

Property letting checklist

This checklist accompanies the book “How To Be A Landlord”, and applies to single-let properties (not HMOs). It primarily relates to properties in England, but I’ve attempted to note where the process differs for properties in Scotland and Wales.

For all the details about every step on this list, buy How To Be A Landlord as a paperback, audiobook or for Kindle: <http://www.propertygeek.net/landlordbook>

Get permission

Covered in full in [How To Be A Landlord](#), Chapter 1

- ☐ If it's a flat, get consent from your freeholder
- ☐ If you used to live in the property, get consent from your mortgage lender to rent it out or switch to a buy-to-let mortgage
- ☐ If it's in Scotland or Wales, register with the appropriate government scheme
- ☐ Check whether the property is in an area that requires a license (Google “[local authority] selective licensing”) and apply if necessary
- ☐ Register for council tax, and apply for any exemptions you’re entitled to
- ☐ If this is your first property and it’s owned in your own name, notify HMRC
- ☐ If you meet the definition of an “overseas landlord” and this is your first property, fill in HMRC form NRL1i (or NRL2i if the property is owned by a company) if you want to receive your rent without basic rate tax deducted

Prepare the property

Covered in full in [How To Be A Landlord](#), Chapters 2 to 4

- ☐ Make sure you have appropriate buildings insurance (optional if you don’t have a mortgage, but you’d be mad not to). If it’s a flat, check that buildings insurance is arranged by the freeholder and charged to you either as part of your service charge or separately
- ☐ Do any work needed to bring the property’s condition up to scratch

- ☐ Furnish the property, if you decide to
- ☐ Consider getting landlord contents insurance
- ☐ Obtain an Energy Performance Certificate, if the property doesn't already have one
- ☐ If there's gas, get a gas safety certificate (and make a note for 11 months' time to start arranging its renewal)
- ☐ Fit a carbon monoxide alarm (not mandatory in England and Wales except in rooms with appliances that burn solid fuel; mandatory in Scotland for rooms with *any* kind of fuel-burning appliance, including gas)
- ☐ Consider getting an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) (mandatory in Scotland)
- ☐ Consider getting a PAT test on any appliances you're supplying (mandatory in Scotland)
- ☐ Make sure any furniture complies with fire safety regulations
- ☐ Make sure a smoke alarm is fitted on every floor (more stringent requirements in Scotland – check Bonus 3 of the book for full details)
- ☐ Conduct a Legionella risk assessment
- ☐ Write the house manual, if you'll be providing one

Find tenants and make reference checks

Covered in full in [How To Be A Landlord](#), Chapters 6 to 11

- ☐ Decide how much rent to charge
- ☐ Get photos taken
- ☐ Write the advert
- ☐ Advertise the property
- ☐ Conduct viewings
- ☐ Negotiate and accept an offer
- ☐ Take the holding fee and/or application fee (no fees allowed in Scotland)

- ☐ Get proof of ID
- ☐ Establish their Right To Rent (not required in Scotland)
- ☐ Conduct tenant references
- ☐ Ask for a guarantor if necessary

Set up the tenancy

Covered in full in [How To Be A Landlord](#), Chapters 12 to 18

- ☐ Draw up the tenancy agreement
- ☐ Supply the tenants with a draft copy for them to study (ideally seven days ahead of move-in)
- ☐ Check the property over for any final defects
- ☐ Consider professional cleaning
- ☐ Conduct an inventory
- ☐ Before allowing the tenants to move in, make sure you have the first month's rent and the deposit in your bank account in cleared funds (i.e. not just a cheque!)

On move-in day, provide the tenants with the following documents, and require them to sign to say they've received them:

- ☐ The tenancy agreement
 - ☐ The EPC
 - ☐ The gas safety certificate (if applicable)
 - ☐ The EICR and PAT test (if applicable)
 - ☐ The "How to rent" leaflet (if the property is in England)
 - ☐ The tenant information pack (if the property is in Scotland)
 - ☐ The house manual (if you're providing one)
 - ☐ A copy of the prescribed information and T&Cs for the deposit scheme
 - ☐ A copy of the inventory for them to sign and return
 - ☐ A standing order form, if that's how the rent will be paid
 - ☐ A photograph or photocopy of the keys they're being given
-
- ☐ If they're not already in the house manual, make sure manuals for any appliances are in the property
-
- ☐ Take meter readings

- ☐ Register the deposit with a government scheme
- ☐ Give final readings and new tenants' details to the utility suppliers
- ☐ Give new tenants' details to the council tax department of the local authority

Keep the tenancy running smoothly

Covered in full in [How To Be A Landlord](#), Chapters 19 to 26

- ☐ Make a diary note of every rent due date and chase it up if it's late
- ☐ Book in an inspection (I recommend six weeks after move-in, then at least twice yearly)
- ☐ Make a diary note for two months before the end of the fixed-term tenancy
- ☐ When the gas safety certificate is renewed, make a diary note for a month before its new expiry date
- ☐ Negotiate the renewal of the tenancy

Move the tenants out

Covered in full in [How To Be A Landlord](#), Chapters 27 to 30

- ☐ Before move-out, make sure tenants are clear on their responsibilities and what is expected in order for them to get their deposit back in full
- ☐ Conduct a check-out inspection
- ☐ Take meter readings
- ☐ Contact the utility companies with the meter readings, the tenant's forwarding address, and the details of the new occupant
- ☐ Agree on how much (if any) of the deposit should be deducted
- ☐ Arrange the return of the deposit with the deposit protection scheme you've used