

If you are thinking  
about renting or  
letting a property...

**Read this First!**

# A FREE Guide to Renting Private Property Important Checklists

What to ask before you visit | Housing & Property | Fire Safety | Police & Security | Tenancy Agreement



Safety checklists for use when looking for  
or providing rented accommodation



**Photocopy the checklists and use them every time you view a property.**

**This main guide and checklist, provided as a separate Acrobat PDF files, can be downloaded FREE from [www.homestamp.com](http://www.homestamp.com)**

On our website you can also find the full list of partner agencies, and further information and advice on renting property.

## Using this Checklist

The checklists on the following pages allow you to check properties you are viewing for rent, and if you are a landlord, covers all the safety aspects that prospective tenants will be looking at.

To get the most out of this checklist, when you are viewing properties for rent, make sure you read all the information in the main guide "A FREE Guide to Renting Private Property."

View as many properties as you can, and if you are interested in a property, visit the location at different times, during the day and on the evening, and on different days of the week.

Checklists are divided into sections:

<b>1. What to ask before you visit</b>	<b>i</b>
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And if you choose this property:	
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By using this checklist you can keep a record of properties you have looked at and use the checklists in helping you reach a decision.

### Disclaimer

The information contained in this guide is for general guidance. The application and impact of laws can vary widely based on the specific facts involved and you are advised to seek further specialist advice if you are at all uncertain as to their application in relation to your business. Given the changing nature of laws, rules and regulations, and the inherent hazards of electronic communication, there may be delays, omissions or inaccuracies in the information contained in this guide.

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Information contained in this document is correct at the time of going to publication.

# 1. What to ask before you visit

**This section gives a list of questions you should consider asking the landlord or letting agent, before you view a property.** There are many legal areas which landlords must comply with - these areas are highlighted in questions. For further reference see the main guide.

Address of Property:
Postcode:

1. How much is the rent? £  :
2. When is it to be paid? ☐ Weekly ☐ Monthly
3. Does the landlord accept Housing Benefit / Local Housing Allowance? *(if applicable)*  
☐ Yes ☐ No
4. Do you have to pay rent in advance? ☐ Yes ☐ No
5. Who pays the water, gas and electricity bills? ☐ Tenant ☐ Landlord
6. In the case of communal areas or services, is there a service charge and, if so, who pays for it?  
☐ No ☐ Yes, paid by
7. Which Council area is the property located in?
8. Who pays the Council Tax? ☐ Tenant ☐ Landlord
9. Is there a written agreement? ☐ Yes ☐ No
10. How much notice do you have to give if you want to leave?
11. Do you have to pay a rent deposit? ☐ No ☐ Yes If yes, how much? £  :
12. Where will the rent deposit be held? *(It is a legal requirement for the rent deposit to be held by one of the following agencies. See page 10 of the main guide.)*  
☐ Deposit Protection Service ☐ My Deposit ☐ Tenancy Deposit Scheme
13. Is the landlord a member of a Landlord's Accreditation Scheme or a professional body?  
*(See page 13 of the main guide)*  
☐ No ☐ Yes, state:

# 1. What to ask before you visit

14. What type of heating does the property have?

☐ Gas ☐ Electric ☐ Other, state:

15. Is there an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)? *(This is a legal requirement - EPCs can be used to directly compare running cost of different premises. You may want to check costs if this certificate was issued some time ago. For further information see page 9 of the main guide).*

☐ Yes ☐ No

How much does the EPC show it will cost each year for

Lighting:  £ :  Heating:  £ :  Hot Water:  £ :

Date certificate issued:

16. If there is a gas supply to the property, does it have a Gas Safety Certificate less than 12 months old? *(This is a legal requirement)*

☐ Yes ☐ No

17. Is there an electrical test certificate from the National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contractors (NICEIC) or other suitably qualified electrical engineer?  
*(While this is not a legal requirement, it is recommended electrical safety should be checked)*

☐ Yes ☐ No

18. Is the property:

☐ furnished ☐ part furnished ☐ unfurnished?

19. If furniture is supplied, does it conform to the appropriate fire regulations? *(See page 25 in the main guide)*

☐ Yes ☐ No

20. Is there an inventory carried out at the start and end of the tenancy? *(A detailed inspection and list of the condition and contents of the property, agreed and signed by all parties)*

☐ Yes ☐ No

21. Is the property covered by insurance? *(Make sure that the insurance covers legal liability to cover you in the case of injury or damage)*

☐ Yes ☐ No

22. Is the property in a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme area?

☐ Yes ☐ No

## 1. What to ask before you visit

23. Who is responsible for garden/out buildings maintenance?



Tenant



Landlord

THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN TOLD AND CONSIDER IF THE PROPERTY IS WORTH VISITING?

## 2. Housing & Property

This checklist asks you to look at the state of the property. Tick the boxes provided at the end of every question. Remember, not all questions will fit the property you look at.

WHERE YOU TICK THE 'NO' COLUMN, ASK YOURSELF **SHOULD I MOVE IN?**

### Outside the Property

	Yes	Not Sure	No
1. Are the bricks and joints between them in good condition?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Are all external doors in good condition and can they be opened and closed easily?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Are the windows in good condition, free from rot and glazing intact?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Do the guttering and down pipes look in good condition? (Look for water stains down the brickwork from any broken or missing sections as this can cause serious internal dampness)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Are there any missing or slipped slates or tiles to the roof?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Does the chimney look safe?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Is there a television aerial and does it look safe?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Are the garden and outbuildings in good condition?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Are there any dangerous changes in garden level, steep steps without handrails or damaged paths or steps?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Inside the Property

10. Do all doors and windows open and close easily (try to open) and are windows draught free?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. Are the premises clean and is it free from any musty (damp) smell?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. Do the locks work correctly and are they safe and secure? (Try them!)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. Does the property have full working central heating or suitable alternative? (Check it!)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. Do all windows above ground floor have opening restrictors? (important if there will be children in household)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. Is the premises free from holes and gaps in walls, around doors etc. where pests could enter or where fire could spread from room to room within the property?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. Do the stairs appear safe and fitted with a secure handrail all the way up?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17. Are all floorboards even and safe and there are no other trip hazards?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18. Are all areas free from mould growth, condensation or serious dampness?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## 2. Housing & Property

	Yes	Not Sure	No
19. Is there a supply of hot and cold water to all sinks, bath and showers? (Try the taps!)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20. Does the property have enough light, either natural or artificial?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21. Are the sockets and light fittings all modern (i.e. not round pinned plug sockets, 'Bakelite' fittings, black rubber covered wires or twin twisted wires to ceiling light fittings?)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22. Are there enough plug sockets in all rooms? (At least two double or four single sockets)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Kitchens

23. Are there enough work surfaces and cupboards?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24. Are they secure and in good condition?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
25. Is there a cooker, does it work correctly? (Check it)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26. Is there a fridge, does it work correctly? (Check it)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
27. Check any other appliances supplied - are they in a safe condition and in good working order? (Check to see if plugs are labelled and in date).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
28. Is there an extractor fan, does it work correctly? (Try it)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
29. Is the sink secure, clean and there are no leaks from the pipes beneath the sink?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
30. Is there sufficient natural and artificial lighting?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Bathroom and Toilet

31. Is the toilet clean, in good working order (no leaks, fixed seat etc.) and fitted securely?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
32. Is there plenty of light, either natural or artificial?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
33. If there is an extractor fan, does it work? (Try it)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
34. Is the wash hand basin, bath and/or shower in working order (try taps etc!) and clean?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
35. Does the window open and close easily? (Try it)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<b>Comments:</b>

### 3. Fire Safety

In the case of a House in Multiple Occupation or 'bedsits' (see the definitions on page 4 of the main guide) extra fire safety requirements may be required. However, fire safety is similar in most types of property that you are likely to view.

**The aim of most of the items in this checklist is to protect the escape routes from fire and keep them relatively smoke free, allowing you enough time to escape safely.**

Smoke alarms can give you those precious few minutes of warning, which could help you and your family to get out alive, but they do not prevent a fire from starting nor do they put a fire out. When you move in to a property, sensible fire precautions will greatly reduce the risk of a fire starting.

Tick the boxes provided at the end of every question. Remember, not all questions will fit the property you look at.

WHERE YOU TICK THE 'NO' COLUMN, ASK YOURSELF **SHOULD I MOVE IN?**

#### Inside the Property

	Yes	Not Sure	No
1. Do the front and back doors open easily and fully? <i>(For security of doors please see Police advice on page 31 of the main guide)</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Are the doors openable from the inside without the use of a key? <i>(This is essential if a flat, studio, bedsit or House in Multiple Occupation)</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Are all the internal doors in place, fit well into the frames and close and latch easily?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Is the loft hatch cover in place?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Are ceilings free from any visible cracks or holes?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Are halls, stairs and landings clear of obstructions and storage? <i>(Check for trip hazards)</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. If other escape routes are provided e.g. external stairs, do the access door(s) / window(s) open easily and fully?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Could you or anyone else who is going to live in the property physically get through any window provided for escape?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Escape routes may pass through adjoining rooms or property. If this is the case, are these areas clear of obstructions and storage - can you walk the route from start to finish?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Are any other escape routes clearly marked and free from obstructions?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

#### Fire alarm system

11. If a fire alarm or smoke detection system is fitted, is it working? <i>(Ask for a test and to see the test certificate)</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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#### Emergency lighting

12. If emergency lighting is fitted, does it work? <i>(Ask for a test and to see the test certificate)</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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### 3. Fire Safety

## Firefighting equipment

Yes      Not      No  
Sure

13. Are there fire extinguishers and fire blankets provided?



## Outside the Property

14. Where external stairs/ladders are provided, do they appear to be in good condition and would you use them in an emergency?



15. Are they free from obstructions, e.g. storage, vegetation, etc?



16. If lighting is provided, does it work? (Ask for test)



17. Do all escape routes lead to a place of safety away from the building?



18. Is there a way out of enclosed yards/gardens, etc?



## Comments:

[illegible]

## 4. Police & Security

This checklist is by no means an exhaustive list, but will give you a good idea as to whether the property that you are viewing has adequate security or not. For further information see Property Security in the main guide on page 31.

The following checklist is divided between the exterior of the property and the interior.

WHERE YOU TICK THE 'NO' COLUMN, ASK YOURSELF **SHOULD I MOVE IN?**

### Burglary

	Yes	Not Sure	No
1. Has this house been free from criminal activity for the last six months?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. If it has been broken into, has the point of entry and has the security been improved since? <i>(A property broken into is susceptible to another burglary within approximately two months if its security is not improved)</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Have you done the burglary test? <i>(Could <b>you</b> easily break into the house if you lost your key?)</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Can your neighbours view your home at the front?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Can your neighbours view your home at the back?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Is the front of the property visible from the street? <i>(especially front and ground floor windows)</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Outside lighting

7. Does the property have outside lighting?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Does the outside lighting work? <i>(Check all lights work properly)</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Intruder alarms

9. Does the property have an intruder alarm?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Does the intruder alarm work? <i>(Check all alarms work properly)</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Rear garden

11. Is the rear garden secure?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. If there is an access to the rear of the property via a side alleyway, does it have a lockable side gate? <i>(If so, check that the gate is in use and that the key is readily available for all that need it in an emergency)</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. Is there a continual high solid barrier around the back garden? <i>(This could be a wall, fence or prickly plants e.g. roses)</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. Is the rear of the property maintained and clear of places for people to hide?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## 4. Police & Security

### External Doors

Yes    Not  
Sure    No

*For further information on door security, and an explanation on door security see page 31 of the main guide.*

#### Front door:

- |  |                       |                       |                       |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 15. Is there a door viewer or window to see callers outside?                           | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 16. Is there a door chain, limiter or similar restrictor?                              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 17. Is there an automatic deadlocking rimlatch?  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 18. Is there a quality mortice lock? (5 lever mortice thumb turn lock)                 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 19. Is the door frame in good condition? (Look for signs of damp, damage, wear or rot) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 20. Are hinges sturdy and reinforced with hinge bolts?                                 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 21. Is the door a multi-point security PVC door?                                       | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

#### Back Door:

- |  |                       |                       |                       |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 22. Is there a 5 lever mortice lock?   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 23. Are there any additional security bolts?   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 24. Is the door frame in good condition? (Look for signs of damp, damage, wear or rot) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

#### Patio door

- |  |                       |                       |                       |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 25. Does the door lock top and bottom and has an anti-lift device? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|

#### French windows

- |   |                       |                       |                       |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 26. Is there a 5 lever mortice lock?                              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 27. Are mortice bolts fitted to the top and bottom of the window? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 28. Does it have hinge bolts and frame reinforcement?             | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

#### Internal Doors

*Internal doors should have the same level of security as the exit doors above if it is in effect your front door, e.g. in properties that are divided into bedsits or flats.*

- |   |                       |                       |                       |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 29. Is the door and frame in good condition?        | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 30. Does it have a 5 lever mortice thumb turn lock? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

## 4. Police & Security

## Windows and window locks:

Yes      Not      No  
Sure

For further information on window types and security see page 33 of the main guide.

31. Do all ground floor windows and windows over a balcony or flat roof have locks? ☒ ☐ ☐
  32. Do the windows have a multi-point locking system? ☐ ☐ ☐
  33. Is the condition of window frames satisfactory? *(See page 31 of the main guide for further advice on windows)* ☐ ☐ ☐
  34. Are the windows double glazed? ☐ ☐ ☐

[illegible]

## 5. Tenancy Agreement

**Below is a list of areas you should be satisfied with BEFORE signing or agreeing any tenancy agreement. Use the main guide for any additional information and guidance.**

The main guide also contains a range of advice once you have moved in, so keep it safe as a reference document, should you need further advice! Enjoy your new home!

**IT IS BETTER TO ASK ANY QUESTIONS NOW,  
HOWEVER INSIGNIFICANT YOU MAY THINK THEY ARE,  
PRIOR TO AGREEING TO YOUR TENANCY AGREEMENT.**

- ☐ Are you clear how much you will be paying in rent, by when, how and to whom?
- ☐ If you are paying rent in advance, have you budgeted for this?
- ☐ If you are paying a rent deposit, are you clear about which scheme it is to be paid into?
- ☐ Are you clear who is responsible for paying what bills, by when and how?
- ☐ What are the meter readings?
- ☐ Are you clear on the length and term of your tenancy and the notice period which should be given, when you choose to move out?
- ☐ Have you checked the Energy Performance Certificate?
- ☐ Have you checked the Gas Safety Certificate?
- ☐ Have you checked for an electric test certificate?
- ☐ Are you satisfied by the condition of the building and its facilities?
- ☐ Are you sure that the property is as safe from fire as possible?
- ☐ Have you checked that any furnishings conform to fire safety regulations?
- ☐ Have you checked that the property is as secure as possible?
- ☐ Do you know who to contact for repairs or in an emergency?
- ☐ Do you have the name, address and telephone number of the landlord/managing agent where notices can be served?
- ☐ Has a full inventory check been completed to the satisfaction of both parties, and there is written agreement for you both to sign?
- ☐ Are there any items that need to be replaced or repairs that need doing? You should agree with the landlord, in writing, any work that should be completed and by when, or insist it is undertaken before you agree the contract or move in.
- ☐ Have you confirmed property insurance and what is covered as part of this insurance?
- ☐ Check you are supplied with all keys to the property, including window locks etc!