

Responsibility for repairs

This information is for private landlords of properties in Northern Ireland. Tenants can find advice [here](#).

Addressing repairs quickly reassures tenants and keeps your property in good condition. It also ensures you're following the law.

Make sure you know which repairs are your responsibility. Your tenancy agreement should outline how you'll handle repairs.

Housing Rights has a [free mediation service](#) for tenants and landlords in the private rented sector. Mediation can help to resolve disputes over repairs.

Repair clauses in tenancy agreement

Your contract explains which repairs are your responsibility and what tenant will handle.

[The terms must be fair](#) and should outline:

- how your tenant should report disrepair
- what happens if a tenant damages something
- who deals with communal parts of the building
- [your right of access](#) to inspect and carry out repairs

For example, a contract term making your tenant liable for a repair that is your legal obligation, such as structural repairs, is likely to be considered unfair.

You should also include an emergency contact number for urgent repairs.

Tenancy agreements with no repair clause

[The law sets out](#) the repairs you're responsible for if you do not have a written tenancy agreement or your contract does not mention repairs.

In this case, you'll be liable for repairs to:

- the exterior of the property – including paintwork
- the structure of the property – including drains, gutters and pipes
- all water, gas, electricity, heating and sanitation systems
- all fixtures and furnishings you provide
- all appliances you provide

You must also ensure all communal areas are in good repair, properly lit and safe.

You still need to comply with [legal safety standards](#). If your property is a house in multiple occupation (HMO), it will need to meet [extra safety requirements](#).

Your tenant's responsibilities for repairs

[The law says](#) your tenants must:

- report disrepair to you
- take proper care of the property
- get your permission before making changes
- repair any damage they (or their guests) cause

If your tenants ask to make changes to the property, you should only refuse if you have a good reason for not allowing the change. Keep a written record of what you agree.

Some tenants may want to replace your furniture or appliances with their own. Keep a written record of what you agree and update your inventory. This will clarify which items must remain in the property at the end of the tenancy.

Tenants are responsible for ensuring all items on the inventory are still in the property at the end of the tenancy. Tenants are also responsible for repairing their own furnishings and appliances.

More advice

- [Tenancy agreement](#)
- [Certificates and safety checks](#)