

A tenants Guide to Living in a shared house

How to live harmoniously and comfortably

Learn how to



- ✓ Be a great housemate
- ✓ Operate a dish cloth
- ✓ Not upset anyone
- ✓ Operate domestic equipment
- ✓ Be reasonable
- ✓ Change a light bulb
- ✓ Make sure you get your deposit back
- ✓ And much much more!!



Address & postcode of property ***



Most problems in shared properties seem to arise from tenants not taking personal responsibility for communal areas – The ‘*someone else will do it*’ attitude. People all living together can generate some disagreements. In this case we would advise calling an informal meeting of *ALL* house-mates to ensure a smooth running household. Most problems can be sorted out by talking.

Our 4 main criteria for living together; Don't be noisy, Keep the place clean and tidy, Pay the rent on time and Have a mutual respect for others. Simple!

Fire



The hall, landing and stairs must be kept completely clear of any obstruction, at *all* times – this is a requirement of the local authority as it forms the fire exit. Keep all *your* belongings in *your* room.

In the case of fire – raise the alarm, (Shout 'Fire' as loud you can!) call the fire brigade, 999, from a safe place, do not attempt to extinguish the fire and ensure doors are closed behind you.

This is a non smoking property, when smoking outside the property; please step away and close the door to prevent smoke entering the building.

Please do not place toasters under kitchen units when in use.

Do not use deep fat fryers at this property.

If you introduce any of your own furniture into the house, please ensure it complies with the safety fire regulations. All common sense stuff!



Fire alarm system

The fire alarm system is very sensitive and will be activated by the slightest whiff of smoke! The control panel will display the source of the smoke. A false alarm in which either an engineer or the Fire Brigade are called out, will result in a substantial payment being made by whichever tenant has been naughty.



Kitchen Door

Be aware that if you decide to wedge open the kitchen door, smoke from cooking food in the kitchen may set off the smoke alarms, to the annoyance of anyone else asleep in the house!



Cleaner

The communal areas are cleaned every 2 weeks. Tenants are expected maintain the property to a good standard of cleanliness and hygiene in between times. It is advisable to draw up a cleaning rota with other housemates over a bottle of wine. If you wish to engage the cleaner to clean your space, this can be arranged at a small charge.



Viewings, Inspections & Maintenance

Viewings and maintenance will need to be carried out at the property from time to time. There will be a monthly check of the smoke alarms. Whole house inspections are carried out at 3 month intervals.

All tenants will be informed by text 24 hours in advance. Please report any maintenance issues immediately.



Overnight Guests

It is a common courtesy to inform other housemates if you have the occasional overnight guest. How would you feel bumping into a stranger in the middle of the night? It's generally accepted that no more than 3 nights a week is acceptable for overnight guests. Please inform *Dolphinpropertysolutions* if you think sneaky housemates are abusing this rule.



Your Contact Information

Please inform us immediately of any change of email address and mobile number. Failure to do so could result in an embarrassing situation should we have to do a room

inspection



Broadband Access

Network - ### Password -

###

Man and a Van



If you need a hand moving, call 'Anyvan' on [020 3005 6000](tel:02030056000) or a free estimate and a warm and friendly service.



Security

It is very important to close all windows and external doors securely when leaving the property unattended. Please leave a light on in either the hall or landing when leaving the house unattended for long periods. The energy efficient bulbs cost very little to run. You may be liable for missing items if it is determined that it was *YOU* that left the door unlocked!



Keys

Please be careful with your keys - we charge £20 for replacements.

Electrics and plumbing

Please familiarise yourself with the positions of the fuse-board ([under the stairs?](#)) and stopcock ([under the kitchen sink?](#)) for turning off the water.

Blocked drains



Take care not to allow excess hair to clog the shower and basin. Also take care what is deposited into the kitchen sink and WC – You may have to pay for call outs and plumbers are bloody expensive!

Heating



In very cold weather please do not turn off the heating when the property is left empty. Set the timer so that it switches on for two bursts a day. This is to ensure that pipes do not freeze. Failure to do so may result in tenants being charged for any subsequent damage and repairs and plumbers are (see above)

The overall heat of the house can be adjusted with the thermostat. Individual room temperatures can be adjusted with the thermostats on the radiator in your room. No need to adjust the boiler.

Monthly Bills



Gas and electric bills are capped at £200 per calendar month. If the monthly bill exceeds this amount, the excess will be billed to tenants proportionately. It is therefore in the interest of all tenants to keep bills to a minimum. Just be sensible – don't leave the heating on all day – it will upset *someone!*



Lighting

You have a responsibility to replace blown light bulbs in communal areas immediately to ensure the safety of all tenants. There are different types of fixings – BC or 'Bayonet Cap' energy efficient type is shown.



Emergency Numbers

These are the numbers you should call should the property require **EMERGENCY** repairs out of office hours. Please keep this safe.

Name of company/individual *****

Contact number *****

For any suspected gas leak please contact **Transco 0800 111 999**

These numbers are **ONLY** to be used in the case of an emergency.

If the contractor deems the repair not to be an emergency, **YOU** will be charged for their call out fees and you don't really want to do that, do you?

If you do have to make an emergency call out, please inform ***** first thing the following morning either by

Email rob@dolphinpropertysolutions.co.uk or Tel **07868 439 310**



Waste collection

See the notice on the pin board for collection dates. Rubbish in the black bins will be collected every two

weeks. Please ensure you return the bin to its correct place ASAP after it has been emptied. Try to get it all *in* the bin with the lid closed. Let's try not to make it easy for the rats!!

There is also the usual array of recycling containers for plastic, cardboard, food, foil, cans, glass. If you use the food container, please ensure it is regularly cleaned – be the first to offer to clean it and earn the respect of the other housemates dude!!

Condensation & Damp



We occasionally have complaints about damp or mould. This is usually caused by condensation. With ****** hot adults in the house showering every day, plus cooking and the sometimes necessity of drying clothes in the house, the moisture level in the air increases so much that it can't all escape, causing damp and mould. Mould comes in many wonderful colours - Green, orange, black...

Here are a few points to avoid problem and treat this problem.

- **Cooking - Cover pans when cooking and open a window and use the extractor fan. Make sure the fan is working correctly.**



- **Washing clothes – Put clothes out to dry whenever possible. (Also makes them smell better) If you do air them in your room, leave a window ajar.**

- **Close kitchen and bathroom doors when these rooms are in use as these stops the moisture reaching bedrooms.**
- **Ventilate cupboards and wardrobes. Don't put too many things in them as it stops air from circulating.**
- **Moisture is produced every day by our breathe. When at home it is a good idea to ventilate a room by leaving a window slightly open.**



- **It is also good practise to open windows wide for a few minutes every day to 'air' the house and let the moist air out. Dry air in a house makes it feel warmer, so a better aired house uses heat more efficiently.**

- **When showering and bathing, ensure you ventilate the room afterwards by throwing open the window and using extractor fans where provided.**



- **In the morning, if condensation is spotted on the window, wipe it down with kitchen roll or a cloth. This will make you a better person!**

- **Don't keep opened food in the fridge or cupboards past it's sell by date. Either eat it or give to a housemate to eat.**



- **Do not dry clothes on the radiators in the house. This is usually the biggest cause of mould problems. Google '[Indoor clothes dryer](#)'.**

If you start to see the first signs of black mould, it can be cleaned away easily using a bleach/water solution or specific mould spray. Dispose of cloth afterwards to avoid further contamination and please inform us.



- The first signs could appear around windows, in the silicone sealant around the bath, shower, and sinks. Mould may also form in the washing machine powder drawer.
 - If food is left in the fridge then it will form here too and this can spread. The longer the mould is left the worse it will get.



As tenants you have a responsibility to keep the property in a good state of repair, and take steps to ensure it does not become a problem. Work together to ensure a nice safe environment. If there is a damp /mould problem when you leave the property you will be charged for the extra cleaning/remedial work involved.

Communal Areas

Please do not place **ANY** of your personal belongings in communal areas. Other tenants may be too polite to tell you it bothers them! There are ****** sets of crockery and cutlery etc in the house – please do not overload the cupboards with more!



If you think an unused item has been ‘hanging around’ the kitchen or bathroom, check with other housemates as to who actually owns it – if no one, dispose of it. Be power crazy and ruthless!

Generally

No pets are allowed at this property. Grrrrr!

We find that a house runs smoother when those who live there have a little respect for each other, this could be as simple as



- Closing doors quietly. Shhhhhhhh
- Cleaning up communal areas after use, **24 hours max!**
- Not playing music too loud (use earphones?)
- Not turning TV up too loud (see above)
- Sharing any jobs or working out a rota (House

meeting & bottle of wine)



- Being considerate – it’s why God put you on this planet!
- Using your indoor voice whilst indoors
- No whining – housemates will roll their eyes behind your back!



Tips For Keeping the House Looking its Best



Here are some quick and simple cleaning tips to help keep the house and furniture looking its best, follow these to help save money and make sure you get your deposit returned. According to www.mydeposits.co.uk one of the main reasons that landlords stop money from a *tenants deposit* is to cover the cost of cleaning, not just your room but your % of the house. Respect.

- The evening before the cleaner calls, put rubbish in the bin, do the dishes and clear the worktop - this will allow her to do her job.
- Tenants need to defrost freezer periodically. Respect.
- Oven: Place a layer of foil in the bottom of the oven to collect spills. Replace when dirty. Yea it's a pain, but housemates will see you as their 'Leader'.
- Grill pan: Place a layer of foil in the pan so it covers the top edges. This will catch all grease and fat. Replace after use Leader!
- Grills: Once every couple of months, soak these overnight in biological washing powder, they will come up as new! R-e-s-p-e-c-t



- Shower: You can use a shower de-scale spray on the shower screen and shower head and ventilate the room, to avoid mould. Cool!
- If you spill something then treat immediately to avoid staining. (Always remember this throughout your life)
- Beds: Do not remove the mattress protector from your bed. You will be liable for any stains on the mattress. Yuck.
- Coke is the probably the best cleaner on the market. (The drink) It cleans sanitary wear, sinks, taps, cookers and many other things. Minimal elbow grease needed. WC's - just pour the coke into a toilet and leave it overnight and in the morning - 'ping'! Ha Ha - imagine what it is doing to your small intestine?! Drink water - it's free!
- If you have failed to open a window and



there is black mould on the walls there is no point in painting over the mould because it is a living organism and will quickly come back to haunt your dreams. The walls need to be cleaned, then neutralised with white wine vinegar to kill the mould and when it is dry a quick coat of emulsion will restore the wall to its former glory. You can do this and your landlord needs never know!!



housemates to try it as a scientific experiment.

- A dirty microwave is easily cleaned with a cup of lemon juice mixed with sodium bicarbonate placed inside and micro-waved for a couple of minutes. The lemon will evaporate and condense onto the metal surfaces melting the grease ready for a quick wipe out. The same mixture can be warmed and used to clean and deodorise a fridge or freezer. Tell your



- If by some bizarre occurrence you create a dirty oven, there is a good product called 'Oven Pride'. It comes with a bag into which you put your oven trays and pour some of the liquid. Leave over-night and in the morning the grease has melted leaving the trays shining like new. The product comes with full instructions – now all you need to do is pour the remaining liquid into the oven and spread it around, within a few hours the oven is clean and ready to wipe out – again, very little elbow grease needed. Ps wear the gloves – it burns!!

Living Together (Forced smile)



- Make sure you avoid arguments about the bin by making a rule about it. The first person who finds a full bin puts the bin bag out. Always check if you are running close to the end of the bin liner roll, otherwise its overflow time. Playing 'Bin Buckaroo' just isn't clever or hygienic.



- For some reason, the fridge is a particular bone of contention. If it drives you mad when other people take your milk then consider labelling it '*Milk experiment # 1*' or '*Urine sample*' on your carton of milk. No one will touch it. In fact, you might free up a whole fridge shelf in this way...

• Make a rota. Some (lazy) people find these restrictive and may claim to be illiterate, but it's a fair system and if you work it out well beforehand, it can really pay off. It's up to you how you arrange it: you could make sure each person takes responsibility for one room or alternate all the jobs that need to be done. However, it is essential that everyone sticks to the plan, if not = house meeting with much tut'ting, shaking of heads and raised eyebrows..

- Learn to accept that cleaning jobs won't always be split fairly, but karmic 'ally, it all balances out. Life will take revenge on that no-good deadbeat!



Maybe you can assist us in putting together some local information for tenants new to the area? Be the first –be a . . . Leader! Email us

- Nearest bus stop.....
- Railway Station.....
- Best taxi.....
- Good cafe.....
- Supermarket.....
- 24/7.....
- Dentist.....
- Doctor.....
- Good Music Pub.....
- Good Food Pub.....

If you have any ideas or suggestions or additional information with regard to the property please let us know. (Don't be rude!)

Thank you

If you have any concerns or complaints feel free to contact me at any time

**Landlords name and address: Rob Walters, 19 woodwaye,
Woodley, Reading, RG5 3HA
Email: rob@dolphinpropertysolutions.co.uk
Telephone number : 07868 439 310**