

Fire safety for tenants

If you rent your home, your landlord has legal duties to take fire safety measures.

Following the Grenfell Tower tragedy, a public inquiry is looking into fire safety in tower blocks. This factsheet deals with fire safety in other types of housing, including houses in multiple occupation.

General duty

All landlords must make sure that:

- electrical wiring and any appliances they provide are safe
- the gas supply and appliances are safe and are checked every year
- furniture they provide is fire resistant.

Get advice if your landlord does not do these.

Some landlords must also make sure your rented home is fit to live in. Your landlord may have to improve the fire safety of your home to comply with the law. Check the factsheet [Is your home fit to live in?](#) to see if you are covered.

Shared houses

If you live in a 'house in multiple occupation' (HMO), your landlord must also:

- assess the fire risks in the property
- provide and maintain smoke alarms
- make sure escape routes are kept clear.

There must be notices pointing out fire exits if the HMO has five or more occupiers. If your HMO is licensed by the council, your landlord may also have to provide a fire extinguisher and fire blankets.

Your landlord should check regularly that fire precautions remain in place.

Blocks of flats or maisonettes

If you live in a block of flats or maisonettes there must be a fire evacuation plan. Ask your landlord if you don't know where to find this.

All front doors and doors to corridors and staircases must be 'fire doors'. A fire door can resist fire and will close itself to help stop a fire spreading. Escape routes should be built to resist fire. They should be clearly signed and illuminated. Don't use a lift if there's a fire.

Prevention

You can find advice on fire safety on [Gov.uk](#). The most important steps you can take are:

- check your smoke alarm every month
- keep escape routes clear and don't prop fire doors open
- don't overload electrical sockets
- tell your landlord if you are worried about the electricians in your home, eg if you see burn marks around a plug. Your landlord has a duty to fix faulty electricians.

Private landlords must fit a working smoke alarm on each floor of your home.

Contact your local fire service

Some local fire services will provide free advice on fire safety and escape routes. Others provide telephone advice or can send you leaflets.

If you live in a block, your fire service can review fire safety advice you have been given.

Ask [your local council](#) or search online for your area's fire and rescue service.

Private tenants

Contact your local council's environmental health department if your landlord has not taken proper fire safety precautions, or if you are worried about fire safety in your home for any other reason.

The council can inspect your home and can tell the landlord to fix things or to install fire safety equipment.

What to do if there is a fire

Call 999 even if you think you can get a fire under control yourself.

If you don't live in a block of flats, get out as quickly as possible. If you do live in a block, do what it says in your fire evacuation plan.

If you are homeless after a fire

If a fire leaves you homeless, the council must find you somewhere to stay in an emergency. It may also have to provide you with somewhere longer term.

Further advice

You can get further advice from 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

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