

# First-Time Landlord Compliance Checklist

40-item checklist covering every compliance obligation before, during, and on termination of a tenancy (England, updated 2026)

## A. Before the Tenancy (20 items)

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### Property Safety

- Valid Gas Safety Certificate (CP12) — annual inspection by a Gas Safe registered engineer
- Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) — every 5 years, satisfactory rating required
- Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) — valid for 10 years, currently minimum rating E (C from 2028 for new lets)
- Smoke alarms on every storey — tested and working at the start of each tenancy
- Carbon monoxide alarms in any room with a fixed combustion appliance (excluding gas cookers)
- Furniture and furnishings comply with fire safety regulations (Fire Safety Regulations 1988, as amended)
- Legionella risk assessment completed

### Licensing and Registration

- Check whether the property requires an HMO licence (mandatory, additional, or selective)
- Check whether the property is in a selective licensing area
- Register with the Private Rented Sector database (when operational — expected 2026/27)
- Landlord registration where required (Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland — separate schemes)

### Tenancy Documentation

- Provide a written tenancy agreement (periodic tenancy under RRA 2025)
- Serve the How to Rent guide (current version) at the start of the tenancy
- Provide a copy of the Gas Safety Certificate before the tenant moves in
- Provide a copy of the EPC before the tenant moves in
- Provide a copy of the EICR (or summary) within 28 days of the inspection

### Deposit Protection

- Protect the deposit in a government-authorized scheme within 30 days of receipt
- Serve the prescribed information about the deposit scheme within 30 days
- Deposit must not exceed 5 weeks' rent (or 6 weeks if annual rent exceeds £50,000)

### Right to Rent

- Conduct a Right to Rent check on all adult occupiers before the tenancy begins (England only)

## B. During the Tenancy (12 items)

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### Ongoing Safety Obligations

- Renew Gas Safety Certificate annually — provide a copy to the tenant within 28 days
- Renew EICR every 5 years or as recommended — investigate and remedy any unsatisfactory results
- Maintain smoke and carbon monoxide alarms in working order
- Respond to repair requests within a reasonable time — keep written records
- Comply with the Fitness for Human Habitation requirements (Homes Act 2018)

### Rent and Financial

- Rent increases: use the Section 13 process — formal notice, once per year maximum
- Do not charge prohibited fees (Tenant Fees Act 2019) — only rent, deposit, and holding deposit permitted
- Provide rent receipts if requested (best practice)

## Property Management

- Give at least 24 hours' written notice before entering the property (except emergencies)
- Maintain the structure, exterior, and installations (landlord's implied obligations under s.11 Landlord and Tenant Act 1985)
- Keep communal areas clean, safe, and in good repair (where applicable)
- Comply with any local authority improvement notices or hazard awareness notices

## C. On Termination (8 items)

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- Serve a valid Section 8 notice citing the correct ground(s) with the correct notice period
- Apply to court for a possession order if the tenant does not leave voluntarily
- Do not harass or illegally evict the tenant (Protection from Eviction Act 1977)
- Return the deposit (or the agreed portion) within 10 days of agreement on deductions
- Provide an itemised list of any proposed deposit deductions with evidence
- Use the deposit scheme's dispute resolution service if deductions are contested
- Conduct a check-out inspection and compare against the check-in inventory
- Ensure all keys are returned and change locks if necessary

**Wales and Scotland:** Many of the same obligations apply, but under different legislative frameworks. Wales uses occupation contracts under the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016. Scotland uses private residential tenancies. Check jurisdiction-specific requirements.

**Penalties for non-compliance:** Failing to protect a deposit can result in 1–3x the deposit amount in compensation. Failing to provide an EPC or Gas Safety Certificate can result in fines of up to £5,000. Illegal eviction is a criminal offence carrying an unlimited fine and/or up to 2 years' imprisonment.