

# The Essential Tenant's Guide

Making the Most of you Outdoor Space



## Making the Most of your Outdoor Space

Whether it's a lush green lawn, a modest patio, or just a few pots on the doorstep, having some outdoor space can be one of the best parts of renting a home. It gives you room to relax, unwind, and enjoy a little slice of the outdoors—whether you're a seasoned gardener or a complete beginner.

But with that space often comes a bit of responsibility too. As a tenant, you're usually expected to look after the garden or yard just as you would the inside of the property. That doesn't mean you need to become a professional landscaper—but a little regular care goes a long way in keeping things tidy, enjoyable, and deposit-friendly.

This guide has been created to help you do just that. Inside, you'll find:

- Clear guidance on what's expected of you as a tenant
- Seasonal tips for keeping things in check throughout the year
- Creative and easy ideas for making small spaces feel special
- Helpful advice about bin schemes, waste disposal, and when to ask for permission

Whether you're hoping to grow a few herbs, enjoy a cup of tea in the sunshine, or simply keep things looking presentable—this guide is here to help you make the most of what you've got, while staying on the right side of your tenancy agreement. Let's dig in. 🌱



## Understanding Your Responsibilities as a Tenant

In most tenancy agreements, if a garden, yard, or any kind of outdoor space is included with the property, you'll be responsible for keeping it tidy and maintained, unless your contract specifically says otherwise.



That doesn't mean you need to be an expert gardener—but it does mean you'll need to carry out basic upkeep, such as:

- Regularly cutting the grass during growing seasons
- Sweeping patios, driveways, and paths to keep them free from leaves or moss
- Removing weeds from flower beds, paving, or gravel
- Tidying borders and hedges where required
- Keeping any garden furniture clean and stored when not in use or during bad weather

If these tasks are neglected, it can lead to the garden becoming overgrown or unmanageable, and in many cases, this may result in deductions from your deposit when you move out.

Always check your inventory report at the start of your tenancy—it should note the condition of the garden when you moved in. That's the condition you'll be expected to return it in.



## Seasonal Garden Maintenance Tips

Keeping your garden or outdoor space in good condition doesn't have to be hard work. By doing a little bit each season, you can avoid big clean-ups later—and keep things looking great all year round.



### Spring & Summer – Growth Season

Spring and summer are when gardens come to life—but they also need a bit more attention.

- Mow the lawn regularly to keep it neat and avoid it getting out of control.
- Trim hedges and shrubs before they get too wild—especially near paths or windows.
- Weed borders, gravel paths, and paving to stop things spreading.
- Water any plants or pots, particularly in hot, dry weather.
- Sweep and clean patios or decking to avoid moss and slippery patches.
- Check outdoor furniture—clean or repaint where needed.
- This is also the perfect time to enjoy the space—so once it's tidy, why not add a few plants, hang some fairy lights, or set up a little seating area?



## Autumn & Winter – Growth Season

The colder months are more about tidying and preventing problems than full-on gardening.

- Rake up fallen leaves to stop them rotting into lawns or blocking drains.
- Cut back dying plants and shrubs, especially anything growing against walls.
- Store or cover outdoor furniture to protect it from the weather.
- Clear out pots and planters that won't survive the cold.
- Keep paths swept and moss-free to avoid slipping.
- Remove rubbish or green waste before it becomes an issue.

Even during winter, keeping things tidy shows care—and helps you avoid surprises in the spring.



## Trees, Bin Schemes & Green Waste

### Trees, Large Shrubs & What Needs Permission

If your rental garden includes mature trees or tall hedges, it's important to tread carefully—especially when it comes to pruning or removing anything.

Some trees are protected under Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs), particularly in conservation areas. That means you legally can't cut them back or remove them without special permission from the council.

If you're unsure whether a tree is protected—or you're thinking about doing anything more than light trimming—always check with your landlord or letting agent first. They may need to arrange the work professionally.

Even outside of conservation areas, it's always better to ask before doing anything major in the garden.





## Green Waste & Local Bin Schemes

In many areas, including Lancaster and Morecambe, local councils offer a green bin collection service for garden waste. This includes things like:

- Grass cuttings
- Leaves and branches
- Weeds
- Small amounts of soil from pots or planters
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However, this service usually requires a yearly subscription, and tenants are responsible for covering the cost.

If you'd prefer not to sign up, you can take your garden waste to the local tip or recycling centre instead—just make sure it's disposed of properly and not left in bags at the side of the property.

To find out more about your local scheme, including how to subscribe or check collection dates, visit your council's website or ask your agent for the right link.



## Maximising Small Outdoor Spaces

Not every rental comes with a big garden—but that doesn't mean you can't enjoy some fresh air and a few personal touches. Whether it's a balcony, a small patio, or a shared courtyard, there are lots of ways to create a space that feels inviting and homely.



### Add Greenery (Without Digging!)

Even if you don't have borders or lawn, you can still enjoy the feel of a garden:

- Use potted plants, window boxes, or herb planters to add colour and scent.
- Try vertical planters or wall-mounted pots to save space and make the most of bare walls or fences.
- Go for low-maintenance choices like lavender, mint, or hardy succulents.

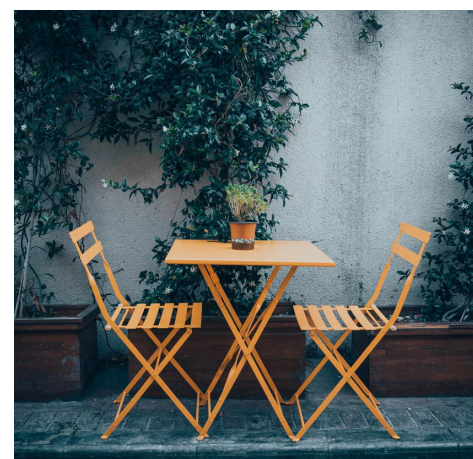
Just remember—if you're hanging anything or fixing items to walls or fences, always check with your landlord first.

### Create a Cosy Corner

You don't need much space to create somewhere to sit and relax:

- A simple bistro set or foldable chairs can be perfect for morning coffees or evening downtime.
- Add a weatherproof outdoor rug to soften the space and define it.
- String up some solar-powered lights or LED lanterns for added warmth and atmosphere.

Be sure to store soft furnishings like cushions or throws indoors when not in use, especially in wet weather.



### Make It Multi-Use

In smaller spaces, it helps to think smart:

- Use bench seating with built-in storage to hide away gardening tools or outdoor bits.
- A small table can double as a potting station, snack surface, or laptop stand.
- Consider freestanding dividers or planters to create a bit of privacy without making permanent changes.

Whatever you do, respect any shared areas and follow the house rules for communal gardens or courtyards.



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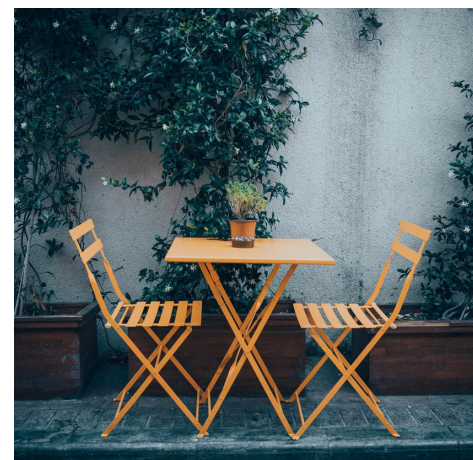
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## Helpful Tips & Preparing for the End of Tenancy

Keeping on top of your outdoor space during your tenancy doesn't just make it nicer to enjoy—it also makes moving out much easier and helps protect your deposit.

Here are a few final reminders to keep things simple and stress-free:



### **Check & Keep Your Inventory**

When you move in, take photos of the garden—especially if the space is tidy and well-kept.

This helps you know what to aim for when it's time to move out and provides helpful evidence if there are any deposit disputes later.

### **Return the Garden to Its Original Condition**

Before handing back your keys:

- Mow the lawn
- Pull up weeds
- Sweep paths and patios
- Remove any rubbish, personal belongings, or furniture
- Trim back overgrowth where needed
- Clear out any planters or pots you're not taking with you

Your goal is to return the garden or yard to how it was when you moved in, allowing for fair wear and tear.



### **Avoid Unnecessary Costs**

Don't leave behind broken items, garden waste, or overgrown hedges—these are common reasons for deductions from deposits.

Don't attempt major gardening jobs without permission—especially pruning trees, removing plants, or making structural changes.

Don't ignore shared spaces—if you use them, help maintain them too.





Looking after a garden or outdoor area doesn't need to be overwhelming. With a little regular care and creativity, you can turn even the smallest space into something practical, personal, and enjoyable.

This guide has covered your key responsibilities, seasonal tips, ideas for small spaces, and how to stay deposit-safe when it's time to move out.

Just remember to check your agreement, ask before making changes, and stay on top of the basics. And if it ever feels too much, don't be afraid to ask for help.

Here's to making your rental feel even more like home—inside and out.

— The JDG Team 🌸



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