

# The Essential Tenant's Guide

## Preparing your property for Autumn & Winter



## Preparing your Property for Autumn & Winter

As the seasons change, our homes face new challenges. Autumn brings shorter days, falling leaves, and wetter weather, while winter often means freezing temperatures, icy conditions, and strong winds. Preparing your home now can help prevent small issues from becoming bigger problems later.

For tenants, taking a few simple steps can make all the difference. From ensuring your heating is working properly to checking draughts and keeping pipes safe from frost, a little time spent on preparation will keep your home warmer, safer, and more energy efficient. It also helps avoid the inconvenience of emergency repairs during the colder months.



This guide is designed to give you practical tips to get your property ready for autumn and winter. By following these steps, you'll not only stay cosy and comfortable, but you'll also help protect your home and belongings throughout the season.

And remember — if you notice anything that needs attention, please let us know straight away. At JDG, we're here to help.



## Heating & Boiler Care

Your heating system works harder than ever in the colder months, so it's important to make sure it's ready before the first frosts arrive. Taking care of your boiler and heating now can save you from unexpected breakdowns, costly callouts, and chilly evenings later.

### Test your boiler early

Don't wait until the first cold snap to switch your boiler on. Run it for a short time in early autumn to check it's working as it should. Listen out for unusual noises, check that your radiators heat evenly, and look for any warning lights or error messages.

### Check the Safety Certificate

Landlords are legally responsible for ensuring the boiler is safe and tested annually. If you're unsure when it was last checked, ask your landlord or agent. An annual safety check makes sure it is safe and running correctly!

### Keep it running efficiently

Avoid turning the heating completely off during cold spells — instead, set it to a low, steady temperature or use the timer to maintain background warmth. This helps prevent frozen pipes and reduces strain on the system.

### Report issues promptly

Don't ignore small problems. A slight leak, unusual sound, or intermittent fault can quickly become a major issue if left unchecked. Contact your landlord or JDG as soon as you notice anything unusual so repairs can be arranged before it gets worse.

## Radiators and Warmth

Once your boiler is running smoothly, it's time to make sure the heat is circulating properly around your home. Radiators play a key role in keeping rooms comfortable, but if they're not working efficiently, you could end up with cold spots, wasted energy, and higher bills.



### Bleed your radiators

- If your radiators feel warm at the bottom but cold at the top, they may have trapped air inside.
- Bleeding them is simple: use a radiator key to release the air until water begins to escape, then close the valve.
- Always have a cloth or small bowl ready to catch drips, and ensure your heating is off before you start.

### Check for cold spots

- After bleeding, run your heating and check that all radiators warm up evenly.
- If a radiator still isn't heating properly, it could indicate a bigger issue — let your landlord or JDG know so we can arrange further checks.

### Maximise heat efficiency

- Avoid placing furniture directly in front of radiators — this blocks the flow of warm air into the room.
- Consider using radiator reflector panels behind radiators on external walls to push heat back into the room.
- Keep curtains or laundry away from radiators to allow heat to circulate freely and safely.

### Draught-proof your home

- Use draught excluders at the bottom of doors and ensure windows are properly closed.
- Thermal curtains can help keep warmth inside, especially during the evening.
- Small steps like these can make a noticeable difference to comfort and energy use.





## Chimney's, Fire & Stoves

If your home has a working fireplace, wood-burning stove, or open fire, it can add real warmth and charm in the colder months. But it's important to make sure these are safe and properly maintained before you light that first cosy fire.

### Have the chimney swept

- Chimneys should be swept at least once a year to remove soot, blockages, and creosote build-up. This reduces the risk of chimney fires and ensures smoke can escape safely.
- If you're unsure when it was last cleaned, check with your landlord or letting agent before use.

### Burn the right fuel

- Only use dry, seasoned logs or approved smokeless fuels — these burn hotter, produce less smoke, and are much better for the environment.
- Avoid burning household waste, treated wood, or wet logs, as these can damage the stove, block the chimney, and release harmful fumes.

### Check for ventilation

- Fires and stoves need good airflow to burn safely. Never block vents or air bricks.
- If you notice smoke escaping into the room, stop using the fire immediately and report it.

### Keep it safe

- Always use a fireguard with open fires to prevent sparks from escaping.
- Keep furniture, rugs, and belongings a safe distance from the fire or stove.
- Allow ashes to cool completely before emptying them, and always dispose of them in a metal container.

### Carbon monoxide awareness

- All homes with solid fuel appliances should have a working carbon monoxide detector fitted.
- Test it regularly, and if the alarm sounds, switch off the fire, ventilate the room, and contact your landlord or agent.



## Windows and Doors

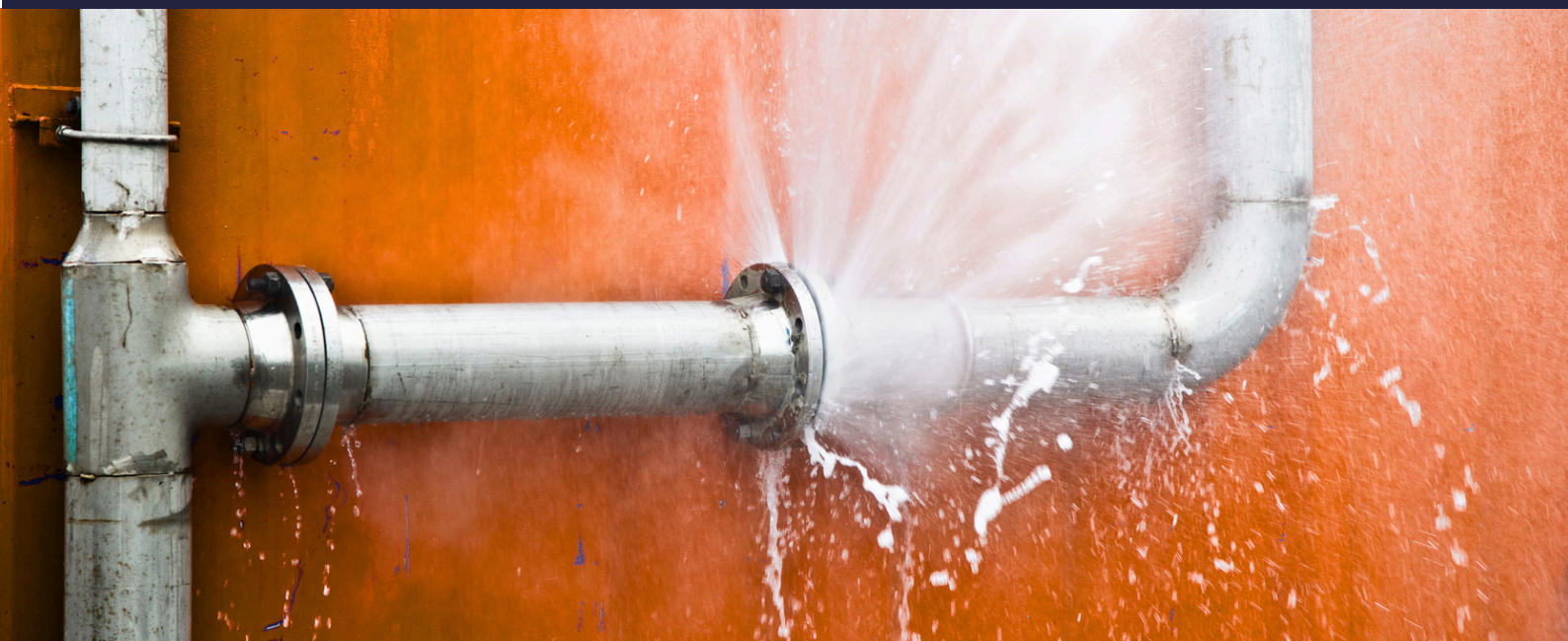
As the colder months set in, windows and doors become the first line of defence against draughts and damp. Even small gaps or worn seals can let in cold air, making your heating work harder and your home less comfortable. Take a few minutes to check around the edges of your windows and doors. If you feel a draught, or notice condensation building up between the panes of double glazing, it's worth mentioning it to your landlord or agent.

Simple habits can also make a big difference. Closing curtains as soon as dusk falls helps keep warmth inside, and thicker curtains are especially effective at retaining heat during the night. Keeping doors closed between rooms helps to contain heat where it's needed most. If your home is older, draught excluders can be a cost-effective way to block chilly air from sneaking in under door frames.

At the same time, it's important not to keep your home too tightly sealed. Everyday activities like cooking, showering, and drying laundry indoors produce moisture that can lead to condensation and, if left unchecked, damp & mould. Try to open windows for short periods each day to allow fresh air to circulate, especially in kitchens & bathrooms. Trickle vents, if fitted, should be left open to keep airflow steady.

Staying alert for signs of wear and tear also helps. Cracked glass, loose fittings, or water coming in through frames should always be reported promptly so they can be repaired before the problem worsens. By taking these small but important steps — balancing warmth with ventilation — you can maintain a comfortable, healthy home throughout autumn and winter.





## Pipes & Water

Cold weather can put a strain on plumbing, and frozen pipes are a common cause of leaks and bursts in winter. Knowing where your stopcock is — the main water shut-off valve — is essential, as turning off the supply quickly can prevent serious damage if a pipe ever bursts. If you are not sure, check your inventory or ask your agent or landlord

To reduce the risk, avoid switching your heating off completely during very cold spells. Instead, keep it on a low, steady setting, especially if you're going away. This helps keep water moving and prevents it from freezing. Many modern systems have an anti-freeze mode that just keeps it ticking over.

Look out for small issues such as dripping taps, leaks, or slow-draining sinks and report them promptly before they worsen. Outdoor taps and hoses should also be disconnected and drained once the temperature drops. If your boiler has a white condensate pipe outside, covering this up can reduce the chances of it freezing and stopping the boiler from working

These simple steps will help keep your home safe and dry throughout the colder months.



## General Safety Checks

As the darker evenings set in and heating systems work harder, it's important to make sure your home is as safe as it is warm. A few quick checks can give you peace of mind and help prevent problems before they start.



### Smoke and CO Alarms

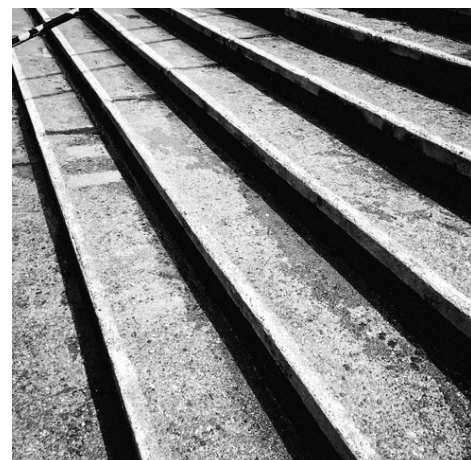
Test alarms regularly to make sure they're working. Replace batteries where needed, or let your landlord/agent know if a hardwired alarm isn't functioning.

If your home has gas appliances or a fire/stove, check that a detector is fitted and working. Carbon monoxide is invisible and odourless, so alarms are essential.

### Pathways and Steps

Wet leaves, ice, and snow can quickly create hazards outside. Try to keep entrances, garden paths, and doorsteps clear, and use salt or grit on frosty mornings.

Good lighting by the front door or communal areas can also make a big difference to safety during darker evenings.



### Electrical Safety

As we head into the colder months, it's easy to plug in extra heaters or festive lights. Be mindful not to overload sockets or extension leads, and always use appliances according to instructions.

Switch items off when they're not in use, particularly at night, to reduce both fire risk and energy waste.



## General Comfort Tips

While much of preparing your home for autumn and winter is about safety and maintenance, it's also a chance to make your living space feel warmer and more inviting. The colder months can be some of the cosiest times of the year, and a few thoughtful touches can make all the difference.

Layering rugs on wooden or tiled floors helps reduce draughts while adding softness underfoot. Thermal curtains not only keep heat in but also make rooms feel snug as the nights draw in. Think about rearranging furniture so that seating areas make the most of natural light during shorter days.



Lighting also plays a big part in creating atmosphere. As daylight fades earlier, switching to warm-toned, energy-efficient bulbs can lift the mood and make rooms more inviting. Lamps and soft lighting create a calm, homely feel in the evenings.

Finally, it's worth keeping a few essentials close to hand. A basket of blankets in the living room, a torch for unexpected power cuts, or even a small stock of salt or de-icer for frosty mornings can make life easier. These small touches combine comfort with practicality, helping you enjoy your home throughout the season.





A little preparation goes a long way in keeping your home safe, warm, and comfortable through the colder months. By checking your heating, staying on top of maintenance, and making small changes to reduce draughts and damp, you'll avoid common winter problems and enjoy a cosier living space.

And remember — if you spot any issues, however small, please let us know straight away. At JDG, we're here to support you and make sure your home is ready for every season.



[www.jdg.co.uk](http://www.jdg.co.uk)



[josh@jdg.co.uk](mailto:josh@jdg.co.uk)



01524 843322



07983444495

