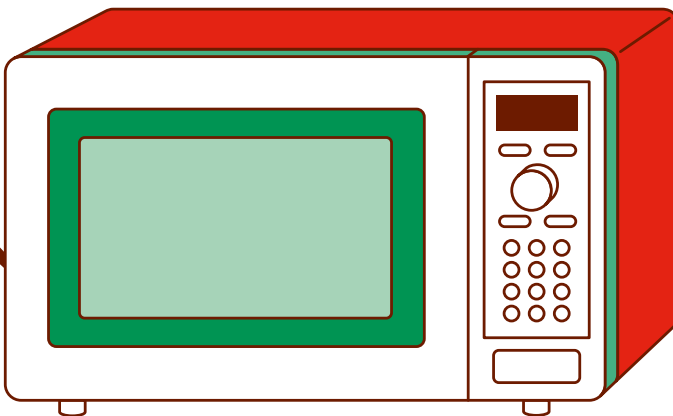


Electrical safety for tenants

Protect yourself in your rented home



Every year a number of deaths and injuries in UK homes are caused by faulty electrics and electrical equipment. Almost half of all domestic fires are caused by electricity.

From June 2020, private landlords must have an inspection carried out on the electrical installations in their rental properties carried out every five years.

Tenants should feel obliged to notify the landlord about any electrical problems as soon as they appear, as well as maintain any electrical items they bring into the property.

This simple guide will help you to talk to your landlord about electrical safety and show you what to look out for in your rented home.

The warning signs

If you see any of these in your rented home, they show that the electrical installation is old and may not have had the proper safety checks:

1

Cables

- Are cables coated in black rubber, lead or fabric?
- Are fabric covered cables hanging from ceiling roses?

2

Fuseboxes

- Does the fusebox have a wooden back?
- Is it made of cast iron or are there a number of them in the same area?

3

Sockets

- Are there old round-pin sockets?
- Are sockets mounted in skirting boards?

4

Switches

- Are there round light switches?
- Are there any brown and black switches?
- Are any light switches mounted on the wall in the bathroom?

Private landlords are required by law to have a periodic inspection and test of the electrical installations in their rental properties carried out by a qualified electrician every five years. Following the inspection, the electrician will issue an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) and your landlord should provide you with a copy.

If any electrical work has been carried out in the property, your landlord should provide you with certification that confirms it meets the UK national standard BS 7671.

Things to check

Protect yourself and those you live with by following these simple steps:

- **Check** that sockets, switches and light fittings are in good condition with no signs of damage such as cracking or burn marks.
- **Check** that leads (flexible cables) on appliances aren't damaged or frayed.
- **Check** that any electrical appliances provided by the landlord have up to date PAT (Portable Appliance Test) stickers on them. This is not a legal requirement, but something that we recommend. It will have been filled in by the electrician or competent person who inspected and tested the appliance. Testing is not generally required if the appliance is under a year old.
- **Check** that the fusebox has RCD protection. An RCD is a life-saving device that protects against fatal electric shock and reduces the risk of electrical fires.



1

Plug-in RCD providing protection for a single appliance.



2

Fusebox incorporating an RCD. This is the safest form of RCD protection and should be tested twice each year - we suggest you do it when the clocks change as an easy reminder.

To help you to carry out visual checks in your rented home, download our free Home Electrical Safety Checks smartphone app, available for iPhone and Android. Find out more at electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/visualchecks



Things to remember

What you can do to reduce the risk of electrical accidents and fires.

- **Make sure** that you register any electrical appliances that you bring into the property. This means that if there is a problem, the manufacturer will be able to contact you. Ask your landlord to confirm that they have registered any appliances that are provided with the rental. You can find out more about product registration at electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/registration
- **Don't** overload sockets. Visit electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/overloadingsockets and use our calculator to make sure that you are safe.
- **Don't** attempt to use electrical appliances from overseas in the UK. Products manufactured for use in other countries may operate at a different voltage and frequency.
- **Don't** attempt any repairs to the electrical wiring or appliances yourself.
- **Don't** take mains-powered electrical products into the bathroom.
- **Don't** touch electrical appliances or switches with wet hands.
- **Don't** plug adaptors into adaptors.
- **Do tell your landlord immediately if you think there is a problem with the electrics.**

If you have reported a problem to your landlord and they have refused to put the situation right or ignored your request, you should contact your local authority who will be able to help you. Local authorities will ensure a landlord is meeting their legal obligations and can take enforcement action against them. You should never try to carry out your own electrical repairs.

Find out more

Electrical

For more information about electrical safety in rented properties visit:

electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk

Fire Safety

For information about fire safety in rented properties visit:

gov.uk/firekills

Gas

For information about gas safety in rented properties, visit:

GasSafeRegister.co.uk

Electrical Safety First



The UK's electrical safety experts

Electrical Safety First is the UK charity dedicated to reducing deaths and injuries caused by electrical accidents. Our aim is to ensure everyone in the UK can use electricity safely.

electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk

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