



News Release

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Subject: Glow-in-the-dark swear words and a pet python — The DPS reveals most bizarre items left by students when they leave accommodation

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GLOW-IN-THE-DARK SWEAR WORDS AND A PET PYTHON — THE DPS REVEALS MOST BIZARRE ITEMS LEFT BY STUDENTS WHEN THEY LEAVE ACCOMMODATION

UK's largest protector of tenancy deposits also provides 12 top tips to help students retain their deposits

Bristol,— Giant glow-in-the-dark swear words, a sex toy and a pet python are among some of the items that students left in their accommodation when they moved out over the summer, according to The Deposit Protection Service (The DPS).

Part of The DPS' role is processing landlords' requests for deductions from their tenants' deposits, and among the claims it received this year was one to cover costs of removing a snake found in a student's bedroom.

Elsewhere, one landlord found an air rifle in a student's room, while another found a living room in good condition in the day time — only to discover four-foot high swear words daubed on the walls once night fell.

Another landlord said he had had to let the owner of a sex toy left behind know of its disposal when they phoned and asked for it back, The DPS said.

Matt Trevett, Managing Director at The DPS, said: "Like all tenants, students must take care of the place they live in, avoiding or properly repairing any damage and leaving the property as clean as when they arrived.

"Because students are more likely to share their house with others, there can be confusion over who is responsible for checking the condition of their accommodation and reclaiming the deposit when everyone moves out.

"Keeping to the terms of a tenancy agreement and demonstrating that they've left the place in good standing is crucial to students receiving their full deposit back."

Below are 12 tips from The DPS to help students increase their chances of retaining their deposits at the end of a tenancy.

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1. Check your landlord protects your deposit with a proper deposit scheme, i.e. one backed by the Government.
2. When you move in, note down any stains, marks or damage and make sure you agree and sign a formal detailed check-in or inventory report that includes date-stamped photographs and accurate descriptions of fixtures, carpets and appliances. Arguing that the massive iron burn on your bedroom carpet was already there when you moved in, but you didn't notice it, just won't fly. MAKE SURE EVERY HOUSEMATE SEES THE REPORT AND HAS A COPY.
3. If the landlord is unknown to you, make sure you check their name against your university or student union's list of approved landlords.
4. Don't throw your tenancy agreement into a dark corner and retrieve it, mouldy and dog-eared, just before you jet off to Ibiza/Magaluf/Scarborough to celebrate getting through Uni. Read it and understand your rights and obligations, then file it safely.
5. Record all communication with your landlord in writing, especially anything you agree with them after you move in. Take screen shots of text message exchanges with your landlord because they record dates and even times and will help you if there is a dispute.
6. File copies of all documents, receipts and emails relating to your tenancy. You will be grateful for your awesome levels of organisation when you prepare to leave your accommodation.
7. If any defects or issues arise, whip out your phone and report them immediately to the landlord (backed by an email). Don't put it off. Your landlord won't mind hearing that 'a pipe is leaking' nearly as much as 'the kitchen has been flooded for a couple of days now'.
8. If you take photos of damage or problems that occur in the property while you are there make sure they are date stamped.
9. Remember the legal phrase 'joint and several'. If one housemate does not 'fess up' when something goes wrong, such as a breakage, it becomes the joint responsibility of all tenants. Encourage all housemates to report their (property-related) mishaps.
10. Even if you keep your own room in a state of pristine perfection, most tenancy agreements stipulate that tenants are also liable for damage to communal areas (n.b. this is a subject to raise at the start of the year and not in a heated discussion on the appalling state of the kitchen during exams).
11. Try not to fall out spectacularly with your housemates and move elsewhere. You could still remain jointly responsible for the property, because liability generally extends right to the end of the tenancy.
12. Make sure you attend the checkout inspection at the end of the tenancy and sign the agreed documentation. (You can take your own photographs, BTW).

For more information about protecting your deposit, see <https://www.depositprotection.com/im-a-tenant/>

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Notes

1. For high resolution images of spokespeople, visit <http://cpu.vg/spokespeople>.

About The DPS

The Deposit Protection Service's custodial tenancy deposit protection scheme is accredited by the Government. It is provided free of charge, and funded entirely by the interest earned from deposits held in the scheme. The DPS was approved by the UK government to run an insured TDP scheme in September 2012 in addition to the approval it has already been granted by the UK government in respect of the custodial scheme. The DPS is run by [Computershare Investor Services PLC](#). Online self-service allows landlords to register and make deposit payments, transfers and repayments 24 hours a day. Help and advice is available through a dedicated call centre during office hours. An impartial Dispute Resolution Service, helps to resolve any disputes quickly and without the need for court action.

For more information, visit www.depositprotection.com.

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