

Buy to Let Landlord – Electrical Help and Advice (UK)

This document contains 'buy to let' electrical advice. The subjects, and order in the document, are:

- General advice.
- Time between electrical inspections.
- Judge Electrical Limited electrical inspection guideline prices.

General Advice

There are many laws and regulations that affect the UK 'Buy to Let' landlord. The UK electrical laws and regulations are hard to understand, there are many different opinions. There is every chance that if this document was written on another day there would be differences to what is written below.

This document provides a very brief summary of the requirements of the UK and a brief summary of the 'England + Wales' electrical laws and regulations.

The requirements of the UK electrical laws and regulations can be summarised as:

- Is the property electrically safe?
- Has the landlord taken all reasonable steps to ensure the property is electrically safe?
- Can the landlord show that they have taken all reasonable steps to ensure the property is electrically safe?

Scotland, Northern Ireland and England + Wales have different electrical laws and regulations.

The most relevant laws and regulations that affect England + Wales are:

- 'Part P' building regulations (Electrical Safety in Dwellings).
- Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994.
- The Plugs and Sockets etc. (Safety) Regulations 1994.
- Various 'Health and Safety Executive' regulations.

Below is a summary of the requirements of the England + Wales laws and regulations:

- Definition of the term 'reasonable' changes over time, what was reasonable last year may not be reasonable this year. Laws and regulations are written to be 'time in-sensitive', they have different meanings at different points in time.
- The landlord is responsible for all of the fixed wiring, lighting circuits, electrical sockets within a property. A property includes the grounds, for instance sheds and garages.
- The landlord is responsible for all 'non-movable' electrical installations.
- The landlord is responsible for all electrical appliances that come with the property, for instance cookers, microwave ovens and free-standing lamps.
- There is no explicit requirement to have appliances inspected in the same way that gas appliances have an annual inspection. Electrical appliances are covered by 'catch all' safety regulations that imply the requirement for inspection of electrical appliances.
- Electrical inspections should be done in-between lets or every ten years, whichever is the shorter. If the occupants are more likely to damage the electrical installation the time between inspections should be shorter. The period between inspections comes under the 'catch all' that landlords should take all reasonable steps to ensure the property is electrically safe. An example is when the occupant is an incompetent 'DIYer' who likes to install electrical sockets, in this case the time in-between electrical inspections period should be shorter.
- If a landlord knows that the occupants use unsafe electrical appliances the landlord should take action even if the appliance is owned by the tenant. The key here is the landlord knows that the property is electrically unsafe, 'if the landlord knows the landlord should act'.
- The person who carries out the electrical inspection, or any electrical work within a property, should be a 'competent person', for instance a NICEIC registered electrician.
- It is reasonable for the landlord to carry out very basic electrical inspections, for instance check that there are no broken sockets or damage to electrical sockets.
- The landlord should keep a record of all inspections.
- The landlord should provide an adequate number of electrical outlets, overloading of single sockets is a major cause of electrical fires.

Remember what was said at the top of the page – ‘The UK electrical laws and regulations are hard to understand, there are many different opinions. There is every chance that if this document was written on another day there would be differences to what is written below’.

Time between Electrical Inspections

Annually – visual inspection by landlord or agent.

1 to 5-yearly – full inspection and test by qualified electrician. Inspection period depends on the age of the wiring and electrical installation.

In-between lets – full inspection and test by qualified electrician.

Judge Electrical Limited Electrical Inspection Guideline Prices

The prices cover all the requirements of a ‘buy to let’ electrical inspection.

Judge Electrical full inspection and test guideline prices:

- One bedroom flat – £150.
- Two bedroom house – £175.
- Three bedroom house – £190.
- Four bedroom house – £210.