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THE 2026 RENTERS' RIGHTS ACT



YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE

Understand your rights.
Know your protections.
Build a better renting
experience.



YOUR RIGHTS

Know what you
are entitled to.



CLEARER PROTECTIONS

Stronger standards
for safer, fairer
renting.



BETTER STABILITY

More security for
you and your
home.



FAIRER RENTING

A balanced system
that works for
everyone.



KNOW THE LAW.
EMPOWER YOUR RENT.
SHAPE A BETTER FUTURE.



The 2026 Renters' Rights Act: Your Essential Guide

Everything you need to know about your new rights as a private tenant, effective **1 May 2026**.

The Renters' Rights Act 2025 transforms private renting in England. Whether you are moving into a new place or staying exactly where you are, these changes apply to you automatically. Your landlord cannot "opt out" or put clauses in your contract to bypass them.

Here is exactly how the new rules upgrade your tenancy.

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1. The End of "No-Fault" Evictions

Your landlord can no longer ask you to leave without a valid legal reason.

- **The Old Rule:** Landlords could issue a Section 21 notice to evict you with 2 months' notice, without explaining why.
- **The New Rule:** Section 21 is completely abolished. Landlords must now use a **Section 8 notice** and prove a valid "ground" (reason) for possession.
- **Valid Reasons Include:** The landlord is selling the property, moving themselves or a family member in, you have 3+ months of rent arrears, or there is proven anti-social behaviour.
- **Your Protection:** If a landlord wants to sell or move in, they **cannot** do this within the first 12 months of your tenancy, and they must give you at least **4 months' notice**.

2. All Tenancies Are Now "Rolling"

The era of being locked into a strict 12-month or 24-month fixed contract is over.

- **No More Fixed Terms:** Assured Shorthold Tenancies (ASTs) are abolished. All tenancies automatically become **Assured Periodic Tenancies** (rolling month-to-month or week-to-week).
- **Your Right to Leave:** You can end your tenancy at any time by giving your landlord **2 months' written notice**.

Important: This applies automatically to existing tenancies on 1 May 2026. Even if your current contract says it ends in December 2026, that fixed end date is erased. You are on a flexible rolling contract.

3. Fairer Rent and No More "Bidding Wars"

The act introduces strict new financial protections to keep renting affordable and transparent.

- **Rent Increases:** Rent can only be increased **once per year**. Your landlord must give you 2 months' notice using a specific legal document (Form 4A). Rent review clauses in your contract are now void.
- **Challenging Rent:** Increases cannot exceed the open market rate. If you believe an increase is unfair, you have the right to challenge it at the First-tier Tribunal.
- **No Bidding Wars:** Landlords and agents must advertise a set asking rent. It is now illegal for them to ask for, encourage, or accept offers above that advertised price.
- **Upfront Costs:** A landlord cannot legally ask you for more than **one month's rent in advance**.

4. The Right to Request a Pet

Finding a pet-friendly rental is no longer a lottery.

- From 1 May, you have the legal right to request a pet in your home.
- Your landlord **cannot unreasonably refuse** your request. If they do say no, they must provide a valid reason in writing, and you can challenge their decision. For example, the freeholder may have included a strict 'no pets' clause in the lease agreement.

5. Bans on Discrimination

It is now explicitly illegal for landlords or agents to discriminate against you because you receive benefits or have children. They cannot withhold property details, refuse viewings, or deny a tenancy on these grounds.

6. Rules for Student Renters

If you are a full-time student renting from a private landlord, the rules are slightly adapted to fit the academic year:

- Landlords can legally evict you at the end of the academic year (using Ground 4A), provided they give you **4 months' notice** ending between 1 June and 30 September.
- **Crucial Detail:** They can only do this if they gave you written notice that they might use this ground *before* 31 May 2026.

7. Coming Soon: Higher Standards and Free Dispute Resolution

Later in 2026, two more major protections will be introduced to ensure your home is safe and your voice is heard.

The Decent Homes Standard & Awaab's Law For the first time, strict quality standards previously reserved for social housing will apply to private rentals.

- **Safe & Habitable:** Your landlord must ensure your home is completely free from serious hazards, including damp, mould, poor insulation, or faulty wiring.
- **Strict Timeframes:** Under the introduction of "Awaab's Law," landlords will be legally required to investigate and fix dangerous health hazards within specific, legally binding time limits.

The New Private Rented Sector Landlord Ombudsman: Currently, resolving a serious dispute with a landlord can mean a stressful and expensive trip to court. Soon, that changes.

- **Free & Impartial:** A new, independent Ombudsman service will be created to handle tenant complaints fairly and completely free of charge.
- **Mandatory for Landlords:** Every private landlord in England *must* join this scheme, even if they use a managing estate agent.
- **Real Power:** If your landlord is at fault, the Ombudsman can legally compel them to take remedial action, issue an apology, or pay you compensation.

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