



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government



Easy  
Read

# Guide to renting

## Guide 2: While you are renting



# Easy Read

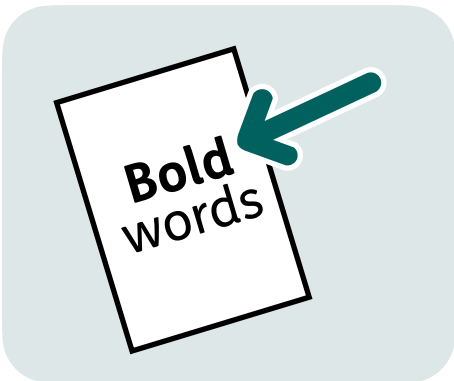


This is an Easy Read version of some information.

It uses easier words and pictures.



Some people may still want help to read it.



Some words are **bold** to show they are important.



We explain bold words if they are hard to understand.

# What is in this booklet

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What do you think about this Easy Read booklet?

Please fill in this survey to tell us what you think: [www.easy-read-online.co.uk/easy-read-feedback-survey](http://www.easy-read-online.co.uk/easy-read-feedback-survey)

# About this guide



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

This guide is from the government.  
It is about renting in England.



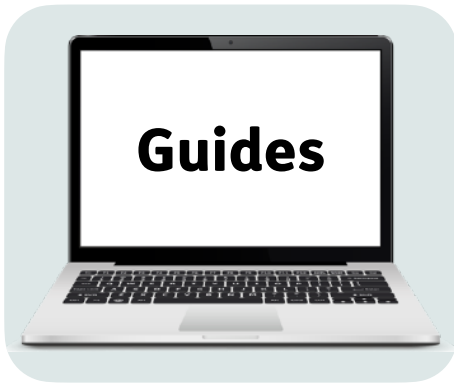
This is guide 2 of 3.  
It will tell you what you must do  
while you are renting a property.



Guide 1 explains what you need to  
know before you start renting a  
property.



Guide 3 explains what will happen  
when you move out of the home  
you are renting.



You can find both guides here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/easy-read-private-renting-in-england>

# Important words and what they mean



This booklet uses some hard but important words.



Hard words that have been used a lot will be explained here, so you can look them up when you need to.



A **landlord** is a person or organisation that owns a property.



A **property** is a place where you can live, like a house or a flat.



**Renting** is when you pay money to a landlord so you can live in their property.



If you pay rent to a landlord to live in their property, then you are called a **tenant**.



A **tenancy agreement** is an agreement between you and your landlord.



A **tribunal** is a special court which makes certain decisions when people cannot agree on something.



An **assured periodic tenancy agreement** is a kind of tenancy agreement that does not have an end date.



A **joint tenancy** is when more than 1 person is on the same tenancy agreement.

This means that all the tenants on the tenancy agreement are responsible for paying rent.



A **letting agent** is a person or company that helps landlords rent out properties.



A **local council** is a group of people who make decisions about things like services in your local area.

# Rent increases



**Rent** is the amount of money you have to pay to live in a property.



A **rent increase** is when your landlord asks you to pay a higher rent.



Your **tenancy agreement** will say how much rent you should pay when you move in.



A **tenancy agreement** is an agreement with your landlord that says you can live in a property.

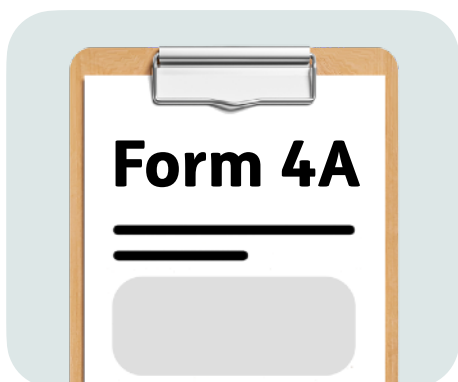
Your landlord cannot:



- Increase your rent for the first year that you live in the property.  
After that, they can only increase your rent up to once a year.



- Ask you to pay rent before it is due (if you started your tenancy on or after the 1st May 2026).



If your landlord wants to increase your rent, they must:

- Fill out and give you a special form called **Form 4A**, and



- Tell you at least 2 months before your rent increases.



Your landlord can tell you about a rent increase in person or by post.



Your landlord might tell you by email if you have already agreed that they can do that.



If you think that the new rent is more than the rent for similar homes in the area, you can ask your landlord to change it.



But they may not change it if they disagree.

# Going to tribunal



A **tribunal** is a special court which makes certain decisions when people cannot agree on something.



If you and your landlord cannot agree on a new rent amount, you can ask the tribunal to decide it for you.

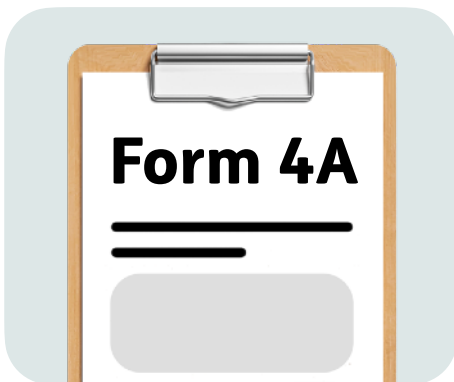


You should tell your landlord if you are applying to the tribunal.

You can only apply to the tribunal if:



- You have an **assured periodic tenancy agreement**.  
An **assured periodic tenancy agreement** is a type of tenancy that does not have an end date.



- Your landlord has given you a Form 4A notice.



- You apply to the tribunal before the new rent is due.

# Asking the tribunal to lower the tenancy's starting rent

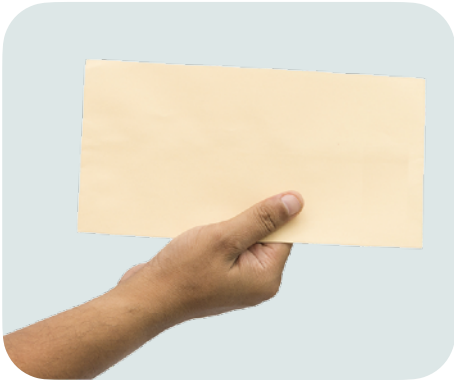


You can ask the tribunal to lower the rent if you think it is higher than the rent of similar homes in the area when you start renting.



You must do this no more than 6 months after you start renting.

# Pets



If you want a new pet to live with you, you must ask your landlord for permission in writing



Your letter should say what kind of pet it is and how much room it will need.



Your landlord will then have 28 days to tell you their decision in writing.



You must give your landlord more information about the pet if they ask.



After you send this information, your landlord gets the rest of the 28 days to decide.

But if this time is less than 7 days, your landlord will get an extra 7 days to decide.



If your landlord agrees to you having a pet and then later changes their mind, you can still keep your pet.



Your landlord should give you a reason if they say no to you having a pet.



If you do not agree with your landlord's decision, you can ask them to change their mind or take them to court.

Your landlord may say no to you having a pet, for example, if:



- Someone else you live with is allergic to your pet.



- The property is too small to have a big pet or lots of pets.

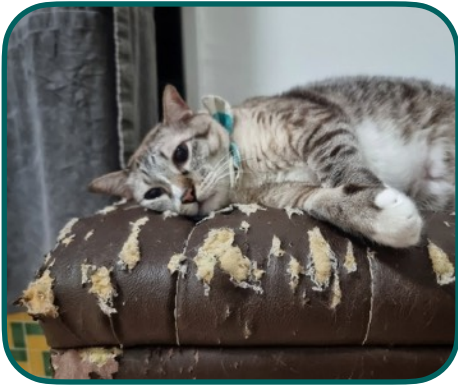


- It is against the law to own the kind of pet you want.



- The **freeholder** does not let people own pets. This is only if the freeholder is not the landlord.

A **freeholder** is someone who owns the land where the property is.



If your pet damages your home, you should tell your landlord.



You may need to pay to fix the damage yourself.

Your landlord may be able to pay for the costs by:



- Using money from insurance.



- Using money from your **tenancy deposit**.

A **tenancy deposit** is money that you pay when you move in.

Your landlord can keep this money until you move out.

# Repairs

## What your landlord must do

Your landlord must repair things like:



- Walls, floors and the outside of the property.



- Sinks, baths, pipes and drains.



- Equipment in the property that uses gas, like gas ovens.

Your landlord must also repair things like:



- Equipment fitted in the property to give you heating and hot water, like boilers.



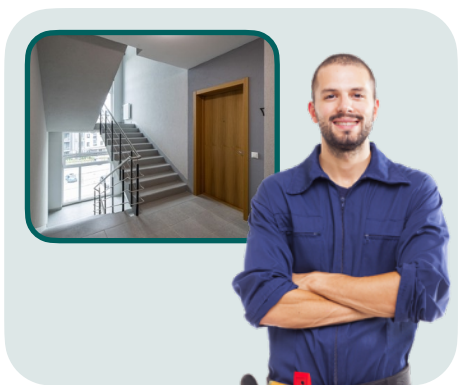
- Electrical wires.



- Any damage they have caused by trying to fix things.



In some properties, there are common areas that you share with other tenants, like the stairs and halls in a block of flats.



If you live in a property like this, your landlord usually also needs to make sure repairs happen in these common areas.

# What you must do



Your landlord cannot make you do repairs that they are supposed to do.



If you or your family and friends damage the property, you must pay to fix it.



You must also pay for repairs if you damage another tenant's flat.

# If your property is damaged



You should contact your landlord if the property needs repairs or has mould.



You should do this straight away if the problems could cause you harm.



Your landlord should tell you when they will do the repairs.



You should keep paying rent while you wait for these repairs.



You can learn more about what to do if your property needs repairs on the government website:

[www.check-how-to-get-repairs-done-in-your-rented-home.form.service.justice.gov.uk/](http://www.check-how-to-get-repairs-done-in-your-rented-home.form.service.justice.gov.uk/)

## If your landlord does not do the repairs



If your landlord does not fix a problem in the property, or it is unsafe to live in, you should contact your local council.



If the council thinks that the problem could seriously harm you or other people, they must do something about it.

# Keeping you safe



Your landlord must make sure that your home is safe and does not cause you harm.

If there is gas equipment in your home, your landlord must get a gas engineer to:



- Set up your gas equipment, like boilers or cookers, and



- Do a gas safety check every year and give you a copy of the gas safety check document.

Your landlord must also:



- Make sure that the electrical system in your home is safe. This includes things like wiring and sockets.



- Get an electrician to do an electrical safety check at least every 5 years.



- Give you a copy of the electrical safety check document.



If your landlord has provided any items in your home that use electricity, like a kettle or fridge, they must also make sure that these are safe.

Your landlord must also:



- Provide a smoke alarm for every floor of your home where there is a room that you use for living or sleeping in.



- Give you a **carbon monoxide** alarm for rooms where there is an item that burns things to make heat, such as a gas boiler or an open fire.



**Carbon monoxide** is a gas that you cannot see or smell.

It can hurt you or kill you if you breathe it in.



- Follow the rules about keeping you safe from fires.



If your landlord has provided you with any of the furniture in your home, they must also make sure this furniture is safe from fire.

## Large HMOs



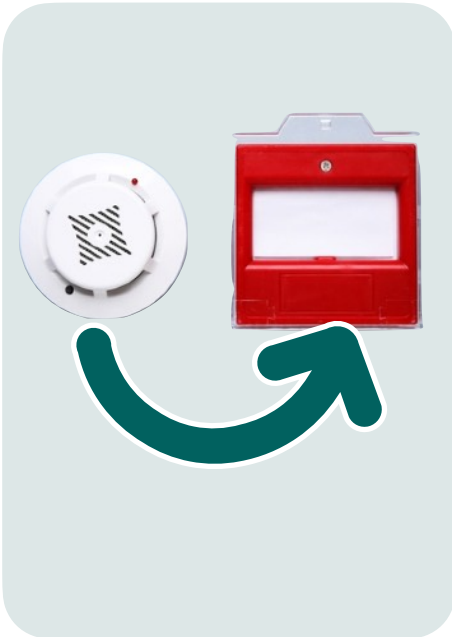
**HMO** stands for **H**ouse in **M**ultiple **O**ccupation.

A **large HMO** is a property that has at least 5 tenants who are not all part of 1 family.



In a large HMO, tenants usually share some common areas, like kitchens and bathrooms.

If you live in a large HMO, your landlord must also provide:



- **Fire alarms.**

**Fire alarms** are usually wired to all the smoke alarms in a building.

If 1 smoke alarm goes off, then the fire alarm will make a sound throughout the whole building so that everyone can leave.



- **Fire extinguishers.**

**Fire extinguishers** are big cans full of water or foam that you can use to put out a fire.

# Harassment



**Harassment** is when your landlord makes you feel unsafe in your home or makes you want to leave.

This could include if your landlord:



- Stops you from using things like electricity or heating.



- Hurts you or says that they will hurt you.



- Says they will change the locks to your home.

# Contact the police

You should contact the police if someone is:



- Hurting you or saying they will hurt you.



- Trying to make you leave your home without permission from the court.



- Trying to take your things out of your home without permission from the court.



The police can help make sure that you are not illegally evicted.

# If you or your landlord wants to end your tenancy



If your landlord makes you move out of your home, this is called an **eviction**.



Your landlord must have a reason to evict you.

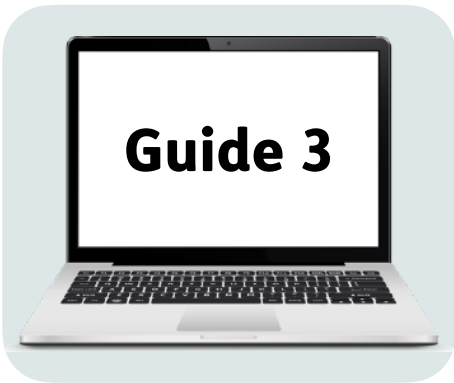
For example, if they need to sell the property.



Landlords must follow the law and eviction rules when evicting you.



If you want to end your tenancy, you will need to tell your landlord. This is called giving your notice.



If you or your landlord wants to end your tenancy, you can look at guide 3 for help and information.

# Advice and support

You get more advice about housing by contacting:



- A lawyer:  
[www.find-legal-advice.justice.gov.uk/](http://www.find-legal-advice.justice.gov.uk/)



- **Citizens' Advice:**  
[www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/contact-us/contact-us/](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/contact-us/contact-us/)



- **Shelter:**  
[www.england.shelter.org.uk/get\\_help](http://www.england.shelter.org.uk/get_help)



You can also get further support with housing by contacting your local council.

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