

BUYING GUIDE – STEP BY STEP

Working out what you can afford



Buying a property is a big step involving a substantial long-term financial commitment, so think hard about [what you can afford](#).

Getting a mortgage



It is vital to secure a mortgage with a lender before starting the searching process. Make sure you know all there is to know in order to [choose the right mortgage](#) for you.

Finding the ideal property



Everyone has their own wish list of elements that make up their [ideal property](#). From transport links to the number of bedrooms, we can help you create a comprehensive list.

Getting the most out of viewings



Viewings can often be over before you know it. So it's essential you [know what you're looking for](#) before you arrive and ensure you remember everything after you leave.

Negotiating and making an offer



Once you have found your ideal property, be prudent and tough in negotiating [know the best possible deal](#) to give you confidence through the final stages of the buying process.

Conveyancing - the legal aspects



Don't be overwhelmed by the legal side of things. We put [the key steps](#) in plain English to help you along your way from offer to completion.

Preparing for moving day



Guide to selling process

Preparing to sell



Take time to [prepare for your sale](#) by ensuring your home is at its best for viewings. Our advice could be the difference between making that all important sale or not.

How much is your house worth?



Work with your preferred local agent have a wealth of information on house prices in your area that can help [set the best price](#) for your home. Make sure you make the most of these services.

Selling privately or through an estate agent



Selling a home is probably the most important transaction you will ever make. Don't take risks and think carefully about [choosing an agent](#) who meets your own specific needs.

Getting the most out of viewings



First impressions count, so put yourself in the buyers' shoes and make the most out of every part of your home with our [expert advice on viewings](#).

Ensuring the sale goes smoothly



Don't let all the legal requirements faze you. All [the key steps](#) are laid out for you in plain English here to help you along your way to a smooth completion.

Preparing for moving day



Moving is always a stressful time, but being organized is the trick to [minimize your stress levels](#) and making your new home feel like home in next to no time.

GUIDE TO LETTING :-

Thinking about letting your property? The process of letting a property can be a complex and time-consuming one, but the rewards can be considerable when you get everything right.

Find out how to let a property and get tips and advice on how to achieve the best rental price from a reliable tenant, as well as understanding your legal rights, the latest legislation and regulations and your obligations to your tenants, whether you're letting a room, a flat or a house.

- **Preparing to let your property**



- Before you begin the process of letting your property, you need to be thoroughly prepared. There is a lot to do and plenty to think about before you can think about getting your new tenants through the door. First impressions count for everything when it comes to property, so it's vital your home looks its best for potential tenants. Maintaining this condition for all your viewings will give you the best chance of letting your home and achieving the best possible price. So, what preparations should you make?

- **The external view**

This is the first view your potential tenants will have of your property, so you should focus on optimising its appearance.

- Tidy up the front and back garden (weed, trim hedges, add some new plants if necessary, clear any dead or unsightly plants, mow and fix any damaged lawn)
- Repair cracks, holes or blemishes in the driveway or walls
- Give the window frames and door a lick of paint if they need it
- Make sure the house number is clearly visible
- Keep rubbish and rubbish bins out of sight.

- **The interior**

De-clutter - create more space by moving some furniture into storage, tidy away or remove unnecessary objects, books and knick-knacks, clear out cupboards and wardrobes of non-essential items

Make minor repairs - fix leaky taps and cracks in the walls, replace broken or crooked tiles, replace burned-out light bulbs - make sure everything works!

Clean thoroughly from top to bottom - carpets, floors, windows, fixtures and fittings, etc.

Eradicate unpleasant odours, like pet smells and cigarette smoke

Decorate rooms if required - a lick of paint can re-energise the appearance of a room.

Clean, tidy and presentable?

Of a sufficient size for the family composition?

Clean and free from damage, such as damp?

Free from serious disrepair?

Structurally sound and not suffering from conditions such as subsidence?
Make sure all aspects of your property are up to scratch and meet all of the required standards to give you the best chance of finding the right tenants and achieving the best price. As well as the physical standards of the property itself, there are numerous other standards that will need to be met, including safety standards for gas and furniture. .

If the property is to be occupied by more than one family or party, this constitutes a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) and further regulations will need to be adhered to, as well as registering with your local authority. Read more about requirements for [Houses in Multiple Occupation](#) on the Communities and Local Government website. It may seem like a lot of work, but with time, energy and even a bit of money spent now, it could really make the difference to how quickly you let your property and how much rent you can charge. Speculate to accumulate!

Other considerations

Think about the type of accommodation you are going to let and how you are going to let it out. For example:

How will it be advertised - for example, two bedrooms with a study, or three bedrooms?

What are your circumstances - will you be living there also, will you be living nearby or living abroad?

Will you let the whole property to one tenant (or family), or will you let individual rooms to a number of different tenants?

Who will your target market be? Families, students, professionals?

Get a clear understanding of the cost of running your property - council tax, utility bills, etc.

These different considerations will affect how you prepare and proceed with the let and the choices you make in managing it.

Who should you consult before letting your property?

Before you can let your property, you need to consult a number of parties:

Your mortgage lender - your lender may ask that you let your property on an Assured Shorthold basis

Your insurance company - if you don't let your insurance company know that you have let your property, you may not be covered in the event of damage, fire or theft in the property

Your freeholder (if you have one) - important if you wish to let a leasehold flat, for example.

You may also find it useful to get advice from a [solicitor](#), an accountant and a qualified [letting agent](#).

The cost of letting your property

While your thoughts may be leaning towards how much you can make by letting your property, it is important that you consider and budget for the costs involved, too. You should budget for the following costs:

Any monthly mortgage repayments owed on the property

Any expenses involved in bringing the property up to the required standards, both physically and in terms of the regulatory safety standards of furniture, utility equipment and appliances

Furniture and furnishings (if required)

Solicitor's fees

Letting agent/management fees

Insurance fees

Choosing a letting agent

You should never underestimate the work involved in the letting of your property.



The vast majority of landlords prefer to hand over the responsibility for finding a tenant to a dedicated and qualified letting or estate agent. This cuts out all of the necessary awkwardness of having to deal directly with viewings and negotiating with potential tenants. There are considerable advantages in using a letting agent, who will:

Advertise your property efficiently to thousands of potential tenants looking for property to rent in the area (make sure you choose an agent that lists its properties on a major portal, like Primelocation.com)

Have knowledge of the local market, including the type of properties to rent in the area, the potential demand for them, the rental prices being achieved and the kind of tenants who might be interested in your property.

Manage and conduct viewings, giving them the opportunity to try and secure tenants for your property and providing you with valuable feedback along the way

Negotiate with tenants on your behalf when discussing the rental price of the property

Provide you with advice and guidance.

After you've found suitable tenants for your property, you have the option of either managing the let yourself, or hiring the services of a managing agent to work on your behalf. Much will depend on your circumstances. If you are living abroad, for example, you may want to employ a managing agent to make sure your tenants and the property are sufficiently looked after while you're away. The majority of letting agents also offer property management services. If this is an option you're interested in, consult the letting agent first to make sure they can offer this service. A managing agent will:

- Vet potential tenants by sourcing references from previous landlords, conducting
- Credit checks and obtaining bank details
- Organise tenancy agreements and inventories
- Manage the start and end to the tenancy based on your instructions
- Organise the collection of rent from the tenants and arrange for repairs during tenancy
- Inspect the property periodically on your behalf for its condition and state
- Provide professional advice and guidance throughout the duration of your relationship.

Pre-tenancy checklist

A pre-tenancy checklist should help you make sure you've ticked all the right boxes before you make the next step in letting your property.

- Update your insurance to take into account that your property is going to be let
- Get the requisite permission from your mortgage lender
- Obtain approval from the council's planning office
(if you plan to make structural alterations to the property or change the property's use)
- Inform the council's Environmental Health Department
(if you plan on letting as a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO))
- Make sure all furniture and furnishings comply with the latest fire regulations
- Ensure that all gas appliances and equipment have been serviced by a CORGI registered engineer and that safety records are kept in a safe place
- Make sure that all electrical wiring has been checked and safety approved by a qualified electrician
- Inform the Council Tax department and utility suppliers that the property will be let (relevant if you plan on being a non-resident of a self-contained property).