

## Deposits

Private landlords and lettings agencies usually ask for a deposit from all new tenants. At the end of the tenancy, they can make reasonable deductions from your deposit to cover certain financial losses - usually unpaid rent or damage to the property or furnishings.

There's no legal limit to the deposit amount that landlords can ask for, but most student landlords and letting agencies will set a specific amount per tenant. Contact us if you think the deposit amount or terms are unreasonable.

### Is your deposit protected?

By law, all Assured Shorthold tenancy deposits must be placed in a government-backed tenancy deposit scheme **within 30 days** of your landlord/agent receiving it. Currently, there are three tenancy deposit schemes backed by the government. Click on the links below to check the scheme databases.

- [Deposit Protection Service](#)
- [MyDeposits](#)
- [Tenancy Deposit Scheme](#)

Within the same 30 day timeframe, your landlord/letting agent should also tell you which scheme is holding your deposit. If you do not receive this information, get in touch with us as we can support you in contacting your landlord/agent about this.

When you move in, make sure that you complete an inventory and return a dated and signed copy along with any photo evidence to your landlord (download our Inventory Template if your landlord has not given you one). This will help avoid any disputes over deductions from your deposit at the end of the tenancy.

### Deposit returns

At the end of your tenancy, your landlord/letting agent should carry out an inspection on the property to determine whether any deductions should be made to your deposit. Check your tenancy agreement to see what your landlord can deduct money for. This might include:

- Unpaid rent (including arrears owed by other joint tenants)
- Damage to the property (but not if this was caused by normal usage / fair wear and tear)
- Replacement of missing items
- Cleaning

They should inform you of any deductions to be made to your deposit and refund the money back into your account. If you don't get your deposit back within 2-4 weeks of moving out make sure that you write to your landlord/letting agent – come and speak with an advisor who can support you to do this.

### What if I disagree?

If you dispute the amount of deposit that has been returned to you then you should write to your landlord/letting agent informing them that you disagree – you should refer to your tenancy agreement, inventory and any photos, emails or other documents you have. Remember to talk to us as we can support you through the entire process.

If you and your landlord/letting agent cannot come to an agreement about the deposit you can raise a dispute with your deposit protection scheme. They will review the dispute impartially and decide how much of your deposit you should have returned. Read the scheme's online guide to disputes for info about what evidence to provide. You have three months from the end of the tenancy in which to raise a dispute.

See our ['Moving Out'](#) guide for end of tenancy tips and our Inventory template which may help ensure your full deposit is returned.