



Self-Help eKit

Property Inventory

Guidance Manual



PROPERTY INVENTORY

NO.	DESCRIPTION	CHECKS	NO./QTY
FRONT PORCH/FRONT			
1	RED CAT TILE SIDING		
2	RED BRICK SIDING		
3	BLACK PLASTIC TRIMMING (FRAMES)		
4	WHITE VINYL TRIMMING (FRAMES)		
5	CEILING, AREA		
6	LIGHT (TUBE) BATH TUB, TUB, SHOWER, W/ TO FRONT DOOR		
7	HOLLY BUSH PLANTING (FRONT) OR CASKET TO FRONT AND 100% MAINTAINED TO A HEIGHT OF 4 FT.		
8	WHITE PLASTIC GAS METER, CUPBOARD		
9	WHITE PLASTIC ELECTRICITY METER CUPBOARD		
10	WOOD, YES/NO ONE TILE (BASE)		
11	WOOD, YES/NO ONE TILE (BASE)		
FRONT DOOR/INNER HALLWAY			
12	WHITE WOODEN FRONT DOOR, CHROME HANDLE, YALE LOCK, 1 X 4 CLIP, MORTISE LOCK		
13	WHITE TEXTURED CEILING		
14	MAGNOLIA PAINTED WALL		
15	WHITE PAINTED WOODWORK		
16	BRICE (HOLE) PILE CARPET, MAT TO FRONT DOOR, RUBBER DOOR STOP		
17	BANK LIGHT, BRONZE PAPER (HANG DETECTOR, 1 X 4 (CHROME COATHOOK) HIGH LEVEL		
18	WALL, CROWN, NIGHT TO WALL, LIGHT (CURRY AT 10 FT AND 20 FT, 1 X 10 (20 FT)		
19	FALL YEAR AND YEAR TO CARPET, (FRONT)		

Important Facts about this Lawpack eKit

This Lawpack eKit can help you achieve an important objective conveniently, efficiently and economically. Nevertheless, it is important for you to use this Lawpack eKit properly if you are to avoid later difficulties.

This eKit is for those people drawing up a Property Inventory for lettings of property situated in England, Wales and Scotland. Refer to the Property Inventory extracts and completed example at the end of this Manual for guidance.

Always use a pen or type; never use pencil.

Always keep property documents in a safe place and in a location known to your spouse, family, executor or solicitor.

Read this Manual carefully. It contains the instructions you need to complete the template Inventory provided. If you decide that your requirements are not met by this Lawpack eKit, or you do not feel confident about creating your own documents, consult a lettings agency or solicitor.

Throughout this Lawpack eKit, for 'he', 'his' and 'him' read 'he or she', 'his or hers' and 'him or her', and 'tenant' should be read as 'tenants' in the case of multiple tenants.

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Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition

The Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition

What is a Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition?

A Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition is a single document that may form part of a tenancy agreement which lists the items in a rental property. It also records their condition as well as that of the décor and fittings.

A detailed Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition should be made prior to the commencement of any tenancy regardless of whether the property is furnished or unfurnished.

As a landlord why do I need one?

The issue of the return of the deposit at the end of tenancies is one of the major sources of conflict between landlords and their tenants. When it comes to returning your tenant's deposit, if you don't have a detailed Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition you could find it extremely difficult to justify any deductions you want to make from the deposit.

On 6 April 2007, the government introduced Tenancy Deposit Protection in England & Wales, with Tenancy Deposit Schemes which are designed to improve methods of handling a tenant's deposit money and promote the use of inventories. Landlords have to clearly demonstrate where a tenant has caused damage or loss to the property if they are to be successful in retaining money from the deposit. Tenancy Deposit Schemes now apply both in England & Wales and in Scotland.

Further information about the three government-authorised Tenancy Deposit Schemes in England & Wales, and the three in Scotland, can be obtained from their websites.

England & Wales:

1. Deposit Protection Service – www.depositprotection.com
2. Mydeposits – www.mydeposits.co.uk
3. Tenancy Deposit Scheme – www.thedisputeservice.co.uk

Scotland:

1. Letting Protection Service Scotland – www.lettingprotectionscotland.com
2. SafeDeposits Scotland – www.safedepositsscotland.com
3. Mydeposits Scotland – www.mydepositscotland.co.uk

What goes into an Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition?

Each area of the property should be clearly detailed and you should follow a consistent method of notation when you describe items and their condition so that it can be easily understood by both you and your tenant.

Many landlords make the mistake, when creating a Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition, of just listing the 'moveable' contents of the property (such as sofas, fridges, etc.), without detailing the condition of these items and their appearance. Writing down the contents of a three-bedroom property could easily be done on one side of paper, but if you do not consider the 'fabric' of the property you could find that your Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition is not detailed enough to prove that your tenants have caused damage. For example, if in your Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition there is a pair of hanging curtains, you should also state:

- the colour;
- whether they are lined or not;
- what fabric they are made of;
- whether they are hung with hooks or if they are tab top;
- the age of the curtains (if known);
- if there are any marks or nicks in them and if so how many and where they appear.

It is all about being thorough. If you do not consider the detail, your tenants could claim that your lush velvet-lined curtains, which they have damaged, should only be replaced with cheap unlined cotton ones! All too often landlords deduct money from a tenant's deposit for items that are not even listed on the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition and this can lead to time-consuming disputes and even court hearings, where the landlord can be ordered to return the tenant's money and pay additional costs.

When you walk into a room you need to consider every part that you can see. A good Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition will take into account the ceiling, light fittings, walls, doors, door furniture, paintwork, windows, skirtings, electrical sockets and fittings, telephone and internet connections, light switches, carpets, curtains, pictures, mirrors, shelving, furniture, books and ornaments, etc. This may sound like a lot but if your tenant causes damage to any one of these parts you will want to be able to prove the condition when the tenant moved in so that you can show they are liable for any costs of repair or replacements.

As part of your Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition you should also make sure that you record:

- How many keys you give to the tenants and what make of key they are.
- The gas and electricity meter readings on the day the tenants move in.

- The date that the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition is valid from (i.e the day your tenants move in).
- A space for you and your tenants to sign.

Gas and electrical safety records

If your property has any gas installations or pipework, you are required by law to provide your tenant with an annual gas safety record. This must be carried out by a qualified Gas Safe registered engineer and you should carefully read the report and carry out any repairs immediately to ensure your tenant's safety.

Currently, there is no legislation in place that requires landlords to carry out an annual check of the electrical appliances; however, you are legally obliged to provide safe appliances (under the Electrical Equipment Safety Regulations). In addition, electrical checks of fixed electrical installations do now have to be carried out every five years for HMO ('Houses in Multiple Occupation') properties. Further information is available on the government website, www.communities.gov.uk.

Changes to Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition items during the tenancy

During the course of the tenancy it is possible that you will add and remove Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition items or you might carry out decorative or structural alterations. These must be noted as an amendment to the original Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition, attached to the document on a separate sheet and agreed in writing between you and your tenant.

Similarly, if you agree that your tenant can carry out works himself, such as decorating one of the rooms, you should record in detail the colour that you have agreed (preferably a swatch sample) along with the terms of how you want the tenant to carry out the work and what should happen if the decoration is not to the required standard. These agreements must be signed by both parties and attached to the original Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition as an addendum.

Checking your tenants in

What is a check-in?

The check-in is the process by which tenants are met at the property and taken through the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition before being asked to sign it and agree its contents. Depending on its length this can sometimes take an hour or two to complete (especially if the property is fully furnished), so let your tenants know in advance and be prepared to diarise enough time so that you don't have to rush through it all.

Remember that the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition is there to protect both you and your tenant and the check-in is the only time that both parties will have to agree the condition and the contents of the property. Once the document is signed it will be filed as a true and accurate statement until the day your tenants leave, and aside from any alterations that are accepted during the tenancy, you will make your final judgement about whether the tenants get their deposit back based on this document.

At the check-in you should walk round the property using the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition as your guide and read word for word each item as it is described, giving your tenants a chance to confirm that the condition is as stated. Remember, this is your tenant's opportunity to raise any issues that they have with the way you say your property is presented, so do not be afraid to make changes to the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition at this stage if you agree that an item is not as it appears in your document. Your tenants will not be able to change things once they have signed it and you should treat the check-in exercise as an affirmation of the detail contained in your Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition.

You should also agree the meter readings with your tenants, and the number and make of door keys that you give them. You then retain the signed copy of the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition which you should copy for your tenants to assist them at the end of the tenancy. One copy per house is sufficient.

When to carry out a check-in

The best time to check your tenants in to the property is on the first day of the tenancy. It is a good idea to tell your tenants that you want to meet them at the property so that you can go through all the documents at the same time and hand over keys before they move anything in.

Assume that your tenants need to be told everything and do not just give them a copy of the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition and ask them to check it in their own time. If you do this, you are likely to get it back weeks later with messy handwritten comments all over it that you may not agree with, and you will end up going back to the property to clarify it anyway.

By taking control of the check-in you can reduce the risk of your tenant later claiming that you did not explain the inventory process clearly enough to him at the beginning.

It is important that you check the tenant in before he moves any personal items into the property. It is nearly impossible to go through the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition when you are surrounded by people unpacking boxes and you need the tenant to be focused on the job in hand. It is worth remembering that tenants often cause damage accidentally during the moving-in process and while this may be common it is not something you should be liable for, so you need to make sure that the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition your tenant signs details the condition before, and not after, he starts bringing items into the property.

For the check-in it is a good idea to prepare a pack for your tenant that welcomes him to the property and contains information and instructions about his tenancy. For example, you could include:

- Copies of guarantees or extended warranty documents. You may be liable for repairs and maintenance but it is useful for the tenant to have this information to hand in case they need to liaise with a maintenance contractor or prove purchase of goods.
- Service contract information, such as British Gas Homecare cover. It is useful for the tenant to hold this information in case of an emergency and usually any engineer who calls will need to see copies of your paperwork.
- Instructions on how to work the appliances.
- Useful telephone numbers for cleaners and gardeners.
- Contact information for utility suppliers and serial numbers of the meters at the property.
- Council Tax information.
- Whom to contact in emergencies.
- Any handy local information (e.g. local shopping and transport) that will make your tenants feel at home.

The check-in is also a good time to make your tenants aware of what you expect of them when they move out of the property. If you include this information in the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition, you can advise your tenants accordingly so that when they sign the document they will also be confirming that you have explained their vacating responsibilities to them.

The check-out

What is a check-out?

When your tenant moves out you will need to inspect the property. You should take with you a copy of the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition that was signed by all parties at the start of the tenancy. This process is known as the check-out.

Don't forget if your tenancy started after 6 April 2007 or if you took a deposit on an assured shorthold tenancy before this date and the property is now a 'statutory periodic' tenancy, you must ensure the deposit is protected in one of the authorised tenancy deposit schemes and you will therefore need to be absolutely certain about any deductions you want to make. Before you perform the check-out, it is a good idea to remind yourself of the final steps you must take under your scheme and how you must resolve the return of the deposit.

Before the tenant actually vacates the property, send him another copy of the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition and bring to his attention the 'Guidance Notes for Tenants at the End of Tenancy'.

You should book a specific time to perform the check-out and tell your tenant that he will need to be present in case there are any issues that need to be resolved.

In order to complete the check-out successfully, your tenant will need to have moved all his personal belongings out of the property and put all of your items back where they appear on the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition.

You should never perform a check-out whilst a tenant is still in the process of moving out or cleaning, as it is impossible to record a property's condition accurately unless it has been completely vacated. You are likely to discover damage that you did not notice after the tenant has gone and you will not be able to make deductions for these retrospectively. If you cannot carry out the check-out, an alternative time should be made for you to return to the property when it is suitable for inspection.

When you have completed the check-out you should be in a position to inform your tenant whether you intend to make any deductions from his deposit based on your findings.

How to complete the check-out

Arrange to meet your tenant no later than 24 hours after the final day of the tenancy so that no external influences have had an opportunity to affect the condition of the property. If the check-out is done too long after the tenants have left, they may be able to claim that the damage was done after they left and that it is therefore not their responsibility.

You should also try to conduct the appointment at a time that will offer you the best chance of good weather conditions so that you can see as much of the property in natural light as possible.

When you arrive you will need to take back the keys, read the meters and ask your tenant for his forwarding address. There are spaces for you to record all of this information in the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition Template. It is advisable that you do this before going through the property with the tenant so that it is out of the way.

Many landlords find it useful to explain to their tenants how they intend to inspect the property. For example, you might like to read the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition out loud as you go from room to room checking each item carefully in the tenant's presence. Alternatively, you may like to go through the property reading the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition to yourself only raising any areas of suspected damage or missing items with your tenant as you come across them. Either way the key is to be as thorough and as objective as possible.

When you do discover something that is either missing or damaged you should use the relevant comments box on the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition Template under the column headed 'Check-out'. Also, do not be afraid to write down anything that relates to general wear and tear as this will assist you when it comes time to updating your Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition for the next tenancy; if your tenant questions you about wear-and-tear damage, tell him that you are simply making notes for this purpose and that you cannot deduct money from his deposit for items that have suffered fair wear and tear. You might consider making these comments with a different coloured pen.

When you do make the distinction between what is fair wear and tear and what is excessive damage you must consider a number of factors such as how old the item is and the quality and condition it was in when the tenant moved into the property. It is essential that you avoid making any financial or material gain when you deduct money from your tenant's deposit, so always think about how long each item might reasonably last in a rented property and also the 'type' of tenants you have; for example, a family with young children is likely to cause more wear and tear to your property than a professional couple who are out at work all day, and you must take this into consideration.

Being objective

It can sometimes be very difficult to stand back and consider your property objectively when conducting a check-out, particularly in the instance that you feel your tenants have caused some damage or not looked after the property as you might have done.

As you go through the check-out procedure with the tenant, maintain open dialogue and try not make personal remarks that could cause friction. Remember that you are a landlord and this is a business transaction. You should remain fair and reasonable and make all allowances for what is acceptable wear and tear and what is excessive damage.

As you make notes in the check-out boxes on the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition, think practically about what will need to be done to put things right.

Remain calm and discuss this with your tenant politely. You might try to imagine yourself as an independent Inventory Clerk whose duty is simply to record the condition of the property when the tenant moved in compared to how it looks now. If the tenant is not happy with this, show him the place in the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition where you have noted a change in condition and ask for his feedback. Remember that the tenant signed the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition when he moved in agreeing to the items and their condition, so it should be relatively simple for you to prove instances where excessive damage or loss has occurred within this document.

At the end of the check-out you should be able to see any areas where you think the tenant may be liable for costs that could be deducted from the deposit and you should state these along with any action you intend to take.

Always consider how a third party might view the deductions you propose. If the tenancy began after 6 April 2007 in England and Wales, your tenant may be able to force you to prove, via arbitration, that the sum you want to deduct is fair.

If you can see no reason to make any deductions from the tenant's deposit, you should not waste time in administering the return of the monies in full. As long as you have received all sets of keys, there is no need for the deposit to be held onto and, depending on when the tenancy began and which Tenancy Deposit Scheme you are using, it should be returned to the tenant by you or the scheme administrator.

If you do intend to make deductions from the deposit, see the next section for help on how to apportion costs.

When your tenant vacates the property you might consider changing the locks to maintain security. If the tenant does not return all sets of keys at the check-out it is reasonable to make a charge against him for changing the locks.

Apportioning costs and life expectancy

Before you begin making charges against your tenant's deposit you need to be able to qualify the amounts and how you have calculated them in order to show that you are acting fairly. You must consider the items that you are claiming for very carefully and always take into account age and value in respect of depreciation and wear.

If your tenancy agreement and your Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition state that the tenant is required to leave the property in a clean condition, it is quite simple for you to obtain quotes from local companies who can clean the property if the tenant fails to do so. It is more difficult to calculate a fair and reasonable charge for damaged or missing items and you should think about the following:

- How much money the item costs to replace 'like for like'.
- The expected lifespan of the item that is damaged/missing.
- How long the item had been in the property before the tenant took occupancy.

For example, your tenant vacates the property having broken an armchair and spilled red wine all over the seat. The item of furniture has been damaged beyond repair and you want to claim for a replacement against the tenant's deposit. You might consider that a fair life expectancy for the armchair in a rented property is eight years. You bought it new two years ago and put it into the rented property right away so you have benefited from a quarter of its natural life. As you cannot claim for the usage already had from the armchair and it is not reasonable to claim 'new for old,' even though the item was in a good condition at the start of the tenancy, your tenant should be responsible for 75 per cent of the cost of a like-for-like replacement.

It can be helpful if you create a chart of the life expectancy of items in your property and by considering how long the decoration, carpets, and fixtures and fittings might naturally last you will find calculating any charges a much simpler process.

A rough guide to life expectancy

Below is an example of a chart showing the very approximate life expectancy of decoration and inventory items in an average family home.

Wear and tear will vary depending on what market and type of tenant your property attracts. A professional couple who are out at work will cause less natural wear than a family with small children who are in the property all day. You should therefore not impose the same life expectancy to different groups of tenant.

Decoration

Hall	3 years
Stairs	3 years
Landing	3 years
Kitchen	3 years
Bathroom	3 years
Sitting rooms	4 years
Dining rooms	4 years
Bedrooms	6 years

Take into account the size of the rooms when working out the life expectancy of the decoration. A small room with lots of furniture will sustain more wear than a spacious one where it is easy to move around without touching walls and surfaces.

Carpets

Standard quality	3 years
High quality	10 years
Very high quality	Up to 20 years

Appliances

Cooker	6-7 years
Refrigerator	6-7 years
Dishwasher	6-7 years
Washing machine	6-8 years
Tumble dryer	6-8 years

Compensation

Sometimes your tenant may cause damage to a part of the property where it would be unreasonable to charge for replacements, so consider making a fixed charge instead. The most common instances where you might seek compensation are:

- Cigarette burns.
- Iron burns.
- Kitchen worktop burns/damage.
- Mattress stains.

Remember, you cannot benefit financially or materially when you deduct money from your tenant's deposit, so if your tenant puts a small cigarette burn in a carpet it would not be reasonable to claim to recarpet the entire room. Instead, claim compensation for the damages listed above. A fair sum might be £25 in each instance.

Missing or replacement items

When you need to replace items that are either damaged or missing from the property it is useful to have a few catalogues to hand or alternatively search on the internet at two or three stores which stock the type of items that you are replacing.

If you cannot find an exact replacement, try to match it as best you can and keep printouts or copies of the brochure items so that you can show your tenant what you are basing your figures on.

A walk-through guide to creating a Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition

Where do I start?

The first step is to make sure that you have everything you need to create your Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition. Some people walk around the property with a notepad and pen, while others find that speaking into a Dictaphone and typing it up later is easier. Decide which method is best for you and try to stick to it.

If you are going to write your Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition by hand, first of all make sure you have plenty of pens with you and that you do not run out of paper. If you are using a Dictaphone make sure that the battery is fully charged and there is enough room left on the tape. Remember though that your finished Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition should always be clearly written in black pen or typed on plain white paper.

Always consider what time of day it is and if the weather is good or bad. Poor lighting and wet, rainy or misty conditions can all affect the accuracy and quality of finished observations. Where possible, try to create your Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition during daylight hours in fair weather.

Make sure you have access to all areas of the property and that you park your car off the grounds so that your view of the premises is not obscured.

Some landlords like to take photographs of properties to avoid tenants replacing items with goods that are of lesser quality and to show the condition of specific areas or items; this can be a good idea as long as the quality of the photographs is clear. It is worth remembering that sometimes photographs can show areas of damage to be less severe than they really are or, if taken in poor lighting, they show well-decorated areas to be dull and worn. Photographs can however be a useful way of proving the make and model of particular items in the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition and could be of assistance to you in the future if you have to replace missing items. If you do decide to include photographs in your Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition, be sure to get the tenant to sign and date them and if they highlight areas of damage or wear, include something in the picture to give scale, such as a ruler.

Creating the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition

A brief description of the premises

Write down two or three lines that describe the premises as a whole. Remember to take into account the type of accommodation and include any outbuildings and gardens.

Example:

A well-presented three-bedroom, modern property with a single garage and front and rear gardens.

Areas to inspect

Working your way systematically through the property, you should start with the front exterior, garden and side elevations followed by the interior ground floor rooms upwards, finishing with the rear exterior, gardens and outbuildings.

You should exclude any lofts, cellars, locked cupboards or rooms that you do not want to be opened during the tenancy.

An extract of a sample Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition of the external parts of the front elevation of a terraced property is shown below. You will notice that our sample Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition is split into four sections:

1. Item numbers

These should be used throughout the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition so that you can keep a numerical record of all items. It will make it easier if you have to refer to any item in the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition later on.

2. Description

A concise, clear description of the part of the property you are detailing.

3. Check-in

The condition of the item, if other than good, at the time of the check-in.

4. Check-out

This section is for you to complete when moving the tenant out of the property and it allows you to clearly detail any damages, missing items or change of condition.

Property exterior front

NO	DESCRIPTION	CHECK-IN	CHECK-OUT
1	Red clay tile roofing		
2	Red brick exterior		
3	Black plastic guttering and down pipe		
4	White UPVC window frames		
5	Gravel area	Minor weeds	
6	Light stone patio tiled walkway up to front door	One cracked tile	
7	Holly bush around perimeter of garden to front and sides maintained to a height of 5ft		
8	White plastic gas meter cupboard		
9	White plastic electricity meter cupboard	Loose door	

Internal parts

When detailing the internal parts of the property you should consider the following areas of each room in the order that they appear below:

- Doors
- Ceiling
- Walls
- Woodwork
- Floor
- Lighting
- Heating
- Windows
- Window furniture / curtains / blinds, etc
- Switches / sockets / connections, etc
- Smoke alarms
- Wall furniture / fittings such as shelving or prints
- Freestanding furniture and rugs

Stand in each room and create your Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition in this order every time. It will make it easier to complete and the check-in should flow smoothly because you and your tenants will be able to recognise your pattern as you move through the premises.

Describing the detail of the contents

When you detail each item, it is also important that you record the following in your description:

- the item;
- its age (where possible);
- the material;
- the colour;
- the make (if applicable);
- the model (if applicable);
- the condition (if other than good).

For example:

A John Lewis, two-seat sofa, two-years-old, leather, dark brown, chrome feet, ring mark on right arm and four matching cushions.

You can see the above example as it appears on the following extract of an Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition detailing the sitting room area of a rented property:

Sitting room

NO	DESCRIPTION	CHECK-IN	CHECK-OUT
10	Sapele door, white wood, chrome handle, self-closing	Light scratches to front	
11	White textured ceiling, white coving		
12	Magnolia painted walls	4 x picture hooks	
13	White painted woodwork		
14	Beige short pile carpet	1 x light stain in front of window	
15	Pendant light, round paper shade		
16	White radiator with thermostatic control	Small chip in upper right corner	
17	White UPVC window, left/right opening with keys, white plastic handles/stays, white sill		

18	Pair of chocolate brown unlined tab top curtains, matching tiebacks, chrome pole, glass ball finials		
19	Aerial point/lead		
20	3 x white double electric sockets		
21	Round glass-top coffee table with oak legs	Some light scuffs to glass	
22	A John Lewis, 2-seat sofa, 2 years old, leather, dark brown, chrome feet and 4 x matching leather cushions	Ring mark on right arm	

Bedrooms and dining areas are very similar to sitting rooms in the way that they are detailed and how they appear on a Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition and you should create them in the same manner as the sample above.

It is also important to detail entrance hallways, stairs and landings and to help you we have included an extract of how these might appear on your Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition below:

Stairs/landing

NO	DESCRIPTION	CHECK-IN	CHECK-OUT
23	White textured ceiling		
24	Magnolia painted walls	Small circular indent to wall, light scuffs at low to mid level, 3 x screws	
25	White painted woodwork including spindles and banister rail to first-floor landing		
26	Beige short pile carpet		
27	Pendant light, low energy bulb, white paper shade		
28	Battery operated smoke detector		

Plumbing and utility devices make kitchens and bathrooms quite detailed areas of a property. Often they have a variety of different wall coverings too, as well as cabinets and cupboards and these must all be included in your Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition. If your property is fully furnished, the kitchen might be the most detailed room, as it needs to contain a description of every single item and whilst it may seem a laborious task, if you follow the simple ordering technique

described above you will soon find that you are able to record each item quite swiftly.

A good tip when preparing your kitchen for renting is to keep the contents to a minimum and of the same style and standard. Place the contents in drawers and cupboards so that they are easy to see at the time of check-in and check-out. Keep all pots and pans together and invest in a drawer tidy for the cutlery. Cluttered or scattered items can make the process take much longer, and counting knives and forks is not much fun at the best of times.

When creating the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition for a kitchen or bathroom, try to work clockwise around the room and when you encounter a cupboard or drawer unit detail its contents at the same time.

Below is a kitchen and bathroom sample extract which shows the detail required in a good and thorough Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition:

Kitchen

NO	DESCRIPTION	CHECK-IN	CHECK-OUT
29	Sapele door, chrome handle		
30	White textured ceiling		
31	Light brown painted walls, part tiled in a green ceramic tile		
32	White painted woodwork		
33	Terracotta tiles to floor		
34	Pendant light, white paper shade		
35	White UPVC window, left/right opening, white handles/stays, white UPVC sill		
36	Beech effect Venetian blind		
37	<p>A range of cream fronted kitchen cabinets with matching knobs, oak effect wooden trim, consisting of:-</p> <p>Single wall unit with: 5 x White china dinner plates 5 x White china tea plates 5 x White china bowls 5 x White china mugs</p> <p>Slimline single wall unit, Double base unit with: 5 x Pint glasses 5 x Glass tumblers 5 x Red wine glasses 5 x White wine glasses</p>	<p>Fingermarks to edge of door</p> <p>Drip marks to front</p>	

<p>Single base unit and drawer, with: 1 x Large Ikea saucepan 1 x Medium Ikea saucepan 1 x Ikea frying pan 1 x Ikea black plastic spatula 1 x Ikea black plastic pasta spoon 1 x Ikea black plastic fish slice 1 x Ikea black plastic ladle</p> <p>Double base unit under sink, drawer, with a variety of cleaning materials</p>	Drip marks, scuff to bottom of door	
38 Light wood oak effect worktops		
39 Inset stainless steel sink, chrome monobloc tap, chain/plug	Clean	
40 Light brown plastic cutlery holder & crockery drainer		
41 Wooden chopping board		
42 White Hinari kettle		
43 Stainless steel cutlery holder containing 4 x Ikea '365' spoons, 4 x Ikea '365' Dessert Spoons, 4 x Ikea '365' Forks & 4 x Ikea '365' Knives		
44 Inset Zanussi electric hob in chrome, 4 x hotplates, black dials	Fair age order, burn marks to hotplates, wear around dials	
45 Built-in Zanussi electric oven in chrome, smoked glass door, black dials		
46 Slimline cooker extractor hood in chrome		
47 Wall-mounted Worcester CD24I combination boiler		
48 Sanyo microwave in white		
49 Kenwood TTM332 Toaster in stainless steel		
50 Candy CTSE5142W White 7.8 cu ft fridge freezer		
51 Zanussi 1000 Zn2010 washing machine in white	Light scuffs to casing	
52 White radiator.		

53	Wooden circular dining table Marks to top.		
54	4 x wooden dining chairs Chairs are untreated and water marked		
55	White UPVC door to rear garden with opaque glass upper section, white plastic handle and lock		

Bathroom

NO	DESCRIPTION	CHECK-IN	CHECK-OUT
56	White sapele door, chrome handle/lock		
57	White textured ceiling		
58	White painted walls part tiled in a beige stone effect tile		
59	White painted woodwork		
60	Light oak effect wood laminate flooring		
61	Wooden flush light fitting, glass bowled shade	Dusty	
62	A 3-piece bathroom suite in white consisting of:- WC, wooden seat/lid, wooden handled flush Sink, pedestal, chrome hot/cold taps, chain, plastic plug Bath, chrome hot/cold taps, chain/ plastic plug, white plastic panel to side, beige stone-effect tiled shelf to end		
63	Mira m9000 shower in white, chrome flex, white riser, soapdish and showerhead		
64	White shower rail, white shower curtain, 12 x chrome rings	Some water marks to curtain	
65	Chrome Ikea towel ring		
66	Chrome Ikea towel rail		

67	Chrome Ikea toilet roll holder		
68	White radiator	Spots of rust to top	
69	Chrome toilet brush/holder		
70	Extractor fan		
71	Ikea 'LEVANGAR' mirror 50 cm x 140cm		
72	Shaver point		

Gardens

We have already touched briefly on gardens – this is an area that many tenants neglect. We all know that the costs involved in restoring a garden that has suffered from lack of maintenance can be extremely high and yet some landlords do not include a description of this area in the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition.

When you detail the garden, always try to use layman's terms alongside any botanical language or names which the tenants might not understand, and where relevant state how the garden should be maintained so that your tenants are aware of any specific requirements that certain shrubs, plants and flowers might need.

Whilst your tenancy agreement should contain clauses that state the garden is the responsibility of the tenant to keep in reasonable order, it is a good idea to supply some basic gardening equipment to encourage your tenants to maintain this part of the premises.

Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) (Amendments) 2010

If you supply any item of furniture or furnishing at the property you must ensure that it conforms to the government's regulations regarding fire safety in rented property. The best way to tell if your furniture complies is to check that it has a modern fire label attached to it. If you are unsure, the Department of Trade and Industry's website (www.dti.gov.uk) contains a useful guide. Alternatively, remove the item from the property and the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition before your tenants move in.

Additional Information to include in the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition

- **The property address**

The first page of your Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition should state the address of the property, the name of the landlord(s), the name of the

tenant(s), the date that the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition was created (make sure this is not too long before the check-in) and the check-in date.

- **Declaration**

This part of the Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition explains how the document is constructed and the responsibilities of both parties in agreeing its content.

- **Guidance notes for tenants vacating the property**

It is a good idea to include a section which reminds the tenants of their obligations when moving out of the property, as included in the tenancy agreement.

It is worth remembering however that if you do not present your property in a good, clean condition at the start of the tenancy, you should not expect your tenants to return it to you in any better condition. Also, if your garden appears poorly maintained at the check-in or the grass is overgrown and weedy, you cannot ask your tenants to improve this when they leave.

- **Meter readings**

You should always take the meter readings at the check-in and leave a space for readings to be recorded when the tenant vacates. Include a description of where the meters are located so that they are easy to find.

Some landlords leave it to their tenant to inform the utility companies of their occupancy but they often forget to do this, so it is advisable that you take on this task to ensure that accounts are correctly forwarded to the relevant parties.

- **Signatures**

This section asks the tenant to confirm that he has read and understood the Property Inventory document and that he agrees that it represents a true and accurate account.

All tenants should sign, print name and date this section.

- **Tenant's forwarding addresses**

This is a section that you should complete when you carry out the check-out procedure; you need to confirm where to send the tenant's deposit and whose name and address to put on the termination of utilities accounts.

You should now be ready to start creating your own Property Inventory and Schedule of Condition using the template included as part of this eKit. Refer to the following example of a completed Property Inventory for guidance.

Example of completed Property Inventory

INVENTORY AND SCHEDULE OF CONDITION

Property address: 14 GLADSTONE STREET, ASHBOURNE, DERBYSHIRE, DB2 4AX

Landlord/s: RON ROBERTS
7 PERCY ST, ASHBOURNE, DERBYSHIRE, DB2 5AZ

Tenant/s: TIM BOND
7 BATH ROAD, BRISTOL, BS2 3DJ

Date inventory prepared: 6 APRIL 2015

Check-in Date: 7 APRIL 2015

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY:

A WELL-PRESENTED THREE-BEDROOM, MODERN PROPERTY
WITH A SINGLE GARAGE AND FRONT AND REAR GARDENS.

DECLARATION

This Inventory provides a fair and accurate record of the contents of the property and their condition. It also records the condition of the fabric of the internal and external parts of the property.

Unless otherwise stated it is accepted that a listed item is in good condition, free from obvious defect or damage.

Any comments noted by either party in respect of a listed item should be recorded at the time of the check-in and added to this Inventory.

The Inventory should be used for identification purposes only and not as a structural survey report.

Items stored or kept in lofts or cellars and locked rooms that have not been recorded on the Inventory are the sole responsibility of the landlord

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR TENANTS AT THE END OF TENANCY

The Inventory will be checked at the end of the tenancy at which time any variances or discrepancies will be recorded. Missing or damaged items that are not considered as 'fair wear-and-tear' will be the responsibility of the tenant to pay for repair, replacement, making good, cleaning or any other required process.

The following notes have been designed to assist you when handing your property back to the landlord at the check-out appointment

In order to protect your deposit, it is advisable that you read these guidelines and take the appropriate action.

- Ensure that the property has been left in a good, clean condition throughout and all of your personal items have been completely removed.
- All items should be returned to exactly the same position as they are listed on the inventory.
- All windows, mirrors and glass items should be cleaned and polished
- All woodwork, skirting, dado rails, picture rails, frames, shelving, cabinets, etc., should be cleaned and polished.
- All soft furnishings such as carpets, curtains, rugs, bed linen, towels, throws and mattresses, etc., should be laundered/washed free of stains, ironed (where applicable) and left clean.
- All walls and ceilings should be dusted, wiped over (where necessary) and be free of excessive wear.
- All kitchen appliances including cookers, hobs, microwave ovens, toasters, washing machines, tumble dryers, etc., should be cleaned free of residues, grease and stains.
- All kitchen cupboards should be cleaned and emptied of your food and belongings.
- Fridges and freezers should be emptied of food, cleaned thoroughly, defrosted, switched off and their doors left open.
- Cooker extractors should be cleaned and their filters changed.
- Bathrooms should be cleaned thoroughly and all sealant and grouting should be free of staining or mould.
- All light bulbs should be present and in working order.
- All picture hooks, tacks, screws, nails or other fittings installed by you should be removed and any damage made good.
- Gardens should be in a well-maintained condition for the time of year, lawns should be cut and all garden implements should be clean and in working order.
- Any missing or damaged items should be replaced to match.
- A mail forwarding service should be set up by you to ensure that your post reaches you at your new address.

PROPERTY EXTERIOR FRONT			
NO	DESCRIPTION	CHECK-IN	CHECK-OUT
1	RED CLAY TILE ROOFING		
2	RED BRICK EXTERIOR		
3	BLACK PLASTIC GUTTERING AND DOWN PIPE		
4	WHITE UPVC WINDOW FRAMES		
5	GRAVEL AREA	MINOR WEEDS	
6	LIGHT STONE PATIO TILED WALKWAY UP TO FRONT DOOR	ONE TILE CRACKED	
7	HOLLY BUSH AROUND PERIMETER OF GARDEN TO FRONT AND SIDES MAINTAINED TO A HEIGHT OF 5FT		
8	WHITE PLASTIC GAS METER CUPBOARD		
9	WHITE PLASTIC ELECTRICITY METER CUPBOARD	DOOR LOOSE	

FRONT DOOR/INNER HALLWAY			
NO	DESCRIPTION	CHECK-IN	CHECK-OUT
10	WHITE WOODEN FRONT DOOR, CHROME HANDLE, YALE LOCK, 2 X 5-LEVER MORTISE LOCKS	DIRT MARKS TO FRONT AROUND LOCKS	
11	WHITE TEXTURED CEILING		
12	MAGNOLIA PAINTED WALLS	SMALL CIRCULAR INDENT TO WALL, LIGHT SCUFFS AT LOW TO MID LEVEL, 3 X SCREWS	
13	WHITE PAINTED WOODWORK		
14	BEIGE SHORT PILE CARPET, MAT TO FRONT DOOR, RUBBER DOOR STOP	FAIR WEAR AND TEAR TO CARPET, STAINS	
15	PENDANT LIGHT, BROWN PAPER SHADE		
16	SMOKE DETECTOR		
17	WOODEN BATTEN, 5 X CHROME COATHOOKS		
18	FUSE BOX AT HIGH LEVEL		

KITCHEN			
NO	DESCRIPTION	CHECK-IN	CHECK-OUT
32	SAPELE DOOR, CHROME HANDLE		
33	WHITE TEXTURED CEILING		
34	LIGHT BROWN PAINTED WALLS, PART TILED IN A GREEN CERAMIC TILE		
35	WHITE PAINTED WOODWORK		
36	TERRACOTTA TILES TO FLOOR		
37	PENDANT LIGHT, WHITE PAPER SHADE		
38	WHITE UPVC WINDOW, LEFT/RIGHT OPENING, WHITE HANDLES/STAYS, WHITE UPVC SILL		
39	BEECH EFFECT VENETIAN BLIND		
40	A RANGE OF CREAM FRONTED KITCHEN CABINETS WITH MATCHING KNOBS, OAK EFFECT WOODEN TRIM, CONSISTING OF:- SINGLE WALL UNIT WITH:	FINGER MARKS TO EDGE OF DOOR	
	5 X WHITE CHINA DINNER PLATES		
	5 X WHITE CHINA TEA PLATES		
	5 X WHITE CHINA BOWLS		
	5 X WHITE CHINA MUGS		
	SLIMLINE SINGLE WALL UNIT		
	DOUBLE BASE UNIT WITH	DRIP MARKS TO FRONT	
	5 X PINT GLASSES		
	5 X GLASS TUMBLERS		
	5 X RED WINE GLASSES		
	5 X WHITE WINE GLASSES		
	SINGLE BASE UNIT AND DRAWER, WITH:	DRIP MARKS, SCUFF TO BOTTOM OF DOOR	
	1 X LARGE IKEA SAUCEPAN		
	1 X MEDIUM IKEA SAUCEPAN		
	1 X IKEA FRYING PAN		
	1 X IKEA BLACK PLASTIC SPATULA		
	1 X IKEA BLACK PLASTIC PASTA SPOON		
	1 X IKEA BLACK PLASTIC FISH SLICE		
	1 X IKEA BLACK PLASTIC LADLE		
	DOUBLE BASE UNIT UNDER SINK, DRAWER, WITH A VARIETY OF CLEANING MATERIALS.		
41	LIGHT WOOD OAK EFFECT WORKTOPS		
42	INSET STAINLESS STEEL SINK, CHROME MONOBLOC TAP, CHAIN/PLUG	CLEAN	
43	LIGHT BROWN PLASTIC CUTLERY HOLDER & CROCKERY DRAINER		
44	WOODEN CHOPPING BOARD		
45	WHITE HINARI KETTLE		

BEDROOM 1			
NO	DESCRIPTION	CHECK-IN	CHECK-OUT
75	WHITE SAPELE DOOR, CHROME HANDLE, WHITE HOOK TO BACK		
76	WHITE TEXTURED CEILING		
77	MAGNOLIA PAINTED WALLS		
78	WHITE PAINTED WOODWORK		
79	BEIGE SHORT PILE CARPET		
80	PENDANT LIGHT, BULB, WHITE PAPER SHADE		
81	WHITE UPVC WINDOW, LEFT/RIGHT OPENING, WHITE HANDLES/STAYS, WINDOW LOCKS, WHITE UPVC SILL		
82	PAIR OF LINED CREAM COLOUR CURTAINS FROM JOHN LEWIS ON A WHITE TRACK		
83	WHITE RADIATOR WITH THERMOSTAT	LIGHT MARKS TO FRONT	
84	DOUBLE PINE WARDROBE, 2 X DRAWERS TO BOTTOM, CLOTHES RAIL AND HANGERS TO INSIDE	3 X STICKERS TO FRONT	
85	BLACK CAST IRON BEDSTEAD WITH MATCHING FRAME, KINGSIZE MATTRESS		
86	PINE 6-DRAWER CHEST, ROUND WOODEN HANDLES	WEAR TO VENEER AROUND HANDLES	

BEDROOM 2			
NO	DESCRIPTION	CHECK-IN	CHECK-OUT
87	WHITE SAPELE DOOR, CHROME HANDLE	WEAR TO VENEER TO LEFT-HAND EDGE	
88	WHITE TEXTURED CEILING		
89	MAGNOLIA PAINTED WALLS		
90	WHITE PAINTED WOODWORK		
91	BEIGE SHORT PILE CARPET		
92	PENDANT LIGHT, BULB, WHITE PAPER SHADE		
93	WHITE UPVC WINDOW, LEFT/RIGHT OPENING, WHITE HANDLES/STAYS, WINDOW LOCKS, WHITE UPVC SILL		
94	PAIR OF LINED CHOCOLATE BROWN COLOUR CURTAINS ON WHITE TRACK		
95	PINE 4-DRAWER CHEST, LARGE CIRCULAR PINE FRAMED MIRROR TO TOP	AGED, RING MARKS TO TOP, WEAR TO DRAWER FRONTS	
96	SINGLE DIVAN BED BASE WITH SINGLE MATTRESS AND PROTECTOR COVER		
97	RATTAN CHAIR	MARKS TO SEAT	
98	WHITE RADIATOR		

SIGNATURES

We/I hereby agree that the Inventory and Schedule of Condition contained herein is a true and fair representation of the facts, inclusive of amendments agreed to of today's date.

Date 6 APRIL 2015

Signed T. Bond Name (Print) TIM BOND

Signed _____ Name (Print) _____

Signed _____ Name (Print) _____

Signed _____ Name (Print) _____

FORWARDING ADDRESSES

Name: TIM BOND

Forwarding address: 7 BATH ROAD, BRISTOL, BS2 3DJ

Tel: 01234 567890

Email: TIMBOND@HOTMAIL.CO.UK

Name: _____

Forwarding address: _____

Tel: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____

Forwarding address: _____

Tel: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____

Forwarding address: _____

Tel: _____

Email: _____

