

Y-US LETTINGS & MAINTENANCE LTD

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# The Tenant Guide

Your practical handbook for renting with us — answering your questions on moving in, paying rent, reporting repairs, your rights, and everything in between.

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*Your home. Our support.*

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*Your guide at a glance*

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# Welcome

*Who we are and how this guide helps you.*

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Welcome to your new home. We're Y-Us Lettings & Maintenance Ltd — we manage this property on behalf of your landlord, and we're your main point of contact for everything from repairs to tenancy questions.

We've written this guide to answer the questions tenants ask most often — in plain English, without the jargon. Keep it handy throughout your tenancy.

## Q Who do I contact if I need something?

Us. Whether it's a leaky tap or a question about your agreement — we're your first point of contact.

- **Phone:** 01733 895630 (Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm)
- **Email:** [help@whyuslettings.co.uk](mailto:help@whyuslettings.co.uk)
- **Emergency out of hours:** 07534 493611

## Q Are you a proper, registered company?

Yes. We're registered with Companies House (15106820), the ICO for data protection (ZB614557), the Property Redress Scheme (PRS42402), and HMRC for anti-money laundering. Your deposit is held by the Deposit Protection Service, and all client money is protected by Money Shield.

## Q Is my deposit safe?

Absolutely. It's held by the Deposit Protection Service (DPS) — a government-approved scheme. We don't hold it; they do. Neither we nor the landlord can touch it without your agreement.

# Before You Move In

*What happens between applying and getting your keys.*

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## Q What do you need from me?

- **Photo ID** — valid passport or UK driving licence
- **Proof of address** — recent utility bill, bank statement, or council tax bill
- **Right to Rent documents** — passport, biometric residence permit, or share code
- **Proof of income** — recent payslips or SA302/accounts
- **Completed application form**

## Q What's the referencing process?

We run checks on identity, credit history, income, employment, and previous tenancy. It typically takes 2–5 working days. You can speed things up by telling your employer and previous landlord to expect a reference request.

## Q What if I don't pass referencing?

Don't panic. There may still be options — such as providing a UK-based guarantor (who goes through the same checks) or paying some rent in advance. We'll explain your options clearly.

## Q What will you give me before I move in?

- Your signed tenancy agreement
- The government "How to Rent" guide
- Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)
- Current Gas Safety Certificate
- Deposit protection certificate and prescribed information
- Inventory / schedule of condition

# Fees

*What you'll pay, what you won't, and what the law says.*

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## Q Do I pay any fees to rent through you?

Under the Tenant Fees Act 2019, the only payments we can ask for are:

- **Holding deposit:** Maximum 1 week's rent
- **Tenancy deposit:** Maximum 5 weeks' rent
- **Rent:** As agreed in your tenancy agreement

We do NOT charge application fees, referencing fees, admin fees, or checkout fees.

## Q Are there any other charges I might face?

Only in specific circumstances:

- **Changes you request to the tenancy:** Capped at £50
- **Late rent (14+ days overdue):** Interest at 3% above Bank of England base rate
- **Lost keys:** Reasonable replacement cost
- **Early termination (your request):** Reasonable costs until a new tenant is found

## Q What about bills?

Unless your tenancy agreement says otherwise, you're responsible for gas, electricity, water, council tax, TV licence, broadband, and contents insurance. These are set up in your name — we don't handle them.

### GOOD TO KNOW

No hidden fees. Ever. If you're unsure about a charge, just ask us. If it's not listed above, we can't charge it.

# Your Deposit

*How it's protected and how you get it back.*

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## Q Where does my deposit go?

Straight to the **Deposit Protection Service (DPS)** — a government-approved custodial scheme. The money is held by them, not by us or the landlord. Nobody can access it without your agreement or a formal dispute decision.

## Q When do I get it back?

After your tenancy ends and the checkout inspection is completed. If no deductions are needed, we aim to process the return within 10 working days. If deductions are proposed, we'll send you a breakdown with evidence.

## Q What could be deducted?

- Damage beyond fair wear and tear
- Cleaning (if not returned in acceptable condition)
- Missing items
- Unpaid rent

Normal wear — like slight scuffs on walls or a carpet that's a bit less vibrant after two years — is NOT chargeable. A hole in the wall or stained carpet IS.

## Q What if I disagree with a deduction?

Tell us. We'll try to reach an agreement. If we can't, you can raise a free dispute through the DPS — an independent adjudicator reviews the evidence and makes a binding decision.

### HELPFUL TIP

Protect yourself: take dated photos on moving-in day. Check the inventory carefully and report discrepancies within 7 days. This is your best evidence if there's ever a dispute.

# Your Tenancy Agreement

*What it means, in plain English.*

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## Q What type of tenancy do I have?

An Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST) — the standard residential tenancy in England. It gives you the right to live in the property for the agreed term and protects you from being asked to leave without proper legal process.

## Q What's a fixed term?

The initial period (usually 6 or 12 months) during which you're committed to stay and the landlord is committed to keeping you. Neither side can end it early unless there's a break clause or you both agree.

## Q What happens when the fixed term ends?

Your tenancy automatically becomes "periodic" — rolling month-to-month on the same terms. You don't have to sign anything new. You can stay as long as you like (or give one month's notice to leave).

## Q What are the most common rules?

- No pets without written permission
- No smoking inside
- No subletting or unapproved occupants
- No alterations without permission
- Keep the property clean and report issues promptly
- Maintain the garden (if applicable)
- Allow access for inspections and repairs with notice

### **IMPORTANT**

Read it before you sign. Your tenancy agreement is legally binding. If anything is unclear, ask us — we're happy to explain any clause in plain language.

# Moving In

*What happens on the day and what to do in your first week.*

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## Q What happens on moving-in day?

We'll meet you at the property at the agreed time. We'll go through the inventory together, show you how everything works (heating, appliances, alarms), take meter readings, and hand over your keys.

## Q What should I do in my first week?

Set up gas, electricity, and water accounts in your name

Register for Council Tax

Set up your TV Licence (if needed)

Set up a mail redirect from your old address

Register with a local GP and dentist

Test all smoke alarms and CO detectors

Locate the fuse box, stopcock, and gas shut-off valve

Check the inventory — report discrepancies within 7 days

Set up your rent standing order

Consider getting contents insurance

## Q Do I need contents insurance?

We strongly recommend it. The landlord's insurance covers the building, but NOT your belongings. If there's a fire, flood, or break-in, you'd need to replace everything yourself. Contents insurance is usually very affordable.

# Paying Rent

*How to pay, when to pay, and what to do if you're struggling.*

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## Q How do I pay rent?

By **standing order** to the bank account in your welcome letter. A standing order goes out automatically — you don't have to remember. Please don't use direct debit, cash, or cheque.

## Q When is it due?

On the date in your tenancy agreement — usually the same date each month as your tenancy started. Make sure the money arrives on or before the due date.

## Q What if I'm going to struggle to pay?

**Contact us before you miss a payment.** Life happens — job loss, illness, unexpected expenses. We'd always rather hear from you early so we can try to find a solution together. Ignoring the problem always makes things worse.

## Q What happens if I don't pay?

We'll try to contact you. After 14 days, interest may be charged (3% above Bank of England base rate). If rent remains unpaid, it can lead to formal action including possession proceedings. Please don't let it reach that point — talk to us early.

## Q Can my rent go up?

Not during your fixed term (unless there's a specific review clause). After that, any increase requires a Section 13 notice and at least one month's warning. You can challenge an increase you believe is unfair.

# Your Responsibilities

*What's expected of you — and why it matters for your deposit and reference.*

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## Q What am I responsible for?

- Paying rent on time
- Keeping the property reasonably clean and tidy
- Reporting repairs and damage promptly
- Not causing damage beyond normal wear
- Allowing access for inspections and repairs (with notice)
- Not subletting or having unapproved people living there
- Being considerate to neighbours
- Maintaining the garden (if applicable)
- Testing smoke/CO alarms regularly
- Putting bins out and disposing of rubbish properly

## Q What small jobs are mine to handle?

Replacing lightbulbs, unblocking a sink with a plunger, replacing batteries in smoke alarms, keeping the garden trimmed. Anything structural or mechanical — boiler, plumbing, electrics — is the landlord's.

## Q How do I prevent condensation and mould?

- Open windows regularly, especially after cooking or showering
- Use extractor fans
- Don't dry clothes on radiators
- Keep some background heating on in cold weather
- Leave a gap between furniture and external walls
- Wipe condensation off windows in the morning

If mould appears despite doing all this, report it — there may be a building issue.

### **WHY THIS MATTERS**

Looking after the property protects your deposit (fewer deductions at the end) and earns you a positive reference for your next home.

# Reporting Repairs

*How to let us know, and what happens next.*

## Q How do I report a repair?

For non-emergencies during office hours:

- **Email (preferred):** help@whyuslettings.co.uk
- **Phone:** 01733 895630

Include: your name and address, what the problem is, photos if possible, and when you're available.

## Q What happens after I report it?

1. We acknowledge your report (usually within 1 working day)
2. We assess urgency and arrange the right contractor
3. We confirm the appointment with you
4. The contractor attends and we follow up

## Q How quickly will it be fixed?

PRIORITY	EXAMPLES	TARGET
Emergency	Gas leak, flooding, no heating (winter)	Same day / 24hrs
Urgent	Partial heating failure, broken window	1–3 working days
Routine	Dripping tap, sticking door	5–10 working days

## Q Will I be charged for repairs?

Not unless the damage was caused by you, your household, or your guests. Normal wear is the landlord's responsibility.

### IMPORTANT

Report problems early. A small leak left unreported can become a ceiling collapse. You won't be blamed for reporting issues — but you might be held responsible for damage that worsens because you didn't tell us.

# Emergencies

*What counts, what to do, and who to call.*

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## Q What counts as an emergency?

Something posing an immediate risk to safety or serious damage:

- Gas leak (smell of gas)
- Fire
- Flooding or burst pipe
- Total loss of electricity
- Complete heating failure in freezing conditions
- Break-in or the property being insecure

### **GAS EMERGENCY**

Smell gas? Open windows, DON'T touch light switches or flames, leave the property, call the National Gas Emergency Line: 0800 111 999. Then call us.

### **FIRE**

Get everyone out. Call 999. Do not go back inside. Contact us once you're safe.

## Q Who do I call out of hours?

**Emergency out-of-hours: 07534 493611**

Use this only for genuine emergencies. A dripping tap at 11pm is not an emergency — an overflowing water tank is.

## Q What should I do while waiting for help?

- Turn off water at the stopcock if there's a leak
- Turn off electricity at the consumer unit if water is near electrics
- Move your belongings away from water
- Put towels/containers down to contain leaks

### **HELPFUL TIP**

Know where things are. On your first day, locate the stopcock, consumer unit, and gas shut-off valve. In an emergency, these few seconds matter.

# Inspections

*Why we visit, what we look at, and what it means for you.*

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## Q Why do you inspect the property?

To check everything's in good order, spot maintenance issues, and make sure the property is safe. It's a normal part of renting and nothing to worry about.

## Q How often?

Typically every 3–6 months. Your first inspection will be around 8–12 weeks after move-in.

## Q Will I get notice?

Always. At least 24 hours' written notice — usually more. We'll try to find a time that works for you, though you don't have to be present.

## Q What are you looking for?

General condition, cleanliness, damp or maintenance issues, smoke/CO alarms working, and that the property is used in line with the tenancy agreement.

## Q Does the property need to be spotless?

No — we're not expecting a show home. We look for reasonable care, not perfection. A few dishes in the sink won't concern us. Significant damage or major hygiene issues would.

### **GOOD TO KNOW**

Inspections help you too. We often spot problems you haven't noticed — a slow leak, a cracked seal. We'll get these fixed without you having to report them.

# Your Rights

*You have strong legal protections. Here they are.*

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## Q Can my landlord just walk in?

No. You have a right to "quiet enjoyment" — no one should enter without permission or at least 24 hours' written notice. The only exception is a genuine emergency.

## Q Can I be evicted without reason?

Your landlord can serve a Section 21 notice (2 months' notice, no reason) — but only after the fixed term, and only if all legal requirements are met. Even then, you don't have to leave until a court orders it.

## Q What if I complain and then get an eviction notice?

You're protected against retaliatory eviction. If you've made a legitimate complaint and the council has issued an improvement notice, a Section 21 cannot be served in response.

## Q What if someone changes the locks or cuts utilities?

That is illegal. It's a criminal offence to harass you into leaving, change locks, remove belongings, or cut off utilities. If this happens, call the police and your local council's housing team.

## Q What are my other key rights?

- **Safe home** — free from serious hazards
- **Deposit protection** — in a government scheme within 30 days
- **Know your landlord** — request their name and address in writing
- **Challenge unfair rent increases** — via a tribunal
- **Repairs** — landlord must maintain structure, exterior, and installations

# Ending Your Tenancy

*How to leave — whether it's your choice or the landlord's.*

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## Q How do I give notice to leave?

If you're on a periodic tenancy (after fixed term), give us **one month's written notice** expiring on the last day of a rental period. Email is fine.

## Q Can I leave during my fixed term?

Only if your agreement has a break clause. If not, you can ask about ending early by mutual agreement, but the landlord doesn't have to agree and there may be costs (typically rent until a replacement is found).

## Q What if the landlord wants me to leave?

- **Section 21:** 2 months' notice, no reason (after fixed term)
- **Section 8:** If you've broken the terms (e.g., rent arrears)

Even after a notice expires, you don't have to leave until a court orders it. Don't panic — talk to us or seek free advice from Citizens Advice or Shelter.

### FREE ADVICE

Citizens Advice ([citizensadvice.org.uk](https://citizensadvice.org.uk)) and Shelter ([shelter.org.uk](https://shelter.org.uk)) both offer free, independent housing advice if you're worried about a notice or your rights.

# Moving Out & Getting Your Deposit Back

*How to leave well and maximise your deposit return.*

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## Q What should I do before I leave?

- Clean the entire property thoroughly (to move-in standard)
- Remove ALL belongings, rubbish, and unwanted items
- Repair any damage you've caused
- Mow the lawn and tidy the garden
- Replace blown lightbulbs and alarm batteries
- Defrost and clean the freezer
- Return ALL keys, fobs, and access devices
- Take final meter readings
- Cancel/redirect post
- Notify utilities, council tax, TV Licence of move-out date
- Give us a forwarding address

## Q Do I need a professional clean?

Check your inventory — if the property was professionally cleaned before you moved in, it'll need the same when you leave. Keep the receipt. If in doubt, ask us beforehand.

## Q How do I make sure I get my full deposit back?

- Look after the property throughout your tenancy
- Report issues promptly
- Clean thoroughly before you leave
- Take dated photos on moving-in AND moving-out day
- Return the property in the same condition (allowing for fair wear)

**GOOD TO KNOW**

Most tenants get their full deposit back. If you've looked after the place, you've got nothing to worry about.

# Complaints & Help

*What to do if something isn't right.*

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## Q What if I'm unhappy with your service?

1. **Raise it:** Phone or email us. Acknowledged within 3 working days.
2. **We investigate:** Written response within 15 working days.
3. **Still not happy?** Request a senior review within 10 working days.
4. **Still unresolved?** Refer to the Property Redress Scheme (free).

## Q What's the Property Redress Scheme?

An independent body that investigates complaints about letting agents. Free to use, they can award compensation if appropriate.

**Our membership:** PRS42402 | **Website:** [www.theprs.co.uk](http://www.theprs.co.uk)

## Q Where else can I get help?

- **Citizens Advice** — [citizensadvice.org.uk](http://citizensadvice.org.uk)
- **Shelter** — [shelter.org.uk](http://shelter.org.uk)
- **Your local council** — Environmental Health
- **DPS** — free dispute resolution for deposit disagreements

# Contact Us

*We're here to help — don't hesitate to get in touch.*

OFFICE PHONE

01733 895630

EMAIL

[help@whyuslettings.co.uk](mailto:help@whyuslettings.co.uk)

WEBSITE

[www.whyuslettings.co.uk](http://www.whyuslettings.co.uk)

OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Friday, 9am – 5pm

EMERGENCY (OUT OF HOURS)

07534 493611

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