

1 If you can't agree deposit deductions with the tenant, and you enter our Alternative Dispute Resolution process, our adjudicator will use evidence like the inventory to compare the property condition at the beginning and end of the tenancy.



6 Inventories can be the deciding factor in a dispute (and can even prevent them occurring) so it's really important they're clear and detailed.

2 The adjudicator will need to judge how reliable the inventory is. Those considered to be the best evidence will usually:

- > have been prepared by a third party such as a professional inventory clerk
- > contain dated photos
- > have been signed by the tenant

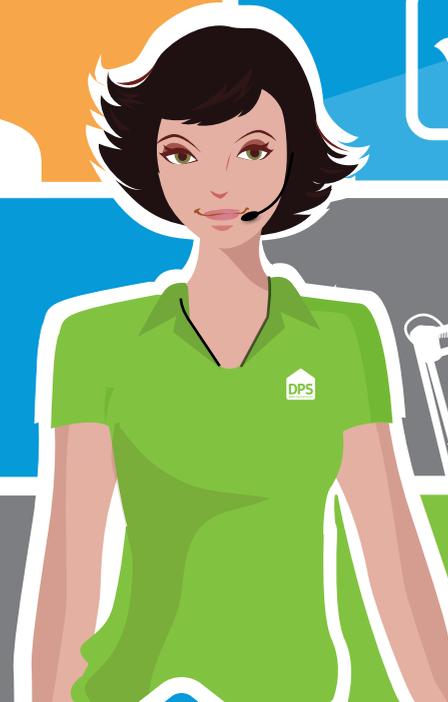


7 There's no set layout to inventories but information should be clear and methodical. The check-in report will need to be as comprehensive as possible, but the check-out report can just note any changes to the condition of the property and contents.

3 The inventory shouldn't just be a list of items. It should include the condition of:

- > the property
- > fixtures and fittings
- > the décor
- > any furnishings or other items

Don't forget - the adjudicator won't visit the property, so the inventory needs to give as clear a picture as possible.



8 If you're explaining the condition of an item, be descriptive! Words like 'fair' and 'ok' can be interpreted in many different ways, and might not help your case. It's important to say if an item is brand new.

4 An inventory should be completed for each new tenancy. It should also be done every time there's a change of tenant at your property, even if it's a multiple tenancy and not all the tenants are leaving. If a new inventory can't be created, adjudicators will consider updated or annotated versions of the original.



9 Make sure you always label items in the same way.

For example, changing the label of bedrooms from "front, middle and back" in the check-in report to "bedrooms 1, 2 and 3" at check-out can make it difficult for the adjudicator to be sure they are comparing the same rooms!



5 Check-out evidence should be completed as soon as possible after the tenant returns the keys. If the tenant has left the property without attending a check-out inspection, you should compile the check-out evidence as soon as possible. The tenant doesn't have to attend the check-out inspection, but they should be encouraged as it will be easier for you both to agree the results.



Our top 10 inventory tips



10 Photos must be good quality, and clearly show the alleged damage or defect. If the inventory has been photocopied, photographs can be unclear and the adjudicator may not be able to make out any damage. Electronic versions of the photos are much easier for our adjudicators to judge.