



Fire Safety Basics for Landlords

Last updated: 22.11.2025

What the Law Requires

Under the **Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations**, the **Housing Act 2004**, and local HMO standards, landlords must ensure adequate fire protection.

Minimum fire safety requirements vary depending on whether the property is:

- A single-family let
- A non-licensable HMO
- A licensable HMO

This cheat sheet covers the **core basics** applicable to most rental properties.

Your Key Responsibilities

1. Install and maintain smoke alarms

- One smoke alarm on every storey
- Must be tested on the **first day of tenancy**
- Tenants must test during tenancy
- Landlords must repair or replace alarms **within 24 hours** once notified



2. Install CO alarms where required

- Required in rooms with **solid fuel appliances**
- Best practice: place near gas boilers too
- Must be tested before move-in
-

3. Keep escape routes safe and clear

- No clutter in hallways
- No obstacles blocking exits
- Doors must open fully
- Windows used as escape routes must be functional

4. Provide fire-safe furnishings

All supplied furniture must meet **fire safety regulations**, including:

- Sofas
- Mattresses
- Cushions
- Headboards
- Upholstered seating

Look for fire safety label compliance.

5. Carry out regular fire safety checks

Recommended:

- Quarterly checks for single lets
- Monthly checks for HMOs
- Annual recorded fire risk assessment



Practical Timeline

| Action | When |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Smoke alarm test | First day of tenancy |
| CO alarm test | First day of tenancy |
| Fire risk assessment | Annually |
| Corridor/escape checks | Monthly (HMO) |
| Furniture compliance check | At each change of tenancy |

Common Mistakes Landlords Make

- Not testing alarms before new tenants move in.
- Not keeping written evidence of checks.
- Providing furniture without fire safety labels.
- Ignoring escape route hazards.
- Not understanding stricter HMO standards.

Quick Compliance Checklist

- Smoke alarms installed and tested
- CO alarm installed where required
- Escape routes clear
- All supplied furniture is fire-safe
- Annual fire risk assessment completed