

Property MOT Guidance Notes

1. EPCs

A valid EPC is needed whenever a property is rented and contains information about a property's energy usage as well as typical energy costs.

Ratings go from A (most efficient) to G (least efficient).

If an energy performance certificate is required for the property, please upload the current valid energy performance certificate. Please note this should be the full certificate rather than an excerpt or graph alone.

If an EPC has been done but you do not have the full EPC then it can be accessed here: www.epcregister.com.

2. Gas

If there is a gas supply but no appliances, the landlord must ensure the supply is safe.

A valid gas safety record (previously called a Gas Safety Certificate or CP12) is needed if the property has a live gas supply and is to be rented.

If a gas safety record is required for the property, please upload the current valid gas safety record.

You should check the gas safety record for any problems noted. It will tell you if the gas appliances are safe.

If the property does not have a valid gas safety record you can find a Gas Safe registered engineer to carry out the necessary checks and report here: <https://www.gassaferegister.co.uk/find-an-engineer/#findbylocation>

A tenant must not move in without being given a valid gas safety report.

3. Solid Fuel and Oil Combustion

- Oil and Solid fuel appliances need to be installed in accordance with regional building regulations and should have periodic servicing
- The recommendation is that they are serviced at least annually by an OFTEC registered technician
- Oil heated homes should be checked regularly including the boiler, fuel storage tank and pipework
- Servicing will be provided with a CD/11 (oil) or CD/81 (solid fuel) service report
- Installer will provide a CD/10 (oil) or CD/80 (solid fuel) and notify the local building control body so that a works notification can be issued
- When Oil or Solid fuel is present, a carbon monoxide alarm should be fitted in every room that any of these are present
- You can verify an OFTEC technician at www.oftec.org or by calling 01473 626 298
- Guide: https://www.oftec.org/Media/Default/DocGalleries/OFTEC%20Homes%20Guides/OFTEC_HomeGuide_HeatingInRentedAccommodation_PUB98.pdf

4/5. Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm Regulations 2015

- All residential rented properties must have the following alarms fitted:
 - One battery operated or mains wired smoke alarm fitted to each storey (to include entrance hallways to maisonettes)
 - One Carbon Monoxide alarm situated within 1-3 metres of any solid fuel burning appliance (e.g. log fire, coal fire, wood burning stoves)
- It is best practice for a Carbon Monoxide alarm to be situated in rooms with gas appliances such as boilers and gas fires.
- Each alarm (whether smoke or carbon monoxide) must be tested for sound on the START DATE of the tenancy, regardless of whether the tenant is actually moving in on that date or not.
- A record must be made on the Inventory, Property Visit and Check Out reports as to whether all appropriate alarms are in situ and whether they are working or not. For electrically wired alarms it is also necessary to note whether the green light is showing or not.
- If any alarm is not working, they should be replaced immediately at the landlord's expense.
- Best practice is for smoke alarms to be fitted in the room/area of most circulation - typically the hallway and landing in most houses. It is not advisable for smoke alarms to be fitted in kitchens as they are activated by burning toast/food and tenants tend to take the batteries out.
- Heat detectors cannot be substituted for smoke alarms.
- Homes in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) usually require more fire safety measures (such as heat alarms, fire blankets and extinguishers).

6. Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR)

Landlords have a legal duty to make sure the electrical installations and electrical equipment supplied are safe at the start of the tenancy and kept in good working order throughout the tenancy. A registered electrical engineer can carry out an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR). These are recommended every five years or as frequently as the engineer advises. You can find a registered competent electrician at [Electrical Safety First](#) and [ECA](#).

7. Visual electrical inspection

A visual electrical inspection should take place between every tenancy when you can check for any damage or wear and tear to electrical parts, e.g. plug sockets and appliances.

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8. Portable appliance test (PAT)

The aim of a PAT is to check that moveable electrical appliances are safe and prevent electrical accidents occurring. A competent person who has had the correct instruction or training and has adequate knowledge of electricity can carry out a PAT. These are recommended every two years.

9. The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) hazard checklist

Any residential premises should provide a safe and healthy environment for any potential occupier or visitor. The HHSRS is a risk-based evaluation system to help local authorities identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings. Introduced under the Housing Act 2004 and effective from 6th April 2006, it applies to residential properties in England.

The HHSRS assesses 29 categories of housing hazard, each hazard has a weighting which will help determine whether the property is rated as having Category 1 (serious) or Category 2 (other). If a property is found to contain serious (Category 1) hazards, the local authority has a duty to take the most appropriate action. This could range from trying to deal with the problems informally at first to prohibiting the use of the whole or part of the dwelling. Please see the [HHSRS guidance](#) for details of each hazard.

10. Legionella

Section 17 Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

“If anyone is alleged to have breached any criminal offence under this act or the regulations, and they failed to adhere to the approved code of practise, a criminal offence shall be deemed to be committed”

- COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regs) and ACoP L8 have been in place for many years
- A new ACoPL8 (HSG274 Part 2), was introduced in April 2014 to include all residential property

Section 28, Health and Safety at Work Act 1974:

“A risk assessment must be carried out to identify and assess the exposure to legionella bacteria from water systems on the premises and any precautionary measures needed. The duty holder is responsible for ensuring the risk assessment is carried out”

- The landlord is responsible for ensuring the risk assessment is carried out.
- Risk Assessments must be completed by a competent person

Section 2.138 (HSG274 part 2) states:

“Landlords who provide residential accommodation have a legal duty to ensure that the risk of exposure of tenants to legionella is properly assessed and controlled.”

- The duty holder must:
 - Assess – carry out a legionella risk assessment by a competent person who is trained under ACoP L8
 - Remove or control identified risks
 - Manage the risks on an ongoing basis
 - Keep records
- Review the assessment and controls regularly

Please see the [HSE website](#) for more information about your responsibilities to prevent legionella as a landlord.

11. Security

A property should contain doors and windows that can be securely locked. However, if the property is burgled, the landlord is not likely to be responsible for the loss of tenants' belongings. Make sure that windows, doors or other points of entry are properly secured, check there are suitable locks on doors and windows and check whether access to the property is well lit.

12. Trips and Hazards

Trips and falls can lead to significant injury, broken bones or loss of confidence. They are more likely to take place in baths and showers, on stairs or around low balconies and windows. Older people and under 5s tend to be more vulnerable.

Landlords should:

- Keep floor surfaces in good repair and free from trip hazards.
- Look for any obvious trip hazards or uneven floor surfaces, particularly on stairs, bathroom floors or at the exits of showers.
- Check there is good lighting on the stairs and that there is a handrail to use.
- Make sure that low-level large windows have restrictors or safety rails.

Blinds: Landlords have a responsibility to ensure blinds installed in their properties containing cords or chains are safe.

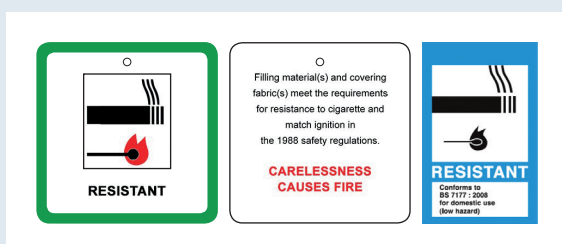
- Blinds installed by the landlord or a letting agent after February 2014 must be compliant with the following standard: BS EN 13120:2009+A1:2014
- This states that new blinds must be safe by design or be supplied with the appropriate child safety devices installed, which means that where there is a loop that is present, or could be created, a safety device must be installed at the point of manufacture. These safety features will either break under pressure, tension the cord or chain, or provide the facility to store cord(s) out of a child's reach. Usually professional installers will fit the devices, but if landlords or agents are fitting blinds, they should fit any safety device that comes with it.
- The standard also imposes a maximum cord and chain length, and all blinds must continue to carry safety warnings.

- Manufacturers and retailers that do not comply with the standards could be prosecuted under the General Product Safety Regulations 2005.

13. Furniture and Furnishing Regulations 1988 (Amended) 1993

- It is an offence, under the Consumer Protection Act 1987, punishable by heavy fines and possible imprisonment to supply or provide furniture in a let property, which does not comply with the Fire Resistance Requirements, contained in the Fire & Furnishing Regulations.
- Soft furnishings supplied when letting a property must meet the official fire resistance standards by containing a permanent attached label confirming that it complies.
- Soft furnishing items that must comply are anything which is upholstered or has foam or internal soft fillings, such as: mattresses, padded headboards, bed bases, pillows, cushions, settees, sofas, armchairs, padded chairs and so on.
- It does not include carpets, curtains, bed linen, duvets and or antiques furniture manufactured before 1950.
- Where a label is not present, proof that it was purchased after the 1st March 1990 with a receipt, may provide proof that the item does comply with the regulations. (Furniture manufacturers had to make compliant furniture from that date).
- It is a legal requirement that all furniture whether second hand or new, included in a letting must comply.
- The regulations effect all Landlords who supply or provide furniture in the course of letting a property. It is also the Landlord's/Agent's responsibility to check any furniture left behind by a previous tenant to ensure that it complies if it is to be included in the next let.
- Landlords or Letting Agents cannot 'get out' of their legal duty when letting a furnished property by either 'giving free' to the tenant the furniture or contracting the furniture to the tenant on a 'buy back' scheme at the end of a tenancy. The Landlord / Agent will still be the 'suppliers' and therefore responsible.
- You cannot store soft furnishings that don't comply anywhere in or on the property – including in the loft or the garage.

Fire resistance labels will look like this:



14. Damp and mould

Damp and mould can cause or worsen respiratory problems, infections, allergies or asthma. It can also affect the immune system, particularly in young children. Damp also contributes to excess heat loss and puts up heating bills, as well as causing damage to building fabric and contents, including clothes and furniture.

Landlords must make repairs to the property's structure and exterior (this includes repairs that are likely to be the cause of damp and mould – such as leaking gutters or wet outside walls). They should also make sure that the property is properly ventilated.

Rising damp: things to look for

- Damaged skirting boards or plaster
- Peeling paint or wallpaper – often with wet patches
- A white powder-like substance on the wall, left by soluble salts dissolved in water
- Tide marks rising up the wall

Rising damp only happens at ground floor levels as it's the moisture drawn up the wall from the soil in the ground. If you have any of the above in your property you should seek expert advice.

Mould

Is a fungus that can grow on walls and furniture. It can look like a cloud of little black dots which is caused by an excessive build-up of moisture. It is unhealthy and requires attention. Some common causes include:

- poor ventilation,
- insufficient heating,
- non-existent insulation in walls,
- water sources such as damp clothes,
- cooking
- bathroom moisture
- rain leaking through cracked walls
- leaking roofs and windows
- water soaking up through walls and floors (rising damp)

Once you know the cause the mould is treatable.

15. Inventory report/Schedule of condition

An inventory is an important document and the main source of evidence if there is a dispute with the tenant at the end of the tenancy about the condition and/or contents of the property. An inventory should be a record of the condition of the property together with any fixtures, fittings, contents and decoration as well as relevant meter readings taken on the start and end dates. To find a safe, independent and local inventory clerk you can visit the Associate of Independent Inventory Clerks (AIIC) at <https://theaiic.co.uk/>.