

**PRIVATE HOUSING  
LEAVING GUIDE**

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# Hello.

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**We prepared this guide to help you when it's time to leave your private rented home. This guide will help you prepare and minimise the risk of deposit deductions.**

Moving out of a rented property can be stressful, but careful preparation can make the process much smoother.

Most students sign a fixed term contract, which means that as long as you vacate the property by the last day of the fixed term period, the contract should naturally come to an end without having to give notice. However, you should notify your landlords or agents of your moving out date (in writing) so that arrangements can be made to carry out inspections.

However, if you stay beyond the fixed term or are on a periodic tenancy (month-by-month), you'll need to give the correct notice in writing. Always check what your tenancy agreement says. If you are unsure, contact the [Advice Centre](#) for further information.

# Bills and Money.

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One of the people named on the accounts needs to contact the utilities companies to let them know when you're leaving (or that you've left) and provide them with any final meter readings as well as a forwarding address. If you can't get a meter reading, you may get an estimated bill for now instead, which will be adjusted once you get the reading.

Your landlord can deduct any unpaid bills from your deposit, so you need proof that you've paid everything and closed the accounts.

It's really important to settle all outstanding bills as failure to do so can have a serious impact on credit score ratings - this would affect both you and your guarantor(s). Utilities companies can, and do, pursue outstanding debts, sometimes using bailiff companies. If you have problems paying a bill, contact your provider who can usually help by creating a manageable payment plan with you.

If you are having difficult with making payments, check out the University's Money Advice team for more information on [Managing Your Money](#) and [Financial Difficulty](#) funding sources.

You can also get support at the [Advice Centre](#) if you are worried about what your financial situation will be like at the end of term.

## >> CHECKLIST

- ☐ Contact all utilities companies to tell them you're moving out.
- ☐ Provide meter readings on the day you move out.
- ☐ Make sure everyone settles their fair share of the bills.



# Future Finances (Home and EU).

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[Turn2Us](#) can advise you about financial help available after you graduate.

You can use online [benefit calculators](#) now to see what government funds you're eligible for after the last day of your course.

[Shelter](#) can help you with any housing problems in your next home after graduating.

# Cleaning.

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Cleaning is the most common reason for deductions from security deposits. The charges were known to be very high, which led to a change in legislation. If your tenancy started after 1 June 2019, The Tenant Fees Ban 2019 means you can opt the property yourself, even if your contract states you have to pay for professional cleaning or your landlord's cleaning service. As a general rule, you should leave the property as clean as you found it.

If you've kept on top of the cleaning, this shouldn't be too difficult. If you haven't, then we recommend you get some bleach, drain unblocker (for kitchen and bathroom), etc. on your next shop.

Make sure to dispose of any rubbish correctly. Make sure to take everything with you as you may be charged for disposing any items left behind.

If you're not known for your cleaning prowess, you may still wish to hire in the professionals. Check out our [top tips](#) to make sure you know your rights and that you get a fair deal.

## >> CHECKLIST

- ☐ Deep clean all areas, especially kitchens and bathrooms.
- ☐ Clean all appliances, especially oven and fridge (defrost and switch off once emptied).
- ☐ Clear all rubbish out of the house and into bins.



# Garden.

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If the garden was tidy when you arrived (check inventory), then you are responsible for tidying the garden at the end of the tenancy. Make sure you have cut the grass and trimmed anything overgrown to avoid gardening charges being deducted from your deposit.

If you were given no tools, contact your landlord or agent to see what steps you should take.

# Rubbish and Recycling.

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Make sure you plan ahead. All your rubbish will not fit in the bins in your final week, so slowly start throwing away things you don't want about a month before your move-out day.

Over-filling bins and fly-tipping lead to fines from the council and deductions from deposits. It's easy to underestimate the amount of rubbish and unwanted items you have accumulated during your tenancy, so we've come up with some handy tips to help you ditch them!

## >> CHECKLIST

- ☐ Fill and return the charity bags posted through your letterbox.
- ☐ Donate to food banks which can be found in [Egham](#) or in [your local area](#). \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Bulky waste – arrange for [Runnymede Borough Council](#) to collect items, appliances and furniture. Charges apply. Advance booking required.



# Moving.

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If possible, plan at least two weeks in advance how you're going to move all your belongings to your next home. Explore vehicle hire and temporary storage options and their costs if you might need them. Read reviews or ask for recommendations before using a service.

Even if you found it easy to move all your stuff in one go before, a year has passed and you've probably accumulated more stuff. Try to start moving out things you don't use regularly a few weeks beforehand to save you stress on the last day.

## >> CHECKLIST

- ☐ Put moving dates into your calendar (and share with your moving helpers).
- ☐ Calculate moving budget and dates.
- ☐ Research and book transportation and storage options.

Remember you could be charged by your landlord or estate agent for the removal or disposal of any items left in or outside the property.

# Storage Companies.

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Below are some local storage providers. You will need to contact them directly to find out if their rates and availability.

## >> **KELLY'S STORAGE**

[inbox@kellystorage.co.uk](mailto:inbox@kellystorage.co.uk)

0800 107 7250

## > **SHURGARD**

[info@shurgard.co.uk](mailto:info@shurgard.co.uk)

0800 368 0420

## > **STORAGE GEEKS**

[info@storagegeeks.co.uk](mailto:info@storagegeeks.co.uk)

01932 568660



# Check-out Inspection.

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At the start of your tenancy, an [inventory](#) of everything in the house should have been completed. Now that you're moving out, you will need to find your inventory (or ask for a copy from your landlord/estate agent) to check that nothing has gone missing or been broken. Contact the [Advice Centre](#) for help if you never received a check-in inventory.

If your contract started after 1 June 2019, you cannot be charged for the inventory process.

Remember that 'fair wear and tear' is acceptable, so small marks and scuffs are ok. If anything is missing or broken, look into the cost of getting it replaced or repaired and make sure the landlord is ok with it.

Ask when the check-out inspection will be done and ask the landlord/agent to share the check-out inventory with you. Make sure you take lots of time-stamped photographs before you leave, in case you're challenged.

## >> CHECKLIST

- ☐ Find check-in inventory.
- ☐ Compare inventory to the state of the property and its contents.
- ☐ Replace and repair what you can.
- ☐ Return furniture to its original location.
- ☐ Take lots of time-stamped photos before you leave.

**Complete the check-out inventory before leaving - this is your last chance to gather evidence of how you left the house.**

# Who needs your new address.

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- ☐ Royal Holloway.
- ☐ [Runnymede Council Tax](#) team even if you're going abroad.
- ☐ Your GP and any medical services they have referred you to.
- ☐ Your employer.
- ☐ Your banks (and PayPal).
- ☐ Your utilities providers.
- ☐ Your online shopping accounts.
- ☐ Your insurance providers.
- ☐ TV Licensing.
- ☐ DVLA.
- ☐ Friends and family.

You may want to leave a forwarding address at the property or with your landlord/agent, so your post can be redirected. However they are not under any obligation to do this, so it's best to update the relevant companies and contacts yourself.

[Royal Mail Redirection](#) is a service you can pay for to have all your mail forwarded to your new address for a set time.

# Getting your deposit back.

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Your deposit should have been placed in a tenancy deposit scheme by the landlord/agent, meaning no deductions can be made without your consent.

To start the process, the day you leave, you must email/text the landlord/agent asking for the return of your deposit. This will give them 10 days to respond to you with any proposed deductions. Assuming there is nothing wrong with the property or its contents, and it's been cleaned where possible, then you should get your deposit back.

We don't advise you agree to any deductions before checking with us as we have found that most proposed deductions are over-inflated or illegal.

If you find out your deposit wasn't protected, you disagree with any proposed deductions, or your landlord/agent doesn't respond within 10 days, email the [Advice Centre](#) for guidance on your next steps.

If you were living with a resident landlord, a deposit scheme can't assist you and you will need to negotiate with the landlord, providing proof and explaining why you think the deductions shouldn't be made. The [Advice Centre](#) and [University of London Housing Service](#) can guide you.

## >> CHECKLIST

- ☐ [Check](#) if your deposit is protected.
- ☐ When you leave, ask your landlord/agent ([in writing](#)) to return your deposit.
- ☐ Negotiate disputed deductions proposed.
- ☐ Settle unresolved deposit disputes through your deposit scheme.
- ☐ You can contact the [Advice Centre](#) and [University of London Housing Services](#) for help and free legal advice.



# Share your experience.

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Thousands of pounds are unfairly deducted from students' security deposits every year. You can help reduce this.

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Email [advice@su.rhul.ac.uk](mailto:advice@su.rhul.ac.uk) with your experiences (good and bad). If you come across a really good professional cleaner, or you felt you had a great landlord, why not recommend them to us so we can guide other students to them?

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Use [Google](#) and [Marks Out Of Tenancy](#) to review your landlord/ agent to better inform next year's students.

# Good luck.

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**Moving out can be stressful, but we are here for you!**

If you encounter any problems during the moving out process, please feel free to contact the Advice Centre and we will be more than happy to help you.

**>> [SU.RHUL.AC.UK/ADVICE](https://su.rhul.ac.uk/advice)**

**>> [ADVICE@SU.RHUL.AC.UK](mailto:ADVICE@SU.RHUL.AC.UK)**



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