

Preparing your property to rent

Paperwork first, then condition, then presentation.

Most delays in letting a home come from things that could have been sorted before the first photograph: an unfinished registration, a repair nobody noticed, a certificate that ran out. This guide walks through the order we suggest, so that when you are ready to advertise there is nothing left to chase.

1. Register as a landlord before you rent

Before you can rent out a property in Scotland you must register as a landlord with the council for the area the property is in, unless an exemption applies. If anyone else owns the property with you, they must register too, and registration has to be renewed every three years.

Registration is done online through the Scottish Landlord Register, which also lists the information you will need and the current fees. Renting without being registered is a criminal offence, so treat this as the first job rather than the last.

Exemptions exist, for example for resident landlords and some family lets. Check the official registration page if you think one might apply to you.

2. Speak to your lender and insurer

Tell your mortgage lender and your insurer that you plan to rent the property. Renting can affect mortgage terms, and insurers may need you to change your policy. If the property is in a tenement, you are responsible for having appropriate buildings insurance.

It is worth asking these questions early: a lender's consent or a new policy can take longer to arrange than the cleaning and repairs.

3. Bring the property up to the Repairing Standard

The Repairing Standard is the minimum level of repair a house must achieve to be let privately in Scotland. It covers the building itself and the installations, fittings and furnishings you provide, and it applies at the start of the tenancy and at all times during it. You are responsible for it even if you use a letting agent.

The official summary says the property must, among other things:

- be structurally stable, and wind and watertight
- be free from damp and mould
- have enough ventilation, light, heating and insulation
- have walls and roof in reasonable condition, and a proper entrance
- allow tenants to reach and use any communal areas, like stairwells and closes, safely
- have a safe water supply, a working toilet, drainage, and a sink, bath or shower and wash basin with hot and cold water
- have a suitable area for storing and preparing food, and cooking facilities or somewhere a tenant can install their own

The safety parts of the standard (electrics, gas, fire and carbon monoxide alarms, and legionella) are covered in our Safety and compliance guide.

4. Presentation that helps the right tenant say yes

None of the following is a legal requirement. It is what we have found makes a home easier to let and easier to look after once a tenant moves in.

- Fix the small things before photographs: dripping taps, sticking doors, loose handles, blown bulbs and tired sealant around baths and sinks.
- Give the property a thorough clean, including inside cupboards, the oven and windows. Tenants are usually asked to return a home in the condition they found it, so start from a clear baseline.
- Touch up scuffed paintwork in a light, neutral colour. It photographs well and is easy to keep consistent between tenancies.
- Decide whether to let furnished or unfurnished. Any furniture and fittings you provide, including carpets and equipment, must be in reasonable condition and safe to use, so only leave what you are happy to maintain.
- Tidy the garden or outside space and clear any lofts, cellars or stores that are not included in the let.
- Gather appliance manuals, boiler instructions and the location of the stopcock and fuse board, so they can be left for the tenant.
- Have a full set of keys cut for each tenant, plus one for access and repairs.

5. Get ready to advertise

Every advert or listing for the property must include your landlord registration number, or the words 'landlord registration pending' if your application is still being processed. All adverts must also show the property's Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating, which rates energy efficiency from A (most efficient) to G (least efficient).

When RentLocally markets a property to let, we advertise it on Rightmove. We do not list on other property portals, and this guide does not promise any particular number of enquiries, viewings or a time to let.

Before you advertise: checklist

- ☐ Landlord registration applied for or in place, for every owner
- ☐ Mortgage lender and insurer told; buildings insurance in place if the property is in a tenement
- ☐ Repairs completed and the property checked against the Repairing Standard summary
- ☐ Safety checks and certificates arranged (see the Safety and compliance guide)
- ☐ Valid EPC available, with the rating ready for the advert
- ☐ Property cleaned, small repairs done, furnished or unfurnished decided
- ☐ Manuals, keys and meter locations gathered for the tenant

Official sources

Registering as a private landlord (mygov.scot)

<https://www.mygov.scot/landlord-registration>

Your responsibilities as a private landlord (mygov.scot)

<https://www.mygov.scot/landlord-responsibilities>

Repairs and maintenance as a private landlord (mygov.scot)

<https://www.mygov.scot/landlord-repairs>

Repairing Standard: statutory guidance for private landlords (section 2, overview) (gov.scot)

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/repairing-standard-statutory-guidance-private-landlords/pages/3/>

Energy Performance Certificates (mygov.scot)

<https://www.mygov.scot/energy-performance-certificates>

Please note

This guide is general information for private landlords in Scotland, written by RentLocally and checked against the official pages listed in the sources on 27 October 2026. It is not legal advice. The checklists help you prepare; completing them is not a certification that a property meets the Repairing Standard, the Tolerable Standard or any other legal requirement. Rules change, so always check the official sources and take professional advice for your own circumstances.