



The following information should make leaving your rented house less hassle!

GIVE THE CORRECT NOTICE OF LEAVING

A date to move out is usually stated in the contract or agreed informally between you and your landlord. As most tenancies are now Assured Short hold, you do not need to give notice in order to leave on the day the tenancy ends. If you do not have an Assured Short hold Tenancy contact the FXU Advice Service.

Fixed Period of Time Tenancies

Although you don't legally have to give notice if you move out at the end of these tenancies as the contract has finished, it's a good idea to let your landlord know. You can only move out before the end of the contract if the contract allows this or if your landlord will let you. Try to get the landlord's permission in writing. If you leave without permission before the contract has ended you could be sued for the rent for the rest of the tenancy although the landlord is legally obliged to try to reduce (mitigate) his/her loss.

Other (Periodic) Tenancies.

You should give the notice your contract specifies. If you don't have a written contract or it doesn't say anything about notice then you should follow what the law says:

If you share any of your accommodation with the landlord you would be safest giving 28 days notice in writing, keeping a copy;

If you don't share accommodation with the landlord you should give the same length of notice in writing and keeping a copy that one payment of your rent covers (but at least 28 days), making sure that the notice runs out on the day before or the day on which you are due to pay your rent.

SAFEGUARDING YOUR DEPOSIT

Your deposit may act as insurance cover for two or three elements of the tenancy agreement: any outstanding fuel bills, any rent arrears, or any damage. If you have proof you paid a deposit you shouldn't have a problem getting it back if you follow these instructions. Deposits paid after 6 April 2007 are subject to the Tenancy Deposit Protection Scheme and your landlord must have informed you within 14 days of paying your deposit as to how it would be protected. There is either a custodial scheme or two insurance based schemes which can help if there is any dispute over the return of your deposit. For more information read our leaflet Tenancy Deposit Information. Come and see an advisor if there is any problem.

Outstanding fuel bills

How you deal with this depends on whether the bills are in your name or in your landlord's name. If they're in your name you'll need to get the meters read on the last day of your tenancy and request a bill to that date. If they're in your landlord's name you'll need to take a witnessed reading of the meters yourself (preferably a witness from outside your household) and ask your landlord for a copy of the most recent bill. From this you can get information about how much each unit of fuel costs, what the last reading was and thus how much you have used, and the cost, since the last reading.

The same procedure applies to any other bills that are your responsibility under your tenancy agreement.

Rent Arrears

Usually this would only be a problem if you haven't given the correct notice to leave. If you do have problems with this and you don't agree with your landlord that you owe any rent, come and see us at the FXU Advice Service.

Damage

The best thing you can do is wash everything that's washable and clean every surface that's cleanable. Make sure that everything that's on the inventory (list of things provided by the landlord) is still there. Then invite the landlord round for an inspection about a month before you're due to move out giving them the opportunity to point out anything they're unhappy with and giving you the chance to put it right. Don't forget the landlord can't by law hold you responsible for fair wear and tear on the property or its contents. Try to have someone there at the time that doesn't live in the house to act as a witness to anything that's said. Use the inventory as a checklist with the landlord.

Return the keys by hand (and get a receipt) or by registered post, and ask for your deposit back within a specified period of time.

Change of address and notifications

Let the fuel companies, i.e. your electricity and gas supplier, know the date you're moving out in writing, keeping copies. Let the water company and the Council tax section know if you've been responsible for these bills as well. Also the telephone company if you've had a telephone in your name at the address.

Keep copies of all these letters so you can prove you sent them. Also don't forget your doctor, dentist, the University, your bank, the Student Loan Company, and last (but not least?) your parents!

Any other problems

Check with us, the FXU Advice Service Advisors, as soon as possible.

FXU Advice Service

Help with: Money, Hardship Fund (Access to Learning Fund), Benefits, Childcare, Housing, Tenancy Agreements, Academic problems, student life!

We are here to help you!

FXU Advice Service Available (Term time only):

Tremough Find us in the Annex (opposite the Refectory/Bar)
Ring: 01326 370447 for an appointment

Woodlane Find us in the Library Building, Woodlane
Ring: 01326 213742 for an appointment

Email advice@fxu.org.uk