

TENANT HANDBOOK



hello@mightystudentliving.co.uk



www.mightystudentliving.co.uk



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Mighty Student Living Lancaster

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WELCOME TO YOUR NEW HOME

Thank you for choosing a Mighty Student Living property. Our top priority is to ensure your happiness, comfort, and safety in your new home.

This handy pocketbook contains all the essential information for a smooth and hassle-free stay.

If you have any questions or concerns after reading this guide, please don't hesitate to contact our office by phone or email. We're always here to help!

We are excited to have you with us! Stay connected with us on Facebook and Instagram for important updates and announcements.



BEGINNING YOUR TENANCY

1. Moving In

If you haven't already done so, you will need to book a key collection slot from the online link we have already sent out to you. Our date and time slots are limited so the sooner you are booked in the better chance you have at picking the time slot that best works for you. You will only be able to book a key collection slot one day following your move in date.

If you're a student moving in with a group, only the lead tenant needs to book a key collection slot. The lead tenant will then collect one set of keys for the property, and the rest of the keys will be in the property itself. You can nominate someone else from your group to pick up the keys if the lead tenant is unavailable, just make sure they put their name on the booking form. This will need to be a member of your group and cannot be a friend, relative etc. After you are booked in, we'll then send your Inventory Report in advance of you moving in.

We can only give out keys once your contract starts so please check the start date on your tenancy agreement. If you select a date before your contract start date, we will cancel your booking and you will need to pick another date.

2. Arriving

Once you arrive at your new house, before you get too comfortable, you will need to complete the Inventory Report - there will be QR code passed to the lead tenant within the envelope with keys to the property. You must complete this within 7 days of moving in - no later! Please take pictures for your records. This is really important as it determines the condition of the property when you moved in and ensures that you are not charged for things that were there when you moved in, end of your tenancy. We will provide you with professional inventory we have conducted for comments and to upload your pictures at later date.

3. Payments

You should have been made aware of when your rent is due when you signed your contract, including the total amount, and dates it is due each term. If you are unsure please refer to your tenancy agreement for details. If you need to change the rent due dates for any reason, please put your request in writing (via email) to hello@mightystudentliving.co.uk.



4. Utility Bills

For the majority of our properties your bills are included, so you don't need to set anything up. But remember, your tenancy agreement provides a 'fair usage allowance' of gas and electricity, you can refer back to your contract to see your allowance. We will keep updating you throughout the tenancy on your usage. If you use more than your fair usage allowance, we will have no choice but to charge this back to you.

If bills are not included with your property, you will be responsible for setting up and looking after the utilities. You will need to set up an account for the utilities from the first day of your tenancy.

To find out who is the current utility providers at the property are you can go to the following link: www.uswitch.com/gas-electricity/guides/who-supplies-my-electricity-and-gas/

5. Council Tax

Full time students do not have to pay Council Tax! If you are a full time student and you do get a bill, you can apply for an exemption. You will need to contact Lancaster City Council to do this.

To count as a full-time student, your course must:

- Last at least 1 year
- Involve at least 21 hours study per week

If you study for a qualification up to A level and you're under 20, your course must:

- Last at least 3 months
- Involve at least 12 hours study per week

If there's someone in your house who is not a full-time student, you will still be liable to pay Council Tax; but your household might still qualify for a discount so you should contact the council tax team by filling their contact form on lancaster.gov.uk/council-tax or call: **01524 582000**

6. TV Licence

TV Licences will be supplied and paid for by us if you have bills included on your contract. For those that have not opted for a house with bills included, the responsibility to purchase a TV licence will fall on you.

For more information on TV Licensing please see the following link: www.tvlicensing.co.uk. Remember, you could be prosecuted if you are found to be watching, recording or downloading programmes illegally. The maximum penalty is a £1,000 fine plus any legal costs and/or compensation you may be ordered to pay!

7. Internet

If you have bills included on your property we've got the internet covered. You can find your Wi-Fi password on the back of your router, so connecting should be as simple as that! If you are in one of our studios we will write the Wi-Fi password down for you when you collect your keys.



8. Repairs & Maintenance

It is inevitable when you're moving into a new home there will be some minor maintenance issues that we may have missed. Some things are not visible to the naked eye and you would only notice them if you are living in the property. We do ask that all tenants report maintenance to us before they leave but sometimes that does not happen so please do let us know if you have a problem and we will be happy to help you. If this is the case, don't worry at all. You can report any maintenance issues via **Fixflo**. You will be sent the link to Fixflo when you move in and you will also be able to find the link on our website under the 'tenants' section.

We will always provide a minimum of 24 hours' notice if we, or anybody instructed by us, needs to access your property; except in the case of an emergency whereby we feel you, or the property's safety, is at risk.

9. Condensation

Condensation is one of the biggest problems tenants experience in shared accommodation. And the number one cause of mould in homes is caused by under heating! Damp is caused by the condensation = when hot steam from your cooking, bathing, or drying cloths inside meet with a cold spot in the house and turn back to water. Damp and mould are terrible for your health and the health of the property!

To avoid this,

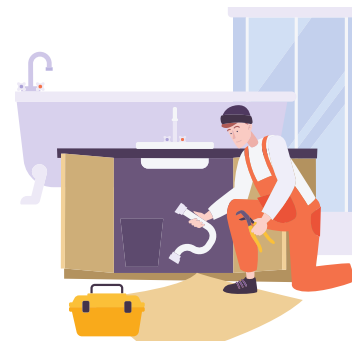
- You don't need to crank the heating up high. Just make sure you're putting it on consistently. Keep your bills low and your property mould free!
- If you don't want to heat the whole property, keep the doors shut in unheated rooms!
- Ventilate - a dry property takes less energy to keep warm. Let cold, dry air in after showering and cooking. Let all the steam and moisture escape.
- Never dry wet clothes on the radiator!
- Always put lids on pans when cooking.

If you don't do this, damp patches will appear on the walls and ceiling. It is your responsibility to remove these marks if they appear. If these are left then damage may occur to the paintwork or plaster which will need to be rectified at your expense.

If you find re-appearing/persistent mould please despite following these tips please inform our maintenance team for investigation.

10. Toilets and Drainage

Please DO NOT put objects down the toilet that could cause a blockage, e.g. baby buds, sanity products, cleansing pads. If the toilet or drainage becomes blocked due to misuse then it will be charged to the tenant responsible. If nobody admits liability, the cost will be divided equally between all tenants.



11. Waste Refuse and Recycling

We urge all of our tenants to check their local councils' website for information on how to do this. Rules and regulations will vary from area to area. All of our properties fall under Lancaster County Council. The link for LCC is www.lancaster.gov.uk/waste-and-recycling/household-waste/recycling We recommend that you download and read the document on the right - Waste and Recycling Handy Guide Booklet.

LCC is now charging for leaving your bins out past the allocated collection date, so please make sure you return your bins to their usual spot after collection. The council charge is £60.

12. Property Inspections

At Mighty Student Living, we conduct 2/3 interim inspections on all of our properties to help keep them in a good condition. We'll let you know in advance, but during the inspection, we will check for cleanliness, damages, missing items and any unreported maintenance issues. It's really important to us that our properties are looked after, so please ensure your home is always clean and tidy. When we do an inspection, we'll need to check your bedroom too. Our inspections include photographic documentation to ensure an accurate record of the property's condition. Once we have inspected your property, if we notice any issues we will write to you to discuss further.

13. Security

It is your responsibility to keep your keys safe and for these to be returned at the end of your tenancy. Any lost keys must be reported immediately and the cost will be re-charged to you. We will always provide you with the copy of the receipt. Most of our homes operate on a master key system so changing keys and locks can be expensive (as much as £40 per key on master system)

In the unfortunate event that you are locked out of your room or house for any reason, we will of course help you gain access during office opening hours. In the event that you are locked out outside the opening hours, you can call our out of hours line. Charges will apply and these must be paid in advance to regaining access.

14. Safety

To minimise any compromise to your fellow housemates and any possessions, please be conscious of the following tips at ALL times:

- Ensure doors and windows are closed and locked when you leave the property
- Never let strangers into your house - if we have sent anybody to the property you will always be notified
- If you notice any strangers at the property and are concerned, please call our office immediately to confirm whether the individual has been sent by us

15. Fire Safety

Smoking AND vaping is NOT permitted on the premise of your property at any time.

All tenants are required to familiarise themselves with the instructions on how to use any fire safety equipment in their property.

16. Contents Insurance

Insurance documents will follow and you will be made aware once the document is available.



17. What to do in an Emergency

We hope the following never happens, however, if you need any emergency contact details you will find them below: Once you have contacted the emergency services, you should also report any emergency to us at any time of the day by contacting Mighty Student Living by telephone. If the emergency is out of office hours, you can call our emergency out of hours team on **01524 544666**.

Fire

If you see a fire and the alarms haven't already been activated, sound the alarms as soon as possible.

- Call **999** and ask for the Fire Service.
- On hearing the alarm, you **MUST** leave the building. Try to stay as calm as possible. **DO NOT** try and collect any belongings
- If it's safe to do so close all doors and windows on your way out and warn the neighbours.

Any person found to have tampered with any of the fire alarm systems will be charged accordingly and may face criminal prosecution.

Water

In the case of a **water or waste water emergency**, please **call the office first**. We will advise you further.

For **burst pipes** inside your home

- Turn the water off using the stop tap
- If electrics are affected see 'turning off electricity'.

If there is **no water** coming out of your taps, please first check on **United Utilities** website for any outages in your area. If there is an outage please follow the website instructions - no need to raise a maintenance ticket.

Gas

If you smell gas, think you have a gas leak, or are worried that fumes containing carbon monoxide are escaping from a gas appliance, please call Cadent (or the National Gas Service Emergency Line) on **0800 389 8000** to report a suspected gas leak. They'll sort out the problem and tell you what to do to stay safe.

In the meantime:

- **DON'T** smoke or vape
- **DON'T** light matches or cigarette lighters
- **DON'T** turn light switches or anything electrical on or off
- **DO** put out any naked flames such as candles
- **DO** open all doors and windows
- **DO** turn off your gas supply at the meter (and leave it switched off until you're sure it's safe to turn it back on again)

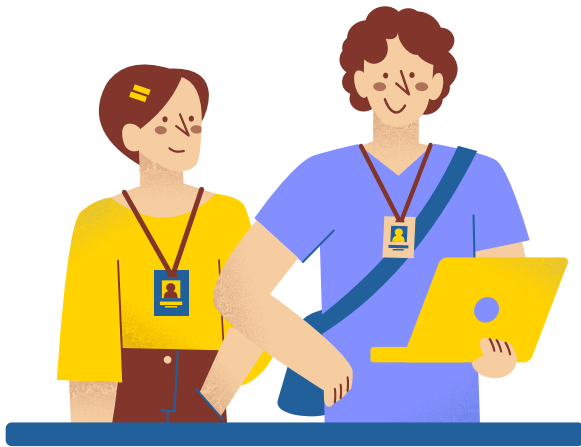
No electricity

- Check your **fuse box** to see a switch has tripped or a fuse has blown.
- Check if other rooms or neighbours are also affected, check on **Electricity North West** website for any reported power cuts and guidance
- If none of the above apply and the problems persist report the issue in **FixFlo**

Please note the following are not emergencies:

- You are locked out
- There is an issue in the property which does not pose any danger to anybody





Royal Lancaster Infirmary
Ashton Rd,
Lancaster
LA1 4RP



Personal Injury

If someone has had a serious accident please call **999** and ask for the Ambulance Service. Ensure someone is available to greet the ambulance at the front door.

Ambulance should be called if someone:

- Is bleeding heavily
- Is falling in and out of consciousness, or is unconscious
- Has suspected broken bone(s)
- Is having difficulty breathing
- Has severe burns
- Has had an allergic reaction

If someone has had an accident or needs medical attention but it is **not serious**, you can call **111** for medical assistance and advice.

Criminal Behaviour

If you have been involved in or witnessed any criminal behaviour, this must be reported to the police immediately. For any emergencies, please call **999** and ask for the police. For anything that does not require an emergency response, please call **101** or fill the online form doitonline.lancashire.police.uk

18. Complaints Procedure

We are committed to providing a high-quality service to all our clients. When something goes wrong, we need you to tell us about it. This will help us to improve our standards.

We accept that sometimes, things go wrong. If your complaint is not able to be dealt with verbally, then please put your complaint in writing to your property manager, or to hello@mightystudentliving.co.uk. Alternatively, you can post your complaint to 53 Market Street, Lancaster, LA1 1JG

What will happen next?

1. We will endeavour to send you a letter acknowledging receipt of your complaint within three working days of receiving it
2. We will then investigate your complaint
3. We will send you a detailed written reply to your complaint, including suggestions for resolving the matter, within 15 working days
4. If you are still not satisfied, you can then contact our independent redress scheme: Alternative Dispute Service: **The Property Ombudsman** Milford House, 43-55 Milford Street, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP1 2BP

19. What do I do if I want to leave my contract?

You have signed a legally binding Assured Periodic Tenancy Agreement meaning you are legally tied into that contract. To end the tenancy you will have to serve Notice to Quit in writing to **hello@mightystudentliving.co.uk**. The notice is required to be **minimum of 2 months** with the end date being **in line with your next rent payment due**.

Please note, if you don't serve the notice to quit yet move out, you will remain liable for all responsibility of your tenancy, for the duration of the tenancy term, unless this is officially declared otherwise by Mighty Student Living.

Our tenancies rely on a student cycle, and as such we do have reserve a right to serve you Section 8 Ground 4a notice to end your tenancy between June and September.

20. Deposit

During your tenancy, your security deposit will be held with a government approved deposit protection scheme. Please see either your tenancy agreement or Deposit Protection Certificate for further details on this.

Can't find either?

No problem – just drop us an email to hello@mightystudentliving.co.uk and we will supply copies of both!



AT MSL, WE CONDUCT QUARTERLY
INTERIM INSPECTIONS ON ALL OF OUR
PROPERTIES

DURING YOUR TENANCY

Looking After your Home and Tenant Maintenance

You are responsible for keeping your home in good condition. To help you do this it is best to carry out small tasks and routine checks to prevent the build up of problems.

- Make sure you know where the main water stop tap is, and how to turn it off. It is usually where the main water pipe enters the property (by the front/back door or in the cellar) or by the kitchen sink. Be sure you know how to turn off Electricity and Gas supply in an emergency. See 'Turning off Electricity' or ask a contractor when they next visit you to show you.
- Wipe down all areas affected by condensation on a regular basis, and if any mould has formed, clean it off using a solution of 1 part bleach to 4 parts water, or an appropriate cleaning product. See 'Condensation'.
- Limescale can be removed from baths, sinks, shower heads and taps with a de-scaler available from most supermarkets and DIY stores.
- Blockages in kitchen sink waste pipes can be prevented by flushing through an appropriate drain cleaning product on a regular basis (available from supermarkets and DIY stores).
- It is your responsibility to replace light bulbs and change batteries for smoke alarms and CO detectors during your tenancy should they need replacing. See 'Changing Light Bulbs & Batteries'.
- Carry out regular maintenance washes and checks to keep your washing machine and dishwasher clean and in good working order. See 'Washing Machine'.
- Defrost your freezer compartment regularly. Letting ice build up could lead to your freezer not functioning properly or efficiently.

Turning Off Electricity

- If you need to turn off all electricity (e.g. due to a leak), use the main ON/OFF switch on the electricity consumer unit (Fuse Box). This is a white/black box with lots of labelled flick switches inside. They are usually found by the front or back door, in the meter cupboard but occasionally can be in your bedroom so please ensure you familiarise yourself with the location when you first move in. Get in touch with us if you are struggling to find it and we can help locate it for you.
- Modern electric circuits are fitted with circuit breaker fuse system. A switch will trip and the circuit will be broken, stopping power the circuit if a fault develops. Older units will have fuses that may need to be replaced. If in doubt, please contact our maintenance team who will be happy to help.
- When lights suddenly don't work, or your plug sockets, or there is no electricity at all, it could be that a switch is tripped: Open the cover on the fuse box to expose the trip switches. Check which switches have tripped to the OFF position and put them back to the ON position. For more detail, you can find lots of information on this with a quick google search. If the switch continues to trip off contact the maintenance team.
- Overloading Plugs: A common cause of electricity trips or faults is overloading plugs and blowing fuses. Therefore do not use multiple adaptors on single plug sockets and be sure to check the appliance fuse. If a contractor is called out due to this kind of user error, you are likely to be liable for the cost.

Leaking, burst, or frozen pipes:

Please contact the maintenance team and take the following precautions:

- When pipes leak: Place a dish or bowl underneath the leak. Lay down towels to absorb the dampness
- When pipes burst: Turn off the water at the main stop tap and switch off any water heaters. Turn on all taps to drain water from the system
- If electric fittings get wet: Do not touch. Turn off electricity at the Fuse Box

Washing Machine:

To keep your washing machine in good running order, you should carry out a maintenance wash once a month, to dissolve any mould or soap scum build up in the machine.

- Do not put any clothes in the machine. Fill the soap dispense with soda crystals, not normal detergent. (Soda Crystals are available from most supermarkets and DIY Stores and are very cheap to purchase)
- Set your machine on a hot wash and allow it to complete the cycle

Tip: Leave the door on your washing machine open for a while after a wash to prevent damp and mould build up.

If you still find mould in your washing machine, it is best removed by rubber gloves and making sure you remove all mould from the layers of inner and outer door seals, followed with a maintenance wash. see above.

Tip: Washer Dryer Notice - Please be aware that most washer dryer units cannot take the same load in washing as in drying. Always refer to the user guide and do not exceed the recommended limits.

Many problems, such as the washing machine not draining properly or completing its cycle are caused by foreign objects finding their way into the pump area. You should ensure that all small objects are removed from pockets to prevent this from happening.

Please refer to the appliance handbook to gain access to the pump area and remove such objects and be advised that any damage to the appliance caused by this sort of item may be charged to you. If there is no handbook in your property, search the make and model of the machine online and you will easily find a copy of the handbook.

If you cannot gain access to the pump filter or you are unable to carry out the handbook instructions, contact the maintenance team, who will arrange for an engineer to attend.

If a contractor is called out due to this kind of user error, you are likely to be liable for the cost.

Drain Blockages:

Most blockages are caused by a build up of foreign objects, such as food, grease or hair in your drains. You should use a drain cleaning product every so often to clear the drains, available from most Supermarkets and DIY Stores.

If a blockage is caused by your misuse in this way, you are likely to be held liable for the full cost of clearing the blockage. Therefore, you should attempt to clear any blockages yourself before contacting the maintenance team.

Still having problems – Report all issues via FIXFLO

If more than one fitting is blocked:

If more than one fitting is blocked: The problem may be in the soil stack or the main drain. This will need to be cleared by one of our contractors. Please log this on Fixflo and our maintenance team will arrange this visit for you.

Toilet Overflow:

To Stop an Overflow:

If the toilet cistern is overflowing, try lifting the float inside the back of the toilet to close the ball valve. If this stops the overflow, try to tie it up, and contact the maintenance team during office hours to organise.

Bleeding Radiators:

When to do it:

If the top part of a radiator is cold, when the bottom part of it is warm, it means air is trapped within the system. Bleeding the radiator releases this air and allows hot water to fill the whole system. If you suspect your radiators need bleeding, please report this on Fixflo and we will send somebody out to do this for you.

Central Heating

Have you checked that the thermostat is set above the current room temperature and that the timer/programmer is switched on? For most homes, a temperature of **18–21°C** provides a comfortable living environment. Setting the thermostat higher will not heat the property more quickly, it will simply keep the heating on for longer and increase your energy usage.

If your property has a timer or programmer, we recommend setting it to heat your home when you are in and switching off when you are out or asleep. This can help reduce your energy bills and avoid exceeding your utility allowance. If your heating isn't working, check the boiler has power, there are no error messages showing, and that the radiator valves are open. If the problem continues, report it on Fixflo, including a photo of any boiler error code and whether you have heating, hot water, or both.

Kitchen Extractor Fans:

The filters on kitchen extractor hoods should be cleaned regularly to ensure that they continue to work. You will notice discolouration when the filter needs replacing. If you don't look after the filter, grease will build up around the cooker.

Hard metal type filters can be washed with warm soapy water, paper filters will change colour when they need changing.

Oven

Clean your oven on regular bases to avoid build up. if not kept on top of, this could result in **need for professional clean, which would be re-charged to the tenants.**

If you find your oven not working. You may have accidentally re-set the timer. Check and re-set your clock. If there is no power at all, Check isolator switch on worktop is on (if applicable),check your fuse box to be sure that the circuit hasn't been broken.

Changing Light Bulbs and Batteries:

It is your responsibility to change the bulbs and batteries in your property. Normal and halogen bulbs can be purchased from most hardware shops.

Changing Bulbs

- Turn off the light at the switch. To be safe, switching off the 'lights' circuit on your fuse box is the safest option.
- Give the bulb time to cool.
- Remove the bulb with a light but firm grip. It is a good idea to use a cloth glove or other soft glove to avoid direct contact with the bulb.
- Replace with the same bulb type and turn the system back on.

Changing Batteries:

You should carry out regular checks on your smoke detectors using the test button to ensure they are working.

Most of them are fitted with readily available 9 Volt batteries (the rectangular ones) and are easily replaced by opening the device. Mains wired smoke detectors also have a backup battery that may need changing. It would be better that you contact our maintenance team to have this done.

Mice:

Mice are one of the most common types of pest and it can be very difficult to exclude them from properties, particularly conversion flats and terraced houses, as there so many points of entry.

To lessen the likelihood of mice/rodents in your property you should ensure that:

- Food is stored in sealed containers and put away in cupboards/on shelves away from the floor
- Food waste and crumbs are cleaned away immediately
- Waste is kept in closed bins and removed from the property regularly for the local authority waste collection service to remove. Check the Lancaster City Council website for a calendar of their collection service



Still having problems – Report all issues via FIXFLO

If the office is closed - Should I call the emergency out of hours line:

An emergency is occurrence that could not have been foreseen, and which could cause serious danger or damage to the property. If a contractor is called out as an emergency when an emergency repair is not justified, you may be liable for all costs concerned.

Emergency contractors will attend to make the property safe to enable full and proper repairs to be undertaken during normal working hours.

If you experience an emergency as outlined above and the office is closed please take the preventative measures outlined previously and contact: **01524 544666**

Where you can talk somebody through the problem giving your name, address and contact number. It is very important to listen to the advice given. We take emergencies very seriously and we will endeavour to resolve the situation as soon as possible.

Miscellaneous:

If you would like to arrange a regular clean throughout your tenancy please ask your property manager for more details.

Property Viewings and Renewals

We will begin advertising the property in October to find new tenants for the following September. This might seem early, and we agree! However, each year we receive numerous requests as early as August from students looking to secure accommodation a year in advance. This means that right after moving everyone into their current homes, we must start advertising again to fill the properties for the next academic year.

As a result, current occupants will need to allow for viewings and ensure their properties are tidy when we visit. We will always provide at least 24 hours' notice before entering the property and will leave everything as we found it. We won't touch any personal belongings unless they pose a hazard to viewers. All viewings will be supervised by our team.

If the property is left unlocked and no one is home when we arrive, we will lock the property upon leaving to protect both the property and the occupants' belongings. It's crucial for security that we do not leave a property unlocked if no one is home.

If current occupants wish to renew their tenancy for another year, they should notify us by October 1st. We will then prepare a new contract for the following year and cancel any scheduled viewings, provided the contract is signed promptly.



END OF TENANCY

Move Out Date

As all tenancies are now periodic, you will have to serve us at least two months notice in line with your payment date to vacate the property. Please see page 10 for What do I do if I want to leave my contract?

PREPARING TO LEAVE THE PROPERTY

Condition Of The Property and Cleaning

Cleaning is nobody's favourite job but it's one of the most important parts of moving out of a rental property.

The golden rule: tenants are required to return the property and items/appliances in the same condition they received it in.

Professional Cleaning Company: Many tenants hire professional cleaning companies to thoroughly clean the property. They can be inexpensive and in all honesty, they usually save time and hassle. We can help you organise a cleaner if you would like, just let us know.

Empty The Property first: We recommend emptying the property or at least packing up all your possessions, before cleaning the property. A lot of mess (and damage) is often caused while packing and moving items out of the property.

Take all your belongings & dispose of rubbish: Don't leave any of your possessions behind, and make sure you dispose of all rubbish properly including items of bedding, pans and plates etc that you brought with you. Don't forget to check the loft, shed, cupboards and empty all the bins. Your landlord may choose to charge you for anything you leave behind - even left over cleaning products.

Take everything with you that was not there when you moved in and/or provided by your landlord.

Council Tax

It's also a good idea to let the council know in advance that you are moving properties. If you are currently paying council tax then they will need to know this anyway so they can move your council tax bill to your new accommodation.

For the majority of our tenants you won't be paying council tax but you still need to let the council know so that they can issue your new property with a council tax exemption form.



Change of Details

We would also recommend that you contact any companies who hold your personal details so they don't send letters to the wrong address. A few companies that come to mind are below:

- Bank / Building society
- Doctors / GP
- Insurance companies (e.g car insurance, tenant insurance etc)
- Your employer/workplace
- DVLA
- HMRC
- Royal Mail (so you can setup a temporary redirection service if you look on their website)

You may also want to think about taking your current address out of the auto fill section on Amazon or Takeaway apps so your parcels and food don't end up at the wrong address! If things are delivered to the house after you move out, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to retrieve the letter/parcel for you so this is really important!

One Last Check

Finally, make sure that you have one last check of the property before you leave. It's normal that you may have missed a few things. Double check all the rooms, the bathroom, the kitchen, the lounge, underneath the beds, drawers, wardrobes etc. Also please turn off all the lights and turn down the heating before leaving. Once you are certain that everything is clean and all your belongings have been removed you are ready to return your keys to us. You cannot go back to the property after you have returned your keys and if you leave something behind, it is likely that it will be disposed of ready for the next tenancy to begin so please make sure you take all of your items with you.

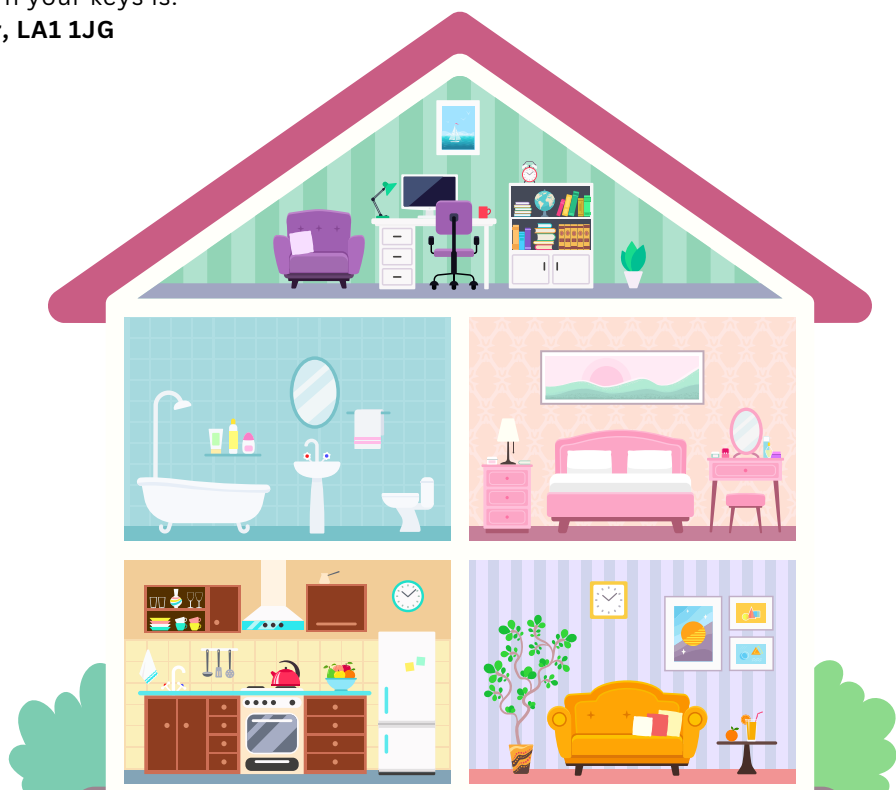
Returning Your Keys

When you and your housemates leave the property, you must all return your keys to our office address below. We will then make a note that you have all moved out of the property so we can visit for the exit inspection.

If any of the keys you were given at the start of the year have been lost, there will be a charge for these keys to be replaced. This charge can range from £10-£50 depending on the type of lock and keys that are on your door/s. Any keys that haven't been returned to us more than 48 hours after your contract ending will automatically be classed as lost keys and you will therefore be charged for this.

Our address for you to return your keys is:

53 Market Street, Lancaster, LA1 1JG



THE DEPOSIT RETURN PROCESS

Just as moving out is hectic for you this is also our busiest time of year. We ask that during the move out period you allow us some time whilst we complete the exit inspection, speak to landlords, contact yourself and your house mates and then come to an agreement if there are any deductions. If you are a 'Noposit' tenant - there are no funds to be returned to you and instead you will be invoiced for any damages/cleaning at the landlords request.

Exit Inspection

After we have received back your keys, we will aim to visit the property within 7 working days to complete the exit inspection. Once the exit inspection is completed this is then looked over by a member of our team and the landlord. We then contact the landlord to receive their agreement if there are any deductions or for a full deposit return. As you can imagine this may take a bit of time due to everyone leaving at the same time so please bear with us. Once we have the ok from the landlord, we will contact all of the tenants to let you know if you have had any deductions or not.

Deposit Dispute

If a deposit dispute does occur then we aim to work with yourself and the landlord as much as possible. Obviously, it can become confusing with lots of different tenants contacted us so if the lead tenant can speak on behalf of all the housemates it will make everything much simpler and the process faster.

If a deposit dispute can't be arranged in house and you open a dispute claim, Mydeposits who protect your deposit will handle any deductions and decide who is entitled to what amounts. This is an independent body who will look at both sides of the deposit dispute and come to a final decision from there. You will need to raise a dispute with them by creating an account and supplying as much evidence as possible. We will also receive a notification of this dispute being raised and will also supply our own evidence for them to look through. It can usually take longer for the the Mydeposits team to come to a final decision than if this is done in house so always try to contact us first.

Noposit

Remember, if you are a Noposit tenant, you must submit any claims for accidental damages before the end of June!

You will be invoiced directly for any damages, so be proactive and use your insurance to pay for it!

If you are worried about anything - please get in touch!



**Report your maintenance
before you leave here <<**



MIGHTY HOUSING TIPS

GUIDE

The following pages provide you with essential information and practical tips on maintaining your home and managing your responsibilities as a tenant.

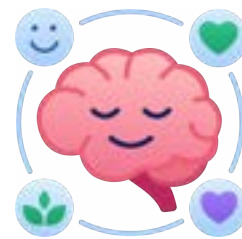
Inside this guide you will find sections on various important aspects of student living, each designed to help you navigate your new environment effectively. The sections include:

- Looking after your mental Health
- Energy saving tips
- Waste and recycling
- Complaints and consequences
- Unacceptable behaviour in residential areas
- Cleaning guide by room
- Cleaning rota

We hope this guide serves as a valuable resource, making your time with us as smooth and pleasant as possible.



IT'S OK NOT TO BE OK



LOOKING AFTER YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

University is exciting, but it can also be overwhelming. Moving away from home, meeting new people, managing your finances and balancing coursework can all take their toll. Most students experience periods where they struggle, and asking for support is a sign of strength, not weakness.

SIGNS YOU MIGHT BE STRUGGLING

It's normal to have the occasional bad day, but if several of these feel familiar for more than a couple of weeks, it may be time to reach out.

Things you might notice:

- Feeling anxious or constantly worrying
- Finding it difficult to sleep, or sleeping far more than usual
- Losing interest in hobbies or socialising
- Feeling exhausted all the time
- Struggling to concentrate on lectures or assignments
- Becoming irritable or emotional
- Feeling lonely, even when surrounded by people
- Changes in appetite
- Feeling overwhelmed by tasks that normally feel manageable



The earlier you seek support, the easier it is to get back on track.



5 WAYS TO LOOK AFTER YOURSELF

You don't have to overhaul your life overnight. Small habits really do make a difference.

- **Move your body**

Even a 20-minute walk around campus or Williamson Park can improve your mood.

- **Protect your sleep**

Aim for a regular bedtime where possible. Your brain works much better after a good night's sleep.

- **Eat and drink regularly**

Skipping meals or living on energy drinks can make stress and anxiety feel much worse.

- **Stay connected**

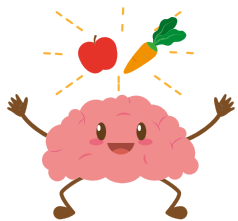
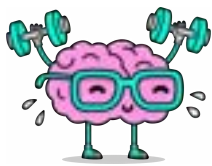
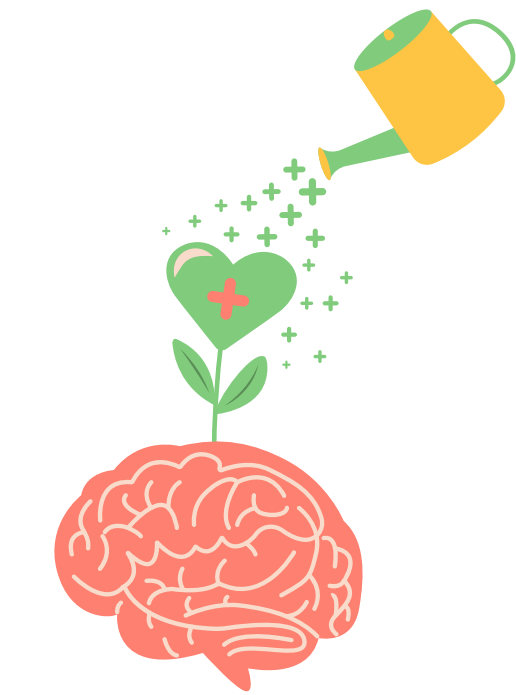
Talk to your flatmates, course mates or family. You don't have to carry everything on your own.

- **Take a break from screens**

Give yourself time away from social media and comparison. Read a book, watch a film or get outside.

- **Be kind to yourself**

Nobody has university completely figured out. Everyone struggles sometimes, even if it doesn't look like it.



ASKING FOR HELP ISN'T GIVING UP. IT'S TAKING THE FIRST STEP
TOWARDS FEELING BETTER.

WHERE TO GET HELP



Lancaster University Wellbeing Services

Your first stop if you're struggling. They offer wellbeing advisers, mental health practitioners, counselling, workshops, daily drop-ins and can help you access the right support. There's also a 24/7 wellbeing advice line, so you can speak to someone whenever you need to.



Lancaster Nightline

Run by Lancaster students, for Lancaster students. If you'd rather talk to another student anonymously, Nightline offers confidential support by phone, instant message and email during the night throughout term time.



Samaritans

Available to anyone, whatever you're going through. If you need someone to listen without judgement, they're available 24 hours a day, every day by calling 116 123



Shout

Don't feel like talking? Simply text SHOUT to 85258 to have a confidential text conversation with a trained volunteer, any time of the day or night.



PAPYRUS HOPELINE247

If you're under 35 and experiencing thoughts of suicide, or you're worried about a friend, PAPYRUS offers confidential support by phone, text and email every day from 9am until midnight.



ENERGY SAVING TIPS

PUTTING THESE SMART HABITS INTO PRACTICE WILL HELP TO KEEP YOUR ENERGY CONSUMPTION AND BILLS IN CHECK

TIP
1



Turn the thermostat down. For each degree you cut the thermostat, expect to cut bills by around 4%, saving you around £65 a year on average!

TIP
2



Use the timer on your central heating, and set it for the morning and evening rather than leaving it on all day. Try not to use electric fan heaters.

TIP
3



Save energy on your cuppa - Put cold water into a mug first then into the kettle to gauge the correct amount for the number of cups.

TIP
4



Turn your washing machine down - Reduce the temperature to 30°C to save energy.

TIP
5



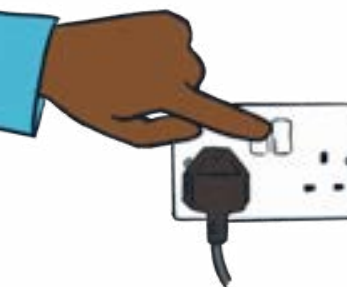
Try and use less hot water - Having a shower instead of a bath can result in a huge saving over a year.

TIP
6



When cooking meals in the oven, try and share it with a housemate and cook multiple meals at once to save energy.

TIP
7



Turn appliances off at the plug to save an average of £30 a year. Households with more gadgets could see annual savings reach between £50 and £80.

TIP
8



Wasting warm water charges you twice - once for the water, and once for heating it - unnecessarily adding to your bill.



WASTE AND RECYCLING

ESSENTIAL WASTE DISPOSAL AND RECYCLING GUIDELINES FOR TENANTS

As one of our tenants, you are responsible for making sure all your household waste is disposed of and recycled properly and legally. All information on waste and recycling is on the Lancaster City Council's website and can be found at www.lancaster.gov.uk/bins-recycling. Collection dates are located on the website too.

Pests and Animals:

- Accumulated waste attracts pests such as rodents and insects. These pests can carry diseases, create additional waste, and damage the property.

Reducing Waste:

- Opt for products with minimal packaging and buy in bulk where possible
- Use reusable containers, bags, and bottles to cut down on single-use items
- Repurpose items that would otherwise be discarded

Recyclable Material:

- Paper: Newspapers, magazines, cardboard, office paper, and mail
- Plastics: Bottles, containers, and packaging labeled with recycling symbols 1-7
- Glass: Bottles and jars (please rinse them before recycling)
- Metals: Aluminium cans, tin cans, and clean foil

Food Waste:

- Use the food waste bin for all food scraps, including fruit and vegetable peelings, leftovers, tea bags, coffee grounds, eggshells, meat, fish and bones. Never put food waste in your general waste bin if a food recycling bin is provided.
- Use compostable bin liners provided by council → if you are running out, tie one of the liners to the handle of your caddy when placing it for collection

How to Recycle:

- Ensure all items are clean and dry before placing them in the recycling bins
- Flatten cardboard boxes to save space
- **Do not place plastic bags, styrofoam, or contaminated items in the recycling bins**

Importance of Disposing Waste and Recycling:

- In the event of an emergency, such as a fire, obstructed pathways due to waste can impede evacuation efforts and put residents at risk
- Recycling and proper waste disposal reduce landfill waste, conserve natural resources, and minimise pollution
- Maintaining a clean living environment promotes health and well-being for all residents
- Your efforts contribute to a sustainable future, supporting eco-friendly practices and reducing our collective carbon footprint
- Ignoring waste disposal guidelines undermines the efforts of others who are committed to maintaining a clean and sustainable community.



WASTE AND RECYCLING

LANCASTER CITY COUNCIL – RECYCLABLE MATERIAL



Coffee Pods

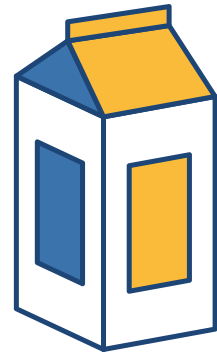
Lancaster City Council, in partnership with Podback, offers a free recycling service for coffee, tea, and hot chocolate pods as part of your normal kerbside recycling collection.

More information can be found at www.lancaster.gov.uk/bins-recycling/podback-coffee-pod-recycling



Plastic pots, tubs and trays

Recycle items marked with numbers 1, 2, or 5, such as yoghurt pots, margarine tubs, and meat, fruit, and vegetable trays. Ensure these items are rinsed and free of food waste, but do not include wrappers, film, or plastic bags, which should go in your general waste bin.



Tetrapak Cartons

Tetrapak cartons can be recycled at Tetrapak recycling banks located at:

Upper St Leonardgate
(Seymour Street), Lancaster

Morecambe Town Hall

Household Waste and Recycling
Centres at Salt Ayre and Keer
Bridge, Carnforth



Batteries

Remove the battery from the electrical item and place it in a clean, recyclable, lidded container marked 'Batteries.'

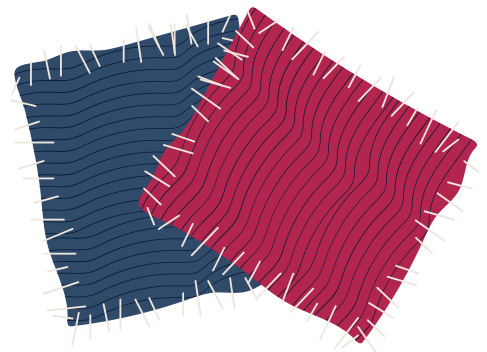
On collection day, place the container on top of your lidded recycling bin or box to ensure it is visible and avoid potential fire hazards.



Freegle

Lancaster has two Freegle groups where you can offer unwanted items or look for pre-loved things you need, all free of charge.

More information can be found at www.ilovefreegle.org/



Textiles

Clean and dry textiles can be placed in a bag and left at the side of your recycling boxes.



COMPLAINTS AND CONSEQUENCES

COMPLICATIONS OF NOISE COMPLAINTS

Living in a community, especially as a student in shared housing, requires consideration and respect for your neighbours. Noise complaints are a common issue that can significantly impact both your relationship with your neighbours and your living environment. Unhappy neighbours may report violations to local authorities, leading to enforcement actions that could have been avoided.

Here's an overview of the complications arising from noise complaints and the policies Lancaster City Council has in place to manage noise pollution. For noise occurring between 11 pm and 7 am, the council can issue warning notices if the noise exceeds permitted levels. Non-compliance can lead to fixed penalty notices or prosecution.

Social Tension:

- Noise complaints can lead to strained relationships with neighbours. Regular disturbances can cause frustration and resentment, making it difficult to maintain a peaceful and friendly community atmosphere.

Legal Consequences:

- Persistent noise complaints can lead to formal action. Lancaster City Council has the authority to investigate noise complaints and, if necessary, issue Noise Abatement Notices. Failure to comply with these notices can result in fines up to £5,000 for individuals or more severe penalties for businesses and serious offenders.

Mental Health Impact:

- Recipients of noise can experience stress and anxiety. Those disturbed by noise may find their sleep and daily routines disrupted, impacting their overall well-being.

Academic Performance:

- For students, excessive noise can disrupt study routines and affect concentration, leading to poorer academic performance. It's crucial for student housing to maintain an environment conducive to both living and studying.

Lancaster City Council's Noise Complaint Procedures:

- The Council advises residents to first approach the noise-makers directly, explaining the problem politely and seeking a mutually agreeable solution. Often, individuals are unaware that they are causing a disturbance and are willing to make adjustments.
- If the issue persists, residents can contact the Council's Environmental Health department to lodge a formal complaint. The Council treats all complaints with confidentiality and takes a systematic approach to investigate and resolve the issue.
- The Environmental Health team may conduct noise measurements and gather evidence to determine if the noise constitutes a statutory nuisance. If so, they will issue a Noise Abatement Notice requiring the offender to reduce or eliminate the noise.
- Non-compliance with a Noise Abatement Notice can result in legal action. Penalties include fines and, in severe cases, seizure of noise-making equipment. The Council aims to resolve issues amicably but is prepared to take necessary enforcement actions.

For more information or to report a noise complaint, you can contact Lancaster City Council's Environmental Health team at environmentalhealth@lancaster.gov.uk or call **01524 582935**. Additional details on their policies and procedures can be found on their website.

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS

COMPLICATIONS OF NOISE COMPLAINTS

Excessive Loud Music:

- Playing loud music, especially at night, is a common source of complaints. It disrupts sleep and daily activities of neighbours, and continuous disturbances can lead to enforcement actions (as stated above).

Household Noise:

- This includes loud conversations, slamming doors, and the use of loud appliances during night hours. Residents are encouraged to be mindful of noise levels, particularly during nighttime.

Parties and Social Gatherings:

- Loud parties, especially those that continue late into the night, are a frequent source of complaints. Residents should notify neighbours in advance if they plan to host gatherings and keep noise to a minimum.

Vehicle Noise:

- Revving engines, loud exhausts, and honking horns can be disruptive. Drivers should minimize noise, especially in residential areas during night hours.

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Drug Use and Dealing:

- Conducting or facilitating drug-related activities in public areas.

Public Drinking:

- Consuming alcohol on the streets, which can lead to disorderly behaviour.

Vandalism and Littering:

- Damaging property and improper disposal of waste.

Vehicle Noise:

- Revving engines, loud exhausts, and honking horns can be disruptive. Drivers should minimise noise, especially in residential areas during night hours.

Hate Crimes:

- Acts of harassment or violence based on race, religion, gender, or other protected characteristics.

Residents are encouraged to report instances of anti-social behavior to the council, the police, or their housing manager, depending on the situation.



CLEANING GUIDE BY ROOM

Living Room

Vacuum and sweep regularly to remove dust and debris.

Dusting surfaces including shelves, tables, and electronics.

Wipe down surfaces such as coffee tables, TV stands, and other surfaces with a damp cloth.

Organise the room but keeping clutter under control.

Cleaning windows and mirrors will remove smudges and fingerprints.



Kitchen

Wash and put dishes away after use to prevent buildup.

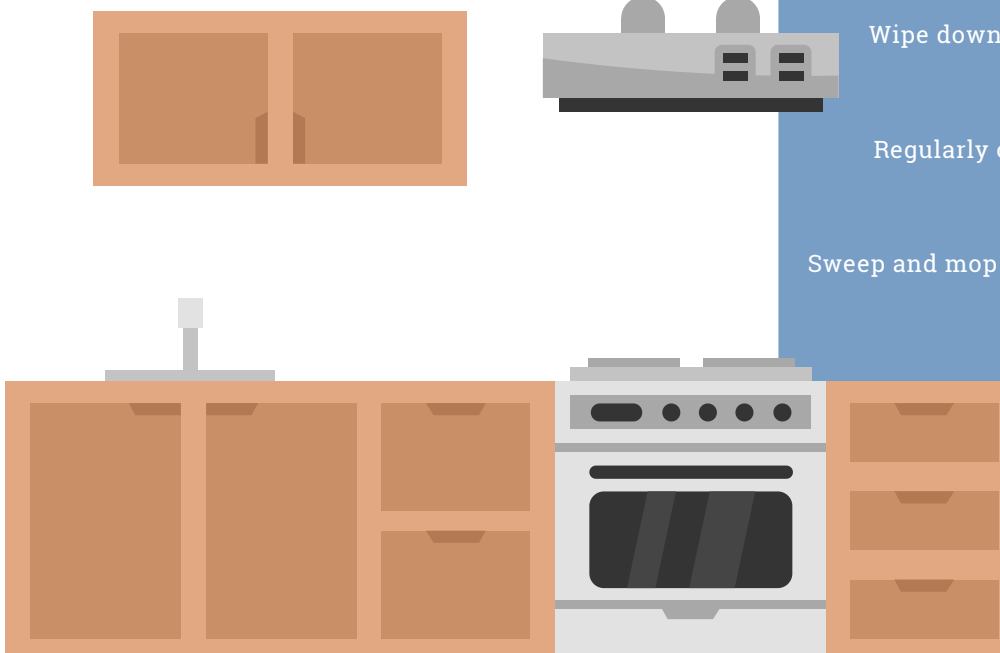
Wipe down countertops, stovetops, and any other surfaces daily.

Regularly check for expired food and clean spills immediately.

Sweep and mop the floor to remove food particles and spills.

Empty bins regularly and ensure they are clean and odour-free.

Clean the microwave and oven periodically to remove food splatters and grease.



CLEANING GUIDE BY ROOM

Bedroom

Make your bed daily and change the sheets regularly.

Dust and wipe down surfaces like desks, nightstands, and dressers.

Vacuum or sweep the floor to keep it free of dust and dirt.

Keep personal items organised and avoid leaving clothes and other items lying around.



Bathroom

Clean the toilet bowl, seat, and exterior weekly.

Wipe down the sink, taps, and counter to remove toothpaste and soap residues.

Scrub the shower walls, door, and bath to prevent mould and soap scum buildup.

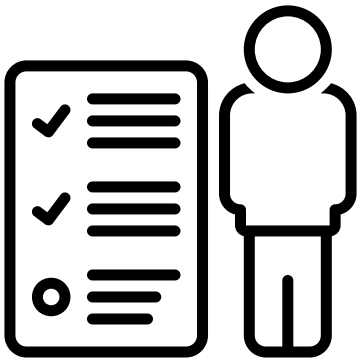
Clean the mirror to remove streaks and spots.

Sweep and mop the floor to keep it clean and dry.

Empty bathroom bins regularly to avoid overflow.

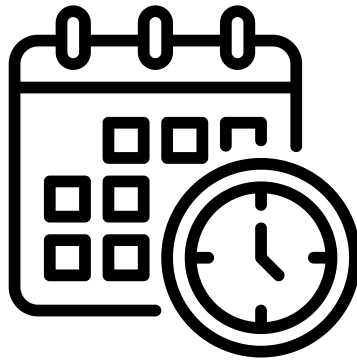


CLEANING ROTA



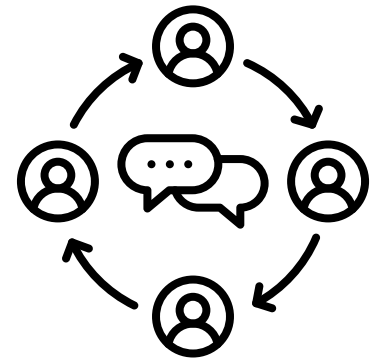
Responsibility

Break down cleaning tasks by room and specific duties (e.g., vacuuming, dusting, etc.). Assign each task to a different housemate to ensure an even distribution of work.



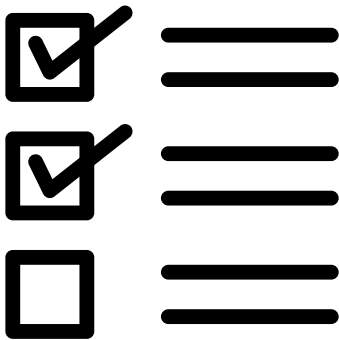
Schedule

Develop a weekly schedule that outlines who is responsible for which tasks and when they need to be completed. Rotate tasks weekly to ensure everyone takes turns cleaning different areas.



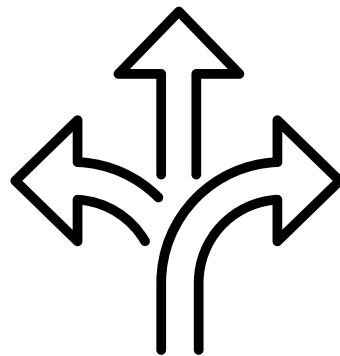
Communicate

Use a shared calendar or app to keep everyone informed about their responsibilities. Regularly remind housemates of their assigned tasks to ensure compliance.



Regular Checking

Hold weekly house meetings to review the cleaning rota and address any issues. Encourage housemates to give feedback and suggest improvements to the system.



Flexibility

Be open to swapping tasks or adjusting the schedule if someone has a busy week or unforeseen circumstances arise. Ensure everyone commits to the rota.

