

# First Time Renting?



## What do I need?

Whether you are renting through an agency or directly from your landlord, any reputable company or person will want to make sure you are who and what you say you are.

You will normally be asked to undergo a credit check. You may be asked to provide bank statements, proof of current address, photo ID and or proof of your annual income. As well as these things references may also be required from your bank.

## How much will it cost?

Agencies may charge you a sign up fee, but be careful! You are only bound to pay this fee if they actually find you somewhere to live. If you find something else without them, you are entitled to a full refund of this fee.



Once you have found your new home most agencies and landlords will charge an 'admin' or 'reservation' fee. This fee is charged to cover the administration fee of drawing up the tenancy agreement and referencing process etc. Once the referencing process has begun this fee will no longer be refundable so think carefully before you sign on the line...

## Looking around...

Always look at more than one property. Even if you think the first one is just perfect the next one might surprise you and it's good to have something to compare with. Take a good look around and check for the small things that it can be easy to forget when excited about finding a new home. It may be worth making a list of the following to take with you:



- Is there any damp?
- Do all the windows and doors close securely?
- Have the gas appliances been serviced and is the correct certification available?
- If white goods are included, check that they function properly
- Are there any fixtures and fittings included?
- Will any furniture I already have fit through the doors etc?
- Check the taps work correctly and the water pressure
- What type of heating does the property have?





- How much does the council tax cost?
- Where is the nearest bus stop?
- Is there any car parking or a garage?
- How much is a taxi home from the local pubs?

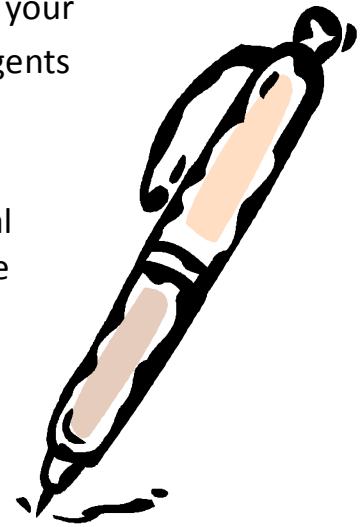
Some of these things you can check for yourself as you look around your potential new home, other things you can ask during the viewing. Don't ever feel you are asking silly questions, any letting agent that has done their homework will know the answer and if not they will be more than happy to find out and let you know!

### **Before you sign...**

Once you have found a property ask your new landlord for a copy of the Tenancy Agreement so you can take it away and read through it before you sign. If there is anything you are **unsure** about **ask!** Your new landlord should be able to explain any jargon terms. If you are still unsure seek legal advice or visit your local Citizens Advice Bureau.

Be clear on the rental amount. How much is it? When is it payable? Does it include any services? Also find out how you are to pay your rent; Direct Debit is preferred by many larger landlords and agents but cheque and standing order are still common methods.

Most landlords will ask for a refundable deposit. The amount required varies but should be no more than 1/6 of your annual rent. Deposits are held by landlords to protect against damage beyond fair wear and tear, unpaid bills etc. Make sure you get a receipt when you pay this amount and an inventory signed by you and your new landlord to agree the state of your property when you move in. A thorough inventory can avoid unnecessary disputes at the end of the contract.



### **Moving In...**

When you move in check **all** the items on the inventory, if there are any discrepancies contact your landlord immediately.

Ensure you read all the meters; gas, water, electric and call your service providers to let them know you have moved in.



## Budgeting

Who (is responsible for paying) pays what???

### **Landlord**

Agent Fees  
Buildings Insurance  
Landlord's insurance  
Annual Gas Check costs  
Maintenance and Repair costs  
Utility Connection fees

### **Tenant**

Reference fees  
Contents insurance  
Personal Insurance  
Deposit  
Administration fees  
Utility bills

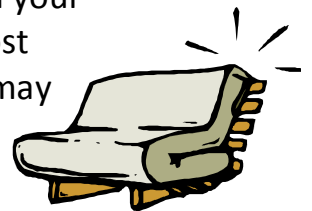
## Upfront Costs

**Deposit** – usually between one and two month's rent

**1 Month's advance rent** – it is usual when renting for your landlord to ask for the rent to be paid in advance

**Apportionment** – If moving in towards the end of a month your landlord may ask you to pay the rent for the end of that month as well as the next month's money to ensure you are 1 full month in advance.

**Furniture/soft furnishings** – You will of course need to furnish your new home! Try to list the things you will need and buy the most important ones first, rushing out to buy everything in one go may prove to be costly and unnecessary.



**Appliances** – If white goods are not included in your property you will have to source your own. Again it may be a good idea to list what you think you need and decide which ones are the most important. Once you have an idea of what you want, and more importantly, what will fit in the space you have, you can start your search!

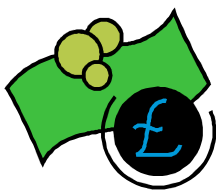


## Ongoing Costs

**Rent** – Possibly the most important and often the largest allocation in a monthly budget.

**Council Tax** – People can often forget to consider council tax when working out a budget, be sure to contact your council as soon as you move into your new home and don't forget to claim your 25% discount if you are a single occupant.

**Bills** – Paying monthly utility bills such as internet, electricity and water by Direct Debit can not only help you spread the costs of the winter months but many companies will offer rewards simply for doing so.

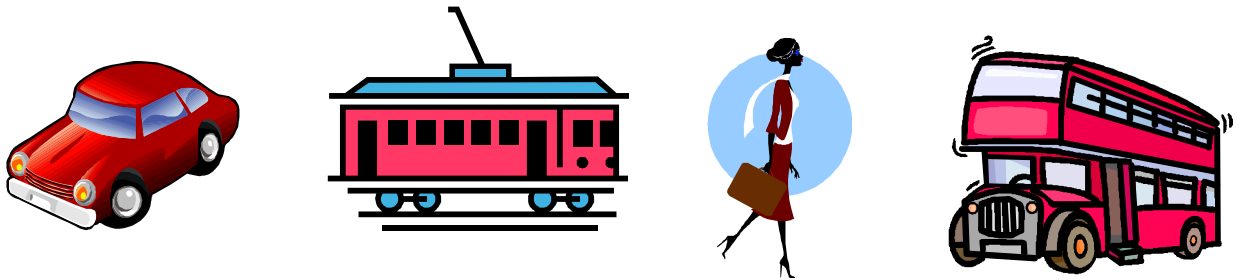


**TV Licence** – A colour TV license is a compulsory purchase for anyone using television receiving equipment in their home. As with other utility bills the cost of a TV licence can be spread using monthly Direct Debit.

**Insurance** - It is your landlord's responsibility to insure the building and any contents belonging to the landlord, however, it is your responsibility to insure your own contents. Tenant insurance can also protect against accidental damage to the landlord's property, which means that if you do accidentally damage anything during your tenancy the repair cost can be borne by the landlord leaving your security deposit safe for a full refund at the end of your tenancy.

**Social and food** – Now you have your own place don't forget to account for your social expenses!

**Transport** –If you own a car consider how your change in circumstances may affect your insurance premiums or commute costs. If you are not a vehicle owner be sure to consider the cost of public transport as a part of your monthly budget. Many bus companies offer all inclusive monthly passes, especially in city centre areas.



## Ending your tenancy...

Be sure you are clear on what happens at the end of your tenancy. If you are in a fixed term contract what happens at the end of the fixed term? Are you able to leave before the end of the fixed term and if so, what are the conditions? If leaving after the end of your fixed term how much notice are you expected to give?



**Evenbrook is a leading residential landlord - if you have any questions about renting your home please contact us – *we're here to help!***



**Call: 0121 500 1771**

**Email: [lettings@evenbrook.co.uk](mailto:lettings@evenbrook.co.uk)**

