



Moving in

What to do when you move into private rented accommodation



What to do when you move in...



Get a written agreement and read it carefully –

- *to understand your rights and responsibilities*

Agree an inventory or check-in report –

- *take photos as an extra safeguard*

Take meter readings –

- *so you don't get lumbered with the previous tenant's bill*

Get your landlord or letting agent's contact details

- *in case of an emergency*

Licence or tenancy agreement



There's a big difference between a licence and a tenancy

- you have a licence if you live with your landlord
- you have a licence if you live in accommodation provided by your employer
- you are a tenant if you rent a room or a whole property and the landlord doesn't live there

Key difference between a licence and a tenancy



Licence	Tenancy
Can only be used by a resident landlord or when accommodation is attached to employment	Most tenancies are 'Assured Shorthold Tenancies' (or ASTs for short)
No minimum period	Six month minimum period
Landlord is only required to give reasonable notice	Landlord required to give at least two months' notice to leave (unless arrears or ASB)
Landlord can usually evict without a court order	Landlord can only evict through court proceedings
Landlord is not obliged to protect deposit	Landlord obliged to protect deposit
Landlord determines house rules	Tenant can give four weeks' notice



What you must do



Whether you have a licence or a tenancy agreement, you must...

- **Pay your rent**
- **Look after the property**
- **Not be a nuisance**
- **Not sublet or take in a lodger without permission**
- **Report repairs immediately**
- **Ensure you know how to operate the boiler, stopcock and fuse box**
- **Know where the meters are located**

What your landlord must do

- **Maintain the structure and the exterior of the property**
- **Fix problems with the water, electricity and gas supply**
- **Maintain any appliances and furniture provided**
- **Carry out essential repairs**
- **Arrange an annual gas safety check by a Gas Safe engineer**
- **Give at least 24 hours' notice before a visit**

If you are a tenant, your landlord must provide...

A gas safety certificate

- *Your landlord must provide one each year*

Deposit paperwork

- *If you paid a deposit it must be protected*
- *Your landlord must provide the official information*

Energy Performance Certificate

- *The energy performance can affect your bills. Your landlord must provide one (unless you live in an HMO*)*

If you live in a HMO*, your landlord must also provide...

- *working smoke alarms*
- *a statement of their terms*

** House of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) are houses shared by unrelated people*





Claiming Housing Benefit

- Respond to letters from Housing Benefit immediately
- Report any changes to Housing Benefit straight away

Avoid the stress of rent arrears...

- Claim Housing Benefit as soon as you move in
- Ask for Housing Benefit to be paid by direct to your landlord
- Set up a direct debit to pay your shortfall or service charge
- Check your Housing Benefit online

Find out more

Housing & private renting

[www.harrow.gov.uk/
singlehomeless](http://www.harrow.gov.uk/singlehomeless)

www.gov.uk/private-renting

Benefits

www.gov.uk/browse/benefits

www.entitledto.co.uk/

Housing Benefit

[www.gov.uk/housing-
benefit/overview](http://www.gov.uk/housing-benefit/overview)

[www.voa.gov.uk/corporate/Rent
Officers/LHADirect.html](http://www.voa.gov.uk/corporate/RentOfficers/LHADirect.html)



Get in touch?

For more information, please contact Harrow Council's Housing Needs Team:

@ housing.advice@harrow.gov.uk

☎ 020 8424 1093

