

10 rights of private tenants

This factsheet sets out 10 important legal rights you have as a tenant if you rent from a private landlord and you have an assured shorthold tenancy.

If you are an assured shorthold tenant who is renting a room, flat or house from a private landlord, you have the 10 rights on this factsheet. Most tenants with private landlords are assured shorthold tenants (ASTs). You have these rights even if you don't have a written tenancy agreement.

1. Information about your tenancy

If you ask your landlord, they must put in writing some of the basic facts about your tenancy – the date it started, the rent and any provision for increasing it, and the length of your tenancy agreement.

2. Address for your landlord

Your landlord must tell you where in England or Wales you can write to them.

3. Deciding who comes into your home

You have the right to decide who can come into your home. Your landlord does not have the right to enter your home without your permission. But you must allow reasonable access for inspections and repairs.

4. Your right to enjoy your home

A minority of landlords make life difficult for tenants, eg by constantly visiting at unsocial hours or by cutting off the gas and electricity. It is illegal to harass or illegally evict you.

5. Protecting your deposit

Your landlord must protect your tenancy deposit in a government-approved scheme. If they don't do this, the court can order your landlord to pay you compensation. It is more difficult for your landlord to evict you if they don't protect your deposit.

6. Your right to have repairs carried out

Your landlord is responsible for most repairs, including to the boiler, heating, roof and windows. If there is disrepair, inform the landlord straight away – preferably in writing. You need to consider the risk that your landlord may take steps to evict you rather than do the work. But you have some protection from 'revenge evictions' if your tenancy started (or was renewed) on or after 1 October 2015.

7. Your right to live in a safe home

Your landlord must install working a smoke alarm on each floor of your home. They must also install a carbon monoxide alarm in any room with a solid fuel appliance or burner. Solid fuels include coal and wood. Your landlord must arrange for any gas appliances to be inspected every year by a Gas Safe registered engineer.

8. After the end of a fixed-term tenancy

If you have a tenancy for a fixed period (eg for 6 or 12 months) you do not have to move out when that period ends. Your tenancy automatically becomes a 'periodic' tenancy, if you do not sign up to a new agreement.

9. Right to remain in your home

Your landlord can only evict you by serving the correct legal notice and then getting a possession order from the court. Even then, you have right to stay until they get a bailiff's warrant to evict you.

10. Record of rent payments

Your landlord only has to give you a rent book if you pay your rent weekly. If possible pay your rent through a bank or post office, or by cheque, so you have a record of what you have paid. If you pay in cash, get receipts.

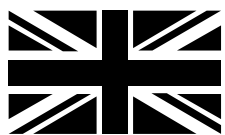
This factsheet is for assured shorthold tenants only. The 10 rights may not apply to you if:

- your landlord lives in the same property as you
- your tenancy started before 28 February 1997
- your accommodation was provided with your job.

Further advice

You can get further advice from Shelter's free* housing advice helpline (0808 800 4444), a local Shelter advice service or local Citizens Advice office, or by visiting shelter.org.uk/advice or adviceguide.org.uk

*Calls are free from UK landlines and main mobile networks.



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Note

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