

TENANCY GUIDANCE NOTES

WG Inventories has put together this short guide, firstly, to help tenants prepare for checking out of their rental property, and secondly, to assist landlords in providing the necessary guidance to their tenants and understanding their responsibilities.

It explains what to expect on the day of the check-out, what tenants should do to ready the property for check out and highlights specific areas to pay particular attention to.

We have also included, at the end, some guidance on how to maintain the property during the course of the tenancy.

GENERAL ADVICE

If the property is a managed property, by a lettings or independent managing agent, they are likely to have an established network of maintenance and cleaning contractors who will be tried and tested. There are distinct advantages to a tenant using those supplied/recommended by the agent:

1. Their Cleaners will understand exactly what is required for an 'End of Tenancy' clean.
2. The standard of their work will have been quality checked by the agent.
3. If there is any reason for recall, the responsibility is not yours to rectify, as they were provided by the agent.
4. Tenants may have to pay further cleaning bills if the correct standards are not met at the check-out.

LANDLORD MAINTENANCE

Agents and landlords have a 'duty of care' and as such, should be making regular visits to properties – every six months - to check health and safety and the condition of the property. They should also respond quickly when a tenant notifies of them of any problems in the property and they should encourage open with dialogue tenants so that problems can be sorted quickly.

DECORATIVE CONDITION

It is expected that the property will be in a similar condition as noted in the original inventory, this includes the decorative condition, eg. Walls, ceilings and painted woodwork.

It is accepted that during the course of normal day to day living marks and scuffs may appear on walls and woodwork, however, should the marking be excessive it will be noted in the check-out report and may incur charges or replacement costs which may be deducted from the tenants deposit.

Particular attention should be paid to:

- Hooks, screws and nails inserted into walls.
- Excessive furniture rubbings.
- Pencil, pen or crayon marks.
- Tears to wallpaper.
- Excessive damage to woodwork.
- Cracked/broken windows.

END OF TENANCY CLEANING

All cleaning should be thorough, there is an expected minimum standard required for an 'End of Tenancy' clean, which is rarely met by a domestic cleaner.

Particular attention should be paid to:

- Sanitary ware, particularly under rims, basin and bath overflows and wastes, chrome taps should be gleaming (polished)
- Windows, whether external cleaning is required.
- Woodwork, especially at high levels such as tops of doorframes or picture rails.
- Light fittings, including shades.
- Kitchen appliances, especially inside soap drawers and rubber seals/rims.
- Beds, bases, mattress and pillows, will be examined for staining and any damage.
- Supplied linens and bedding, should be both laundered and pressed, or replaced if marked or soiled. Beds should not be made up for the check-out as they need to be examined.
- Curtains and blinds, should be cleaned by professionals to avoid shrinkage, depending on the agreement and/or length of the tenancy, and at the very least vacuumed, particularly along the tops as this is where dust often settles.
- Carpets should be thoroughly vacuumed and depending on the agreement and/or length of the tenancy they should be professionally cleaned.
- Cobwebs at high levels - such as ceiling corners and above cupboards.

REMEMBER -

- A charge may be incurred at the end of tenancy to clean any staining or soiling.
- Compensatory costs may be made towards any further damage, such as stains or cigarette burns, not previously recorded in the inventory.
- If any item is badly marked or damaged a charge may be incurred for part or all of the cost of replacement.
- If the standard of cleaning is not satisfactory, managing agents or landlords may employ a contract cleaner, the cost of which may be deducted from the tenants deposit.
- Soft furnishings are expected to be in a similar condition as at the start of the tenancy. It is in the tenants' interest to protect the furnishings as compensation charges or replacement costs may be deducted from the deposit for any damage or excessive wear incurred.

APPLIANCES

It is expected that the property will be in a similar condition as noted in the original inventory, this includes kitchen or other appliances, such as boilers, showers etc.

Where possible, appliances will be tested for power and basic operation. Any deficiencies will be noted on the check-out report. If items are found not to be working or damaged, charges may be applicable in the form of compensation, a percentage of the item or a replacement cost as appropriate may be deducted from the tenants deposit.

Any staining, soiling or excessive discolouration, remaining after cleaning, may incur further cleaning charges, or a percentage of the item or a replacement cost as appropriate may be deducted from the tenants deposit.

OUTSIDE AREAS

It is expected that the property will be in a similar condition as noted in the original inventory, this includes gardens, balconies or terraces, etc. (See section - DURING TENANCY)

Garden sheds, greenhouses etc. are expected to be left in a similar condition as noted in the original inventory.

Compensation and/or cleaning charges may be deducted from the tenants deposit for any damage or excessive wear or neglect.

RETURNING KEYS

All keys listed on the inventory should be kept safely and handed back at the end of the tenancy, this includes keys to internal doors, windows, safes and locks to garden sheds, garages, gates etc.

Should any keys be lost or locks damaged a charge may be incurred for replacement.

If extra keys are cut, these should also be returned.

All keys must be available at the time of check-out.

THE UTILITIES

Utility meters for electric, gas and water will normally be read at the check-out, in order to facilitate the correct end of tenancy readings for final billing purposes. This is done when access to meters is possible. Location of meters, meter numbers and where possible the name of the suppliers, should be made available to inventory clerk prior to check-in/out.

DURING TENANCY

- Always report any appliances if they stop working or malfunction
- Always report any damaged to decoration or structure from external forces, as insurance claims may be required.
- If a gardener is not employed at the property the tenant will be required to maintain the garden. This includes; the cutting of lawns, weeding of beds, trimming bushes and shrubs, and maintaining the garden according to the season. The tenant will be required to maintain paving, pebbled, decked and fenced areas. However, it is suggested that the tenant seeks confirmation with the managing agent prior to taking action.
- Extra keys, or replacements should always be done with the permission of the managing agent.

This document has been formulated as a guide only and in accordance with AIIIC guidelines.