

Deposits- Frequently Asked Questions

Moving can be a hassle. Getting your deposit back doesn't have to be.

At the end of a tenancy, you may have a lot of things to worry about. Sales & Lettings Angels are here to help you make sure your deposit repayment isn't one of them.

To give yourself the best chance of getting your deposit returned quickly, follow our straightforward guidance.

Your tenancy agreement and check-in inventory will form the basis of your landlord or letting agent's expectations about the condition of the property when you move out. Reviewing these will give you an indication of what you need to address before the check-out. This may be to put right any damage to the property, or terms that must be met such as keeping the garden tidy. If you can't find your tenancy agreement or inventory, ask your landlord or letting agent for a copy.

What is a check-out inspection?

During a check out inspection, the check in inspection will be compared to the condition of the property once keys have been returned / last day of the tenancy. The clerk will check the condition of the property and note discrepancies such as broken items, damage, and the cleanliness (See the cleaning checklist that will have been emailed to you).

They will also check for maintenance issues or items for the landlord to address. Discrepancies in excess of fair wear and tear may then be claimed from your deposit.

Do I have to be there for the check out?

No.

The clerk is there to simply record the condition of the property against the opening inspection and will not take into account mitigating circumstances. However the report will be emailed to you for your written approval or disapproval and if you disagree or can mitigate any circumstances, this will be your opportunity to put any points across.

If you feel there are areas of the property you wish to bring to our attention, we recommend you take detailed photos of these areas prior to moving out – you will be able to add these onto your check-out inspection once this has been sent to you.

When your check out report is sent to you, you will be able to comment on each part of it if the clerk has missed something.

I want to talk to you on the phone about my deposit.

If we have made a claim for your deposit, this is because your landlord has instructed us to do so having reviewed the check in and check out report.

Sometimes we have agreed with your landlord and sometimes we do not. However, as our client, we must follow your landlords instructions to us.

The best way to mitigate/challenge any deduction claims made is through the DPS.

Whilst you may wish to discuss with us why you disagree with either our comments or deductions, we will not be able to alter the instruction or the claim against your landlord.

By adding your comments onto the check-out report and on the DPS website, you are putting together your formal evidence which will be reviewed by the DPS and increase the chance of receiving back any claims that you feel are unfair/unjustified.

Therefore, in order to speed up the return of your deposit, we ask that you follow our advice and pop your comments in writing on your check-out report and remark your notes on the DPS website when prompted to do so.

We will only answer queries from the nominated head tenant – we are unable to discuss deposit releases with guarantors. If you do need to email us, please ensure your email clearly has the property address in the subject line. During the summer months, response times may be longer than usual.

Where is my deposit?

Landlords and letting agents in Wales must protect your deposit in a government held scheme. If you are in one of our managed properties, it will be protected with the Deposit Protection Service (DPS). If your landlord manages your property directly it may be with another scheme such as the Tenancy Deposit Scheme or MyDeposits, please contact your landlord directly about your deposit in this case.

How do I get my deposit back?

In order to receive your deposit back, your tenancy needs to have ended and the house needs to be vacant. A check out inspection will be conducted where the condition of the property is compared to how it was at the beginning of the tenancy as per your opening inventory and any proof of works undertaken.

If the property is in a clean and tidy condition with nothing in excess of fair wear and tear, your deposit can be released quickly through the DPS.

If the property is not in the same condition it was let to you in, works may need to be done such as cleaning or repairs. The landlord then may wish to make a claim for the cost of these works from your deposit which will delay the return of it to you.

How will the money be returned to me?

Your deposit payment will come directly from the DPS into the nominated bank account(s) of the head tenant.

YOU HAVE TO REQUEST YOUR DEPOSIT RETURN ON THE DPS WEBSITE.

Sales & Lettings Angels are unable to return your deposit back to you UNTIL you log onto the DPS website and request the deposit back.

The person to request the deposit becomes the nominated head tenant. That means they are then in charge of distributing funds. Funds can either be sent to one bank account or the nominated tenant can input several sets of bank details. Funds are then sent from the DPS in 3-5 working days. We cannot change who is the nominated tenant, and we cannot influence how many sets of bank details are entered or the proportion of funds to go to each person.

I can't log into the DPS, what do I do?

Please contact the DPS directly about all log in enquiries as we cannot change these, visit <https://www.depositprotection.com/> or 0330 303 0030

My flatmate didn't pay their rent/caused damage but I didn't. Can I get my deposit back?

If you have a Joint and Severally Liable Assured Shorthold Tenancy, you are all equally liable for rent and damages on the property. You will have one of these tenancies unless you have rented only 1 room. If you came to us as a group and rented the house as a group, you are equally liable. It will be up to you as a group to decide how the deposit is split between you.

What happens if the landlord wants to make a claim?

If after your check out report is carried out and the property is not up to standard, then works may need to be carried out.

Should your landlord wish to make deductions from your deposit, these will be uploaded to the DPS for you to review. You can then either fully accept, partially accept, or reject the claim.

Also included in the claim may be works carried out throughout the tenancy that are tenant charges, and any rent arrears.

I don't agree with what the landlord is claiming for, what do I do?

If you don't agree with the claim, please make any comments on your check-out report, and on your DPS account.

You can use the **Alternative Dispute Resolution** Procedure with the DPS. In this, both parties submit evidence (such as check outs, photos, emails) as to why they think the funds should be awarded to them. An independent third-party adjudicator then reviews the evidence and comes to a decision on how the funds are to be awarded.

Emails to us with any reasoning or evidence can't be taken into account. Please upload these items to the DPS.

Please note, this DPS process can take anything from 6 weeks to 6 months, and there is nothing Sales & Lettings Angels can do to speed this up.

How long will it take to get my deposit back?

If after your check out inspection there is nothing to be claimed your deposit can be returned with 14 working days.

If after your check out inspection there are items to be claimed it can take weeks-months, depending on how long the DPS adjudication process takes.

What is a single claim?

In some circumstances tenants do not respond to the DPS, so the landlord may wish to speed the Alternative Dispute Process along with the use of a single claim. A statutory declaration is the paperwork needed to do this. It costs money to send a statutory declaration off as a solicitor must sign the paperwork.

What is fair wear and tear?

Please see this link which describes fair wear and tear:

<https://www.depositprotection.com/learning-centre/disputes/adjudication/>

What is betterment?

Landlords can only claim for replacements of something that is like for like. They can't for example, replace your damaged £200 wardrobe with a £500 one and claim £500 from you. They can only claim like for like. Similarly, if a mattress is stained and needs replacing but is 4 years old, the landlord cannot claim for an entirely new mattress. They must consider the life of the object, and proportion the amount to be deducted according to its lifespan.

Why is there no invoice for part of the claim?

If for example, you created a large iron mark on the carpet and the carpet in the room had to be replaced at a cost of £100, you may expect an invoice to show the carpet had been replaced and that it cost £100. However, in this instance, the landlord knows next year they want to renovate the house so it is not worthwhile for them to replace the carpet right now. A claim for compensation would be made to reimburse the landlord. Just because the work may not have been done, does not mean a claim for compensation cannot be made. Damage to the property has still occurred, it is just at the landlords discretion if they want to go ahead with the repairs right away or not. This will also apply for replaced items, for example if you broke 4 freezer drawers the landlord may decide to just replace the whole freezer instead. The landlord cannot provide an invoice to show they have replaced the drawers as they haven't, but you will be charged as if they have done so.

Average charges for common deposit claims

Works	Approximate cost
Cleaning per hour	£22.00
Cleaning, average 2 bed	£150
Cleaning, average 3 bed	£180
Oven cleaning	£55-80
Rubbish removal	£42.50 minimum call out charge. Price varies depending on quantity and location
Handyman visit for minor repairs	£25-£60 call out charge per visit, plus materials.
Lightbulbs	£5 if a cleaner/handyman is already there, call out charge of £25-£60 if a visit is made specially
Painting 1 wall/ceiling	£50-£120 depending on colour and condition
Painting 1 standard bedroom	£200-£250 depending on colour and condition
Chest of drawers/wardrobe repair	From £60 plus materials
Bed frame repair	From £60 plus materials
Replacement mattresses	£50-£150 single £90-£200 double
Replacement bed frames	£100-£200 single £150-£300 double
Replacement desk chairs	£30-£100
Replacement desks	£80-£160
Replacement freezer drawers	This depends a lot on your freezer model, but from £20 each plus a handyman callout charge to fit