

A close-up photograph of a man and a woman smiling and looking at a smartphone together. The man is on the left, wearing glasses and a black beanie. The woman is on the right, with long brown hair. They are both smiling warmly. The background is a blurred indoor setting, possibly a cafe or office, with warm lighting.

Andrew Grant

Your guide to becoming a tenant

**Everything you need to know
about renting a property**

Get the edge by being prepared.

It's quick and simple

The rental market moves rapidly and with demand outstripping supply, desirable properties are quickly snapped up. Clever tenants can ensure they're at the front of the queue for the best rentals and will know what letting agents and landlords are looking for – then run the tenancy responsibly to ensure they stay.

Know what you are looking for

Register

Register with local lettings agents clearing stating your budget and when you will need your tenancy to begin. Even if this is some weeks away agents know which of their current properties are due to be vacated up to two months before.

Flexibility

If a great property comes up right now but you hadn't wanted to move in for six weeks, be willing to compromise rather than lose out.

It's all in the detail

Check on the details - what's included – furniture, white goods, soft furnishings? What agreement is there over parking or shared gardens? How long is the tenancy for?

The majority of rentals are on Assured Shorthold Tenancies which last for six or twelve months initially and can then be renewed if both parties agree, but longer terms can sometimes be available.

Professionals

If you're dealing directly with a landlord ideally, they should be registered with an accreditation scheme like National Landlords Association, The Residential Landlords Association or the Guild of Residential Landlords. Agents should be members of ARLA, NALS, RICS or UKALA.

Prepare yourself

Affordability

Use one of the free online credit check companies to ensure you have no nasty surprises lurking when you come to be referenced.

You will normally be expected to have an annual income of 2.5 times the annual rent - for example, for a rent of £500 per month you'd need a minimum income of £15,000 per year). If renting jointly with another adult their income will count towards this unless you specify otherwise. Don't forget that bills such as council tax, utilities, broadband and TV licence will be your responsibility to set up and pay too.

Budget for referencing fees; plus potential extras for pets, express move-ins, inventories, and guarantor referencing if required. You'll also need to have available a deposit sum equivalent to six weeks' rent as well as your first months' rent.

If you're self-employed, on a freelance contract, still in a probationary period at work or have had credit problems or County Court Judgments in the past you might need to be able to provide a guarantor (someone who agrees to pay the rent if you don't), or offer the full rental for the tenancy in advance (subject to landlord approval).



When you apply

The agent or landlord will look through all the applications received and invite a 'preferred applicant' to move to the next stage of referencing. Provided this referencing is satisfactory, the tenancy will be offered; you should be given terms and conditions to sign which make clear the circumstances under which this wouldn't be the case and your money not refunded.

Employers, previous landlords and personal referees will be approached to verify information about you so speed things up by ensuring they know to expect this.

The agent will also need to establish your 'right to rent' in the UK and you'll need to supply ID such as a passport, driving licence and /or proof of your address.

You'll be working towards a date agreed between you and the landlord as the planned start of your tenancy. Make sure the agent knows if you have an existing tenancy due to expire and you must vacate your current property so that documentation can be completed in time.

When you're accepted

You'll need to pay the agreed deposit before you move in. By law the landlord or agent must register this with one of the government's approved schemes and provide you with evidence within 30 days of you moving in.

Read your tenancy agreement carefully so you know exactly what the terms are before signing. All over 18's living in the property should be named on it and sign too. Be aware that normally all those who sign are 'jointly and severally liable' – that means that you are equally responsible for the payment of the rent so if one fails to do so the others will have to make up the shortfall or will be in breach of contract.

You'll need to pay for your first month's rent and any other monies agreed, if appropriate.

A check-in report should be done on the property and a copy sent to you, as well as an EPC for the property, a copy of the Gas Safety Certificate if the property has gas appliances, information about the Tenancy Deposit Scheme, a copy of your tenancy agreement and any other prescribed information.

You'll normally have 7 days in which to dispute anything on it – take photos as your own evidence if so. This document will be used at the end of your tenancy to identify and damage done so it's important you're happy that it's accurate.

On your agreed date you'll sign for the keys to the property and move in!

How to be a great tenant

Pay on time

You are legally obliged to pay your rent on time, and in full as this will be grounds for eviction if not observed. If you think you'll have trouble paying at any point, don't hide from the problem; let the agent know and keep them updated on the situation.

You are also responsible for paying utilities and council tax. Take meter readings on the day you move-in and check them against your check-in report.

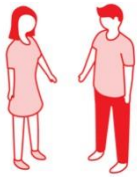


Maintenance

Keep the property well maintained, handling day to day wear and tear (like replacement lightbulbs and wobbly towel rails) yourself, and promptly reporting anything needing professional attention. Be responsible about keeping the property heated and well ventilated, clean and tidy, and outside areas looking cared for. Test the smoke and carbon monoxide alarms at least once a month and replace batteries regularly.

Access

Give reasonable access to the landlord or agent for regular inspections. You will usually be given plenty of notice, with 24 hours' advance the minimum. Please also be respectful with access for contractors handling any repairs to the property.



Look after any items included in the tenancy and ideally insure your own possessions. Be considerate to neighbours. Allow access to the agent or landlord when repairs are needed, or improvements are being made.

Always ask permission before redecorating or removing items included in the tenancy or you may lose part of your deposit at the end of the tenancy to restore it to its original condition.

Consideration

Agreement

If your property is managed, always contact the agent rather than the landlord. The name and address of the landlord is normally shown on your tenancy agreement but won't be happy if you knock on the door asking for a new boiler if he's paying an agent to handle his property.

Don't sub-let. If sharing with other adults and one moves out or a new one in, the tenancy agreement should be re-drawn or you could be in breach of contract.

Smoking is not permitted in most properties, please be sure to check this first, and you will require permission from the landlord before moving any pet in.

Once you've given notice at the end of your tenancy, be reasonable about allowing access for viewings to new prospective tenants. You may want your current landlord to provide a reference to your next one!

Make sure the property is left thoroughly clean on exit, taking photos to verify the condition you're leaving it in. Make sure you hand back all keys, including any for windows, meter cupboards, post boxes and outbuildings.



The end of your tenancy

If the landlord wishes to end your tenancy when it comes to end of the six or twelve months agreed, you must be given at least two months' Section 21 notice before the end of your contract. Tenants should give one full calendar months' notice of your intention to leave.

If you want to stay and the landlord is happy with that, you'll usually be offered the chance to renew the contract for another six or twelve month period. If you don't want to commit to that long – or neither side gives notice that they want the current contract to end – you can go onto what's called a 'rolling contract' or 'periodic tenancy' where the tenancy runs month by month until one side gives notice (two months from the landlord, one month from the tenant)

If there is any dispute over the condition of the property when you leave part of the deposit may be held back while this is resolved and dealt with by the Tenancy Deposit Scheme Dispute Service.

Why choose Andrew Grant?

Andrew Grant is your local lettings expert - if you're looking to rent a home we don't just help you to find it - our friendly and experienced lettings team will support you right through to the day you move. They are experienced at what they do, and most of all - they really enjoy doing it!

We've an extensive range of residential properties available to let throughout the region; from modern studio apartments through to period country estates. Whatever you are looking for our team will help you find a place to call home.

Learn more

To find out even more it's best to speak to us directly. Contact our Property Management and Lettings team

0330 22 11 222

pm@andrew-grant.co.uk

Andrew Grant

online | in branch | at home

www.andrew-grant.co.uk

0330 024 3000

hello@andrew-grant.co.uk

Andrew Grant LLP, 59-60 Foregate Street, Worcester WR1 1DX

Registered number: OC327875