the fusebox has RCD protection. An RCD is a life-saving device that protects against electric shock and reduces the risk of electrical fires.



1 Plug-in RCD providing protection for a single appliance.



2 Fusebox incorporating an RCD. This is the safest form of RCD protection and should be tested quarterly.

To help you to carry out visual checks in your rented home, download our free Home Electrical Safety Checks smartphone app, available for iPhone and Android. Find out more at electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/visualchecks



Things to remember

What you can do to reduce the risk of electrical accidents and fires.

- **Don't** overload sockets. Visit [electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/overloadingsockets](https://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/overloadingsockets) and use our calculator to make sure that you are safe.
- **Don't** attempt to use electrical appliances from overseas in the UK. Products manufactured for use in other countries may operate at a different voltage and frequency.
- **Don't** attempt any repairs to the electrical wiring or appliances yourself.
- **Don't** take mains-powered electrical products into the bathroom.
- **Don't** touch electrical appliances or switches with wet hands.
- **Don't** plug adaptors into adaptors.
- **Do tell your landlord immediately if you think there is a problem with the electrics.**

If you have reported a problem to your landlord and he or she has refused to put the situation right or ignored your request, you should contact your local authority who will be able to help you. Local authorities will ensure a landlord is meeting their legal obligations and can take enforcement action against them.

You should never try to carry out your own electrical repairs.

Find out more

Electrical

For more information about electrical safety in rented properties visit:

electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk

Fire Safety

For information about fire safety in rented properties visit:

gov.uk/firekills

Gas

For information about gas safety in rented properties, visit:

GasSafeRegister.co.uk

Electrical Safety First

The UK's electrical safety experts

Electrical Safety First is the UK charity dedicated to reducing deaths and injuries caused by electrical accidents. Our aim is to ensure everyone in the UK can use electricity safely.

electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk

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