

Important notes:

Where a landlord provides an electrical appliance as part of a tenancy, the law expects the appliance will be maintained in a safe condition to use and will not cause harm to the tenant. It is the landlord's responsibility to ensure this throughout the tenancy and landlords will be liable should an accident occur due to an electrically unsafe appliance. However, the law is silent on how landlords should ensure they do this. Whilst PAT (Portable Appliance Testing) is not a legal requirement an annual PAT of all moveable equipment in the property, this includes items like fridges, toasters, kettles and microwaves, is recommended as best practice for landlords.

If you provide appliances for your tenant(s) you should check that the item carries, at least, a CE Mark – the manufacturer's claim that it meets the minimum requirements of EU legislation. Electrical Safety First recommends the purchasing of appliances that carry additional safety marks, such as the British Standard Kitemark or the 'BEAB Approved' mark, as these can provide greater assurance of electrical safety.

You need to make sure that any appliance you supply is suitable for its location and its intended use. To help ensure your tenants use appliances correctly, you should make copies of the manufacturers' instructions available for them to refer to.

To ensure electrical appliances remain safe to use throughout the tenancy, regular basic safety checks should be carried out.

There are a number of things that you should pay attention to when checking appliances (visual inspections) such as ensuring:

- Appliances are not subject to a product recall (visit www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/recall to check the appliances in your property)
- Flexible cables are in a satisfactory condition and show no signs of deterioration (e.g. fraying, splitting, cuts or heavy scuffing)
- Flexible cables are securely attached to the appliance and plug (no visible coloured wires)
- All covers are in place and in a satisfactory condition (a damaged casing could lead to a shock or fire risk)
- The plug casing is not cracked and the pins are not bent.
- There is no tape applied to the lead to join leads together
- There are no loose parts or screws
- There are no signs of overheating, such as burn marks or staining on the plug
- Equipment is not being stored in dusty or wet environments
- No part of the appliance is damaged or missing
- Cables are not trapped under furniture or in floor boards.

For more information on testing electrical appliances go to: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/electricity/faq-portable-appliance-testing.htm>