

Responsibility for repairs

This factsheet explains your landlord's responsibilities for repairs, and why it is important for you to report problems to your landlord.

Your landlord is responsible for dealing with most repairs in your home. Your landlord also has to make sure your home is fit to live in during your tenancy.

Repairs your landlord is responsible for

Your landlord is responsible for repairs to the:

- roof, walls, windows and external doors
- water and sewage pipes
- gas pipes and electrical wiring
- basins, sinks, toilets and baths
- drains and guttering
- central heating and gas fires (unless you installed them)

Your landlord doesn't have to repair any damage caused by you, someone you live with, or your guests.

If you rent from a private landlord, your landlord has to carry out electrical safety checks. Speak to your council if you are unsure whether your landlord has complied.

Report the problem

If you notice anything wrong with the property, report the problem to your landlord, their agent, or your housing officer as soon as possible.

In most circumstances your landlord only becomes responsible for a repair when you tell them about the problem, unless the problem is in a common part of a building (such as a lift or entrance). Don't wait until the problem gets really bad – it might end up costing more to put right. If you are a private tenant your landlord could take money out of your deposit if you failed to report a problem promptly.

Put it in writing

It is always best to report any repair problems in writing. If you tell your landlord in person or by phone, follow it up with a letter, email or text message. Date any letters you send and keep a copy.

Don't delete any emails or texts. This way, if you have problems getting your landlord to do the work, you can prove they were aware of the problem.

Time to do the work

There are no fixed time limits. Repairs should be carried out within a 'reasonable time'. Certain repairs, such as burst pipes, should be carried out urgently.

Councils and housing associations often set out target times to complete repairs in tenancy agreements or on their website. These give a good guide to what constitutes a reasonable time for all landlords to carry out a repair.

Access

You must allow your landlord into your home so they can assess how much work is needed and to carry out the repairs. They should give you reasonable notice (usually at least 24 hours), unless it's an emergency.

Evidence

Most landlords do carry out repairs once they know about them. If your landlord is not carrying out necessary repairs you may need to take further action.

Collect all the evidence you can about the repairs and what you have done to get your landlord to carry them out. Your evidence could include:

- photographs showing examples of damage or disrepair
- belongings that have been affected (eg, clothes damaged by dampness)
- receipts if you have had to replace things
- reports from your council's environmental health department
- copies of letters, or emails and texts you have sent to your landlord, and of any responses you have received
- medical reports explaining how your health has been affected

Eviction warning

If you rent from a private landlord, they might start eviction proceedings if you complain. You must weigh up this risk. There is some protection against 'revenge' evictions if you ask the council to inspect your home for hazards and they give your landlord an improvement notice or an emergency remedial notice.

Further advice

You can get further advice from [england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice](https://www.england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice), local Shelter advice service or local Citizens Advice. If you have nowhere to sleep tonight, are at risk of harm or losing your home within the next 2 months, call Shelter Helpline on 0808 800 4444 for advice and information on your options.*

*Calls are free from UK landlines and main mobile networks.



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Note

Information contained in this factsheet is correct at the time of publication. Please check details before use.