

Check-Out Procedure/Deposit Refunds

Timeframe for Return of Deposit Monies

As per the terms of your tenancy agreement (sample on 'Downloads' section of website), your deposit monies will be returned to your Lead Tenant within 21 days of the end of your tenancy agreement (ie by 21st July) subject to any deductions for unpaid rent or damages/cleaning. Any such deductions will be itemised in the letter that will accompany the return of the deposit monies.

End of Contract House Inspection

Before we can return your deposit monies we will need to conduct an inspection of your house to ascertain whether it has been left in the condition in which you found it at the start of your contract. We cannot conduct this inspection until we hear that you have all left the house for the last time and that all keys are in the house (therefore indicating that nobody is planning on returning to collect anything or conduct any further cleaning or clearance). Anything remaining in the house after this time will be considered rubbish and will be disposed of at your expense eg junk furniture, bollards (a student favourite), traffic signs or general household rubbish. Please note that the dustmen will not remove multiple black bags or general debris from the front of your house and as such you will need to take any excess rubbish to the town dump if a clearance charge is to be avoided.

Any pre-departure inspections that we may conduct (see below) can of course only be preliminary inspections as your former housemates may have a party in the house after your own departure! ie just because the house is clean when you yourself leave, it doesn't necessarily follow that it will still be clean when the last of your housemates leaves! This noted you should discuss amongst yourselves how/when the house is going to be properly cleaned and how best to ensure that it is returned to us in the best possible condition. The final clean of kitchens and communal areas cannot of course be conducted until the day of departure of the last of your housemates. If you are likely to be one of the last to leave you should ensure that those who leave before you conduct their fair share of the cleaning before they go – we frequently find that those who leave first tend not to contribute too much towards the cleaning and in this way the last tenants to vacate the property decide (perhaps not unreasonably) that they cant be bothered to clean the whole house themselves –this is how you get a large cleaning bill!

What We Will Be Looking For:

The following is intended as a guide to the sort of things we will be looking when we conduct our end of tenancy inspection but is by no means an exhaustive list – some things are simply a matter of common sense!

Bedrooms:

When inspecting bedrooms we will be checking bed-frames, mattresses, desks/chairs, wardrobes and chests, door-locks, door-closers, door-frames, and windows. We'll also check carpets for burns (whether caused by cigarettes, ironing or tongs) and then cleanliness of window and door frames as well as skirting boards and basins. These all need to be wiped clean. Each room should have a lampshade and functioning light-bulb. Any blu-tack needs to be carefully removed from walls.

Kitchens

Kitchen cupboards need to be cleared of all foodstuffs and cleaned inside as well as out. Crockery/cutlery, pots & pans etc need to be cleaned and returned to the cupboards. Ovens/hobs tend not to get cleaned properly all year and this said it is sometimes easier for us to get a professional cleaner in to attend to the grease and grime of the ovens. Professional cleaners charge approx £50 per oven & hob. Dishwashers will need to be free of food waste. Fridges and freezers need to be emptied of all food/drink, defrosted and cleaned. Microwaves need to be cleaned inside as well as out. All light-bulbs need to be functioning. Floor tiles need to be washed clear of stains and stickiness.

Shower/Bathrooms :

Showers need to be cleaned such as to return them to their original colour! Should it prove necessary, steam cleaning of your shower will be approx £30 per shower. Shower ceilings need to be wiped clean of any mould that may have built up due to condensation.

Stairwell:

Banister spindles and skirting boards will need to be wiped free of all dirt and dust and any broken spindles will need to be replaced and decorated at your expense. Hallway vinyl or tiles need to be washed clean of any stains and stickiness. Front and back doors and doorframes need to be wiped clean.

Lounges:

Any damage due to dartboards or anything stuck or pinned to walls will inevitably result in redecoration works for which you will be charged. Heavily stained or smelly carpets will need to be professionally steam cleaned. Window frames and skirting boards will need to be free of dust.

Carpets: If carpets are heavily soiled then they may need to be steam cleaned – as noted this is particularly so with regard to lounges.

Gardens should be clear of all rubbish and flower beds and pavers weeded.

Rubbish: As noted above, anything that is not taken by the dustmen will have to be removed by a private contractor at your expense.

Pre-Departure Inspections

Across the month of June we would be pleased to have a walk through the house with you as many times as you wish. In doing so we will point out matters deserving of your attention and we can clarify precisely what is to be expected. In short we will be looking for the house to be returned to us in the same condition that we provided it to you so the more clearing and cleaning you do the less monies will be deducted from your deposits. If the house is returned to us in a fit state for the next tenants to move straight in then there will of course be no need for any deductions whatsoever. If some cleaning remains to be done then we will charge you what it costs us. The size of any charge is totally dependant upon the amount of effort you collectively put in to cleaning the house.

Key Return

On leaving the house please **leave your key in your door lock and text us to advise that this has been done** and that you have left the house for the last time. We'll then pop round to lock the room so as to ensure that those who still remain in the house don't use it for party guests! Lost or non returned keys are charge at £40 each. Lost master keys are £100

Meter Readings (where renting *exclusive* of bills)

Utility bills never revert to Student Heaven but instead are simply transferred into the name of the Lead Tenant of the incoming group of students. To ensure that there is no understating of meter readings by the outgoing students, or overstating by the incoming (each group trying to reduce their liabilities), we read the meters with the last person to leave the house and phone the relevant utility companies on your behalf. We will provide the utility companies with the readings as well as the forwarding address of the outgoing Lead Tenant. The Lead Tenant can then settle these accounts prior to distributing the balance of the deposit monies to his/her former housemates.

Council Tax

Though as students you are exempt from council tax, the council still needs to be notified of any change of occupants. We will be doing this for you.

Summary:

Discuss with your housemates how/when the house is to be cleared/cleaned
Leave your key in your door lock when you vacate the house and text us to say you have left the house for the last time
Last one to leave the house must contact us to arrange for reading of utility meters
Where renting *exclusive* of utility bills, your closing accounts will be sent direct to the home address of the Lead Tenant by the appropriate utility companies

After our inspection of the house and after any repairs/cleaning have been undertaken we will send your deposit monies to your Lead Tenant minus any deductions relating to unpaid rent and/or damages

Lead Tenant settles utility bills (ie if you have been renting on an *exclusive* basis) and can then distribute the balance of your deposit monies amongst you. It will be for you and not us to apportion these monies between you if for some reason you consider that certain housemates should be solely responsible for meeting all or part of any particular liability/ deduction eg unpaid rent.

NB

Please note that these procedures are provided with the aim of assisting you to recover as much of your deposit monies as possible. We make no money out of organising/overseeing cleaners and tradesmen and consequently will do whatever we can to help you in the check-out process and thereby save time and aggravation for ourselves! Finally, remember, if it doesn't cost us, then it doesn't cost you!