

Checking Out.

A Guide for Tenants

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Introduction.

You've given notice and the moving out date is in the diary. So what exactly happens on that day? Well, there will be an independent inspection either by the inventory clerk or the landlord. The purpose of this is to assess the current condition of the property which is then compared to its condition at the outset of the tenancy. It is this which provides the basis of what happens with your deposit.

The inspection will include meter readings and handover of all keys. You should also give a forwarding address.

The checkout process is not a quick one so please allow plenty of time. A rough guideline is 1½ hours for a lightly furnished one bedroom flat depending on size. Longer for larger and/or more fully furnished properties.

The property must be ready for inspection at the start of the check out. This means thoroughly cleaned and all your personal possessions and rubbish removed. Any extraneous items should also be removed. That chair you bought which you have now decided you don't want cannot be left. The landlord will charge you for the cost of removing it.

It is not compulsory for tenants to attend a check out — but it is certainly advisable! Whether you are present or not, it is your responsibility to make acceptable arrangements for the keys to be available. "I've got the keys at the office, can you pick them up from there?" is not acceptable. The inventory clerk will charge for his/her time to collect them and this charge will come out of your deposit.

Finally, you will have no further access to the property after completion of the check out. "I know it's not clean yet but I'll come back and do it later" is not allowed. The tenancy has ended and you no longer have any right of access. New tenants may be waiting to move in, or the landlord may be decorating the property and have his workmen booked to start straightaway. **If the cleaning is insufficient, professional cleaners will be brought in to rectify this and you will be charged accordingly.** This brings us onto...

Cleaning

The property will have been professionally cleaned before you moved in. You are expected to leave the property in the same condition as you found it (fair wear and tear excepted). In this case it is strongly recommended that professional cleaners are booked for the day before check out, or perhaps first thing on the day of check out — depending on what time your check out is booked for and the size of the property (which will have a bearing on how long the cleaning will take).

The cleaning must be completed before the landlord or inventory clerk arrives for the check out. If the cleaning is still being carried out, the inventory clerk will not proceed with the check out, the appointment will be re-arranged, and you will be charged for the clerk's time.

Please note that the inventory clerk or landlord will want to see a receipt as proof that professional cleaners have been used.

Professional end of tenancy cleaners will know what needs to be done. This will include the following:-

Throughout the property:

- Mopping and/or vacuum all floors and carpets professionally cleaned)
- Cleaning all paintwork including skirting boards, doors (both sides), window frames and ledges, picture rails, dado rails etc. — ensuring all marks, scuffs and stains are removed.
- Cleaning windows (both sides if possible).



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- Vacuuming or dusting light fittings or remove and clean as necessary. All lights should be fitted with appropriate working light bulbs.
 - Removing any cobwebs or dust from ceilings, light fixtures etc.
 - Marks or stains on cushions, sofas etc. to be professionally steam cleaned or dry cleaned. Professional cleaners usually include this in their service.
 - Dry cleaning all curtains if dirty or stained.
 - Replacing any broken curtain hooks; corded systems should also be working.
 - Ensuring all linen, towels and bath mats are freshly laundered.
 - Mattresses should be cleaned and in good condition.
 - Any ornaments to be dusted and/or wiped. Mirrors should be cleaned.

Bathrooms:

- Cleaning toilets (inside and out!)
- Cleaning sinks (they should be sparkling with all limescale removed).
- Cleaning baths and showers (also ensuring all limescale is removed).
- Cleaning floors.
- Cleaning mirrors.
- Cleaning all surfaces.
- Cleaning fronts and inside cupboards, cabinets and drawers.

Kitchen:

- Cleaning fridge inside and out, power to be turned off and door left slightly ajar.
- Defrosting and cleaning freezer, power to be turned off power and door left slightly ajar (note: professional cleaners do not usually defrost freezers so this will be up to you).
- Cleaning hob (it should be free from burnt on grease, cleaned and polished)
- Cleaning oven — including all shelves, trays and inner edges.
- Cleaning microwave inside and out.
- Cleaning front of washing machine and filter. Soap dispenser to be removed, thoroughly cleaned by removing all soap scum and dirt, then replaced — leave door ajar.
- Cleaning front of dishwasher and all shelves, baskets and filter, wipe all trims.
- Cleaning all work surfaces.
- Cleaning all cupboards and drawers — both on the front and inside.
- Cleaning and polishing sinks and taps ensuring all limescale is removed. Any waste disposal unit should be emptied and clear.
- All crockery, cutlery and utensils to be cleaned and in their correct place.
- Cleaning floors.



Garden/Yard:

- Mowing lawn and clear driveways/walkways.
- Cleaning up flower beds and garden areas.
- Removing all dead leaves etc., bag up and put out for collection.
- Removing all rubbish and debris.
- Cleaning all gardening implements and garden furniture.

Garage/Shed:

- Sweeping floors, clean up any spillages
- Cleaning out any cupboards/work benches.

Utility Companies and Service Providers

Sulgrave Estates will contact the utility suppliers through iammoving.com so you don't have to but it's a good idea to contact BT if you have a landline (or the relevant service provider) and ask them to suspend the landline on move out date and send you a final bill.

You should contact TV licensing (which can be done online) and also the Post office to arrange mail forwarding. No responsibility will be accepted for mail arriving at the property after you have moved out.

Please ensure that the gas, electricity and landline are not disconnected. It is likely that the property will be re-occupied soon after your departure. Please note that any reconnection charges may be deducted from your deposit unless this has been agreed with the landlord or agent.

Prior to Check Out

We're nearly there. Just a few more pointers to note before the Check Out can start. You need to make sure that:

- All rubbish has been removed.
- All cleaning has been completed to a satisfactory standard.
- Any missing or broken items have been replaced on a like for like basis.
- All appliance manuals and instruction leaflets are kept together and left in an obvious place for the new tenants.
- All personal possessions have been removed from the property.
- Furniture has been returned to its original position.
- Any pictures belonging to the property that have been stored away have been put back in their original position on the wall.
- All electrical items are in proper working order.
- All keys are available for return to the landlord/agent/inventory clerk.
- You are ready to vacate on completion of the Check Out following which no further access will be permitted.



At Check Out

- All keys should be handed over.
- A forwarding address should be given to the landlord/agent/inventory clerk for return of your deposit.

After the Check Out

Please note that should any significant deterioration or damage only come to light following Check Out, tenants will be liable as if noted at the Check Out.

Professional Cleaners

We strongly recommend you use one of our recommended cleaners. We have had many instances of cleaning firms doing sub-standard cleans which has resulted in the landlord calling in another firm to re-do the job and then taking this cost from the tenant deposit. This will not be the case if you use one of our recommended cleaners.

Domestic Bliss

Tel: 0207 286 1894 (Kim Aleong)
e-mail: kim@domestic-bliss.com
W. domesticbliss.com

Commercial Clean4U

Tel: 0203 730 8862
Mobile: 07980 719611 (Chris)
e-mail: info@commercialclean4you.co.uk

Polished Performance

Tel: 07956 135798 (Simon Belchamber)
e-mail: s.belchamber@btopenworld.com

The Facts

Figures from all three deposit protection schemes report that more than half of all deposit disputes are to do with cleaning. This is followed by damage, redecoration, gardening and rent arrears.

And finally...

We hope you will find this Guide helpful in ensuring a successful return of your deposit and wish you all the best for the future.

