

## New Tenants FAQ

Thank you for taking the time to have a look at our FAQ. Below we have compiled the most common questions and answers for new tenants. If you have any questions or would like more information about anything you see please get in touch with the team or email us at [info@top-let.co.uk](mailto:info@top-let.co.uk)

### What Happens when I want to see a property?

Viewings can be conducted 9am - 7pm Monday to Friday and 9am - 1pm on Saturdays. You can book a viewing by phone or via email at [info@top-let.co.uk](mailto:info@top-let.co.uk)

We will conduct the property viewing on behalf of the landlord and normally keep keys so we can access the property to suit your availability. We can meet you at the property or you can come to the office and we take you there in one of our cars. Sometimes we can collect you from your home or your place of work, depending on where these may be. You should also ensure that anyone likely to share in the decision views the property as well.

After the viewing we need to know if you have any questions or if you are interested in renting the property. So please allow time to discuss your thoughts with us.

### I have seen the property that I want, what happens next?

If the property is suitable for you don't delay your offer as it may be let to someone else the same day. When you make an offer you'll need to pay us an administration fee to cover our tenant vetting costs. You will also receive an application form for each tenant and if required a Guarantor application form as well. These will need to be completed and returned to us ASAP to ensure we can commence processing your application and no later than seven days after securing the property.

### Do I have to pay any other fees/ deposits?

Once your application forms have been returned and processed you will need to pay the first month's rent, plus a deposit [Which is equivalent to the value of 1 Months Rent + £100] at the date of check in. This must be in cleared funds which mean bankers drafts or cash only.

### Do I have to supply references etc?

When we have received your completed Application form we submit this to a referencing agency and they will use the information supplied in the form and obtain references to confirm your ability to meet the rental commitment.

### When can I move in?

Once we have carried out an inventory and have cleared funds, satisfactory references, a signed tenancy agreement, photographic ID, proof of residency and a completed standing order form we will arrange an appointment for you to come to the office and pick the keys up.

### What is a tenancy agreement?

It is a legally binding document between you and the landlord, applicable only to you and the property you are renting that states the amount of rent, the length of the tenancy, your rights and responsibilities. Your agreement will most probably be an Assured Shorthold tenancy under the Housing Act as amended in 1996.

For bona fide companies and/or rental values over £25,000 a year, the agreement will be drawn up under contract law.

### What are my responsibilities?

These should be clearly set out in your tenancy agreement, which you should read carefully before you sign. In general tenants are required to keep the property in good condition and pay rent by the monthly due date.

### How long does it all take before I can move in?

From making your offer to moving in would be approximately 2-3 weeks.

### What will you need from me?

All our tenancies are Assured Shorthold Tenancy agreements for a minimum period of 6 months.

### What happens if I want to stay on or leave early?

Tenancies are frequently renewed and we normally prompt your decision 2 months before the end. All tenancies need to be renewed 1 month before the expiry of the current Tenancy to stay on. Should you wish to vacate please contact us at the earliest opportunity and we can advise of the procedure for this.

If you're likely to leave before the end of the original term agreed, you must negotiate break clauses to be written into the agreement. If not, you will remain responsible for the rent until the end of the term agreed.

### What else do I have to pay for?

The tenant pays the utility bills such as gas, electricity, water, telephone, cable TV, internet and TV licence during the course of the tenancy as well as the Council Tax applicable to the property. If the property is new and has not had telephone or internet services before – you may also need to pay to have the services switched on. This is not uncommon in brand new properties and your consultant will be able to find out if you will need to do this with a property you are interested in.

### What must I do at the end of the tenancy?

Ensure you fulfil your obligations stated in the tenancy agreement to leave the property in the condition it was in at the start, or deductions will be made from your deposit. These will include thorough cleaning and all linen, used or not, freshly laundered. If you've moved furniture, return it to where you found it at the time of the inventory.

### How do I get my deposit back?

After an inventory check, condition inspection and final bill validation have been completed (provided there are no missing items or damage) your deposit will be returned within 14 days after you leave the property. You cannot set your deposit against any rent payment due.

### Who has been holding my deposit?

Your deposit will be held independently in accordance with the deposit protection scheme, which means that it will be released as soon as both parties agree. Full details can be viewed at [www.depositprotection.com](http://www.depositprotection.com)

### What's the difference between a managed property and introduction only?

If your property is let fully managed, then the Top-Let Property Management team will be your first point of contact for all maintenance and repair issues and Top-Let will act on behalf of the landlord. Introduction only means that Top-Let finds tenants for the property and arranges the paperwork, then the Landlord takes over the management and in this scenario you would contact the landlord direct.

### Fully Furnished? Unfurnished? What's the difference?

Properties are let with different levels of furnishings. Broadly speaking, unfurnished means you can expect carpets, curtains and white goods only. Fully furnished includes lounge furniture, a dining table, chairs, beds, etc, and, sometimes other household bits and pieces.

### How binding is the tenancy agreement I enter into?

A Tenancy Agreement governs all rents, which is a legal and binding document. You will be committed to paying rent until the end of the agreed term and you could be liable to legal action if you break the terms of the agreement. If your circumstances should change for any reason during your tenancy, it is a good idea to tell us as soon as possible.

## How much are Top-Let's fees?

Top-Let charge a one-off Administration Fee that is payable when you have decided to proceed with the property of your choice. This fee covers our costs in the referencing and administration of your application. For details of how much this will be please contact us and one of the team can supply you with the information.

## What about pets?

Most landlords are not keen on pets and more often than not there will be a clause forbidding pets. If you do have pets please let us know and we will do our utmost to find you a property where pets are accepted. Some landlords will take pets if an increased deposit is provided.

## What about smoking?

In the majority of cases all of our properties are no smoking and a there will be a clause forbidding smoking inside the property. If you do want a property you can smoke in please let us know and we will do our utmost to find you one where it is accepted.

## Who do you contact for references?

It is in everyone's interests to ensure that you can comfortably afford the rent on your chosen property. Top-Let works in conjunction with respectable credit referencing companies to handle this on our behalf. The checks are as much as you'd expect, e.g. verification of employment, past addresses and so on. Sometimes a guarantor may be required and we are always on hand with any questions you may have.

## When might I need a guarantor?

If your financial reference is weak for any reason, we could ask for a guarantor to support your tenancy. This is a serious commitment, as the guarantor will be as responsible as the tenant for all monies due and obligations agreed for the tenancy. Guarantors need to have strong financial references to show that they will not suffer hardship should they be called upon to pay on your behalf

## CAN'T FIND WHAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR?

If you cannot find an answer to a question you have here call us on 023 92 704118 or email us at [info@top-let.co.uk](mailto:info@top-let.co.uk)