

Challenging a rent increase: your checklist

For private renters in England who have a Form 4A notice from their landlord. Use it with the free checker and guides at www.rentersexpert.co.uk.

Your key dates

The date I got the notice

Start date of the new rent (question 4.6)

Last weekday before the start date for the tribunal to receive my application (allow for bank holidays)

1. Check the notice

- ☐ It is Form 4A, or a form substantially the same. A letter, text or rent review clause is not enough.
- ☐ It is signed by my landlord or their agent.
- ☐ My name and the address of my home are correct.
- ☐ The start date is at least two calendar months after I got the notice.
- ☐ The start date is at least 52 weeks after my tenancy began.
- ☐ The start date is at least 52 weeks after my last increase (53 weeks in some cases: see question 4.4).
- ☐ The start date is the first day of one of my rent periods.
- ☐ It reached me in a way my tenancy agreement allows: by hand, left at my home, by post or by email (only if the agreement allows email).

If a point fails, the notice may not change your rent. Shelter says to get legal advice before treating a notice as invalid.

2. Decide

- ☐ I have compared the new rent with what similar homes nearby let for.
- ☐ I know the tribunal cannot make me pay more than my landlord proposed, and that I do not pay the new rent until it decides.
- ☐ I have thought about agreeing a lower rent with my landlord in writing.
- ☐ If I am unsure, I have asked Shelter, Citizens Advice or a law centre.

3. Gather

- ☐ A complete copy of the Form 4A notice and of my tenancy agreement.
- ☐ A photo of the outside of my home and one photo of each room, with nothing personal showing.
- ☐ The approximate size of each room and a list of features (heating, glazing, appliances) and who provided them.
- ☐ Disrepair: dated photos and the messages where I reported it.
- ☐ Comparable homes: the table on page 2.
- ☐ The £47 fee, or a Help with Fees reference number (gov.uk/get-help-with-court-fees) or form EX160.

4. Apply yourself, before the start date

Apply online (search "Apply for an open market rent determination" on GOV.UK) or on the paper MR1 form. To challenge only whether the notice is valid, GOV.UK says you must use the paper MR1. Apply even if your evidence is not complete yet.

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6 The property and photos	12 Open market rent	Checklist

5. Send and keep proof

- ☐ Email: marketrents@justice.gov.uk, or post: First-tier Tribunal (Property Chamber), Residential Property, Market Rents, PO Box 10057, Leicester LE19 9EP. Phone 0300 303 5857.
- ☐ If I applied by email or post, I sent a copy of the application and attachments to my landlord.
- ☐ I told my landlord I have applied, and I keep paying my current rent in full.

6. After you apply

Your landlord has 28 days to respond on form MR2. You then have 14 days to reply on form MR3. The decision is often made on the papers. The new rent is not backdated, and the tribunal can delay it by up to two months after its decision if paying would cause you undue hardship.

Comparable homes

Street or area	Type and bedrooms	Condition and features	Rent per month	Asking or agreed	Date and source

Agreed rents are stronger evidence than asking rents. Past rent decisions are on GOV.UK: search "residential property tribunal decisions".

Free advice

Shelter: england.shelter.org.uk. Citizens Advice: citizensadvice.org.uk. Law centres: lawcentres.org.uk. If you are worried about losing your home, contact your local council.

Guidance only, not legal advice. RentersExpert is not a law firm and does not act for you: you fill in, sign and send your own application. England only: Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland have different rules. Sources: Housing Act 1988 sections 13, 14 and 14ZB; SI 2026/354; SI 2026/421; Form 4A (05.26); MR1 (08.26); First-tier Tribunal (Property Chamber) Fees Order 2013. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.