

The Renters' Rights Act:

A simple guide for international landlords.



What's changed from Friday, 1 May 2026 (England).

If you rent out a property in England, the Renters' Rights Act now applies to you — even if you're based overseas. It's a big change, but the aim is simple: clearer rules, fairer renting and more certainty for everyone.

Here's what you need to know.

The key changes (without the jargon).

No more 'no-fault' evictions.

Section 21 has been abolished. This means you can no longer evict a tenant without a valid legal reason. To regain possession, you'll need to use specific legal grounds like selling the property, moving back in, or serious rent arrears. You cannot evict tenants to sell or move into the property within the first 12 months of a tenancy.

No More Fixed-Term Tenancies.

All existing and new tenancies will automatically switch to a periodic (rolling) tenancy. Tenants can end a tenancy by giving 2 months' written notice.

Rent increases are more structured.

- To keep things fair, rent can only be increased once a year and it must be at the market rate
- Rent review clauses can no longer be used. You'll need to give tenants at least 2 months' notice of a rent increase
- Tenants can challenge increases they believe are unfair in a tribunal.

Limits on rent upfront and advertising.

- You can only ask for one month's rent in advance
- You cannot accept rent higher than the advertised amount. No more bidding wars.

Clearer rules on pets and discrimination.

- You cannot refuse a reasonable request from a tenant to have a pet
- You cannot refuse tenants if they receive benefits or have children.

What if you don't follow the new rules?

It's important to follow the new rules. If not, there can be consequences and being based overseas doesn't change that.

You could face:

- Fines of £7,000 per breach, rising to £40,000 for repeat issues
- Rent Repayment Orders, meaning you may have to pay back up to 12 months' rent
- Delays or blocks when trying to regain possession
- Increased scrutiny from local councils, who now have stronger enforcement powers.

What to do next.

A few simple steps can make this much easier to manage:

- Check your tenancy agreements and rent processes are up to date
- Make sure any rent increases or notices follow the new legal rules
- Issue the government's information sheet to your existing tenants by 31 May 2026. This is the next key deadline and a legal requirement under the new rules
- Consider using a UK-based managing agent or adviser if you're not already
- Plan for longer tenancies and clearer timelines if you may need the property back.

We're here to help.

These changes are significant. Getting things right early helps protect your investment and avoids issues later.

For further details and more information, see the [government website](#).

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