

House Hold Management

Dealing with mail

Part of household management is dealing with paperwork that arrives by post. You may find it useful to purchase a file or folder in which to store paperwork. You can simply put all of your papers in one file, as at least that way you will know where to find important papers. Alternatively, you can break down the folder into different sections, such as:



- Income (e.g. benefits letters, payslips)
- To pay (bills that need to be paid)
- Paid (receipts and bills that have already been paid)
- Statements (bank statements)
- Medical / Personal (medical letters and personal correspondence)
- RSVP (letters or invitations that you need to reply to)

Gas and Electricity



If you smell gas, this is an emergency and you should call your local National Grid call centre on 0800 111 999. If there is a power cut, you can call 0800 783 8866

If there is not electricity in your home, but you are not sure whether or not there is a power cut, look outside a window. If you can see lights on in other homes and/or the street lights are on, this suggests that there is no power cut and that the electricity problem is in your home. If it is in your home, you should call your electricity provider.

In case of a power cut, you may find it useful to keep some torches in your home, in easy to find locations, and a store of fresh batteries.

Fuses

When a few electrical appliances suddenly turn off but others keep working, it is usually an indication of a safety mechanism coming into play to protect you and your appliances from an overload or fault

Circuit-breaker system

All the wiring in the house runs through a central circuit-breaker panel (or fuse box panel). Typically, a central panel includes about a dozen circuit-breaker switches leading to various circuits in the house. One circuit might include all of the outlets in the living room, and another might include all of the downstairs lighting. Larger appliances, such as a central air-conditioning system, a stove or the hot water cylinder, usually have their own circuit.

If the above has happened, try these steps to see if you can restore power:

- Turn off all light switches and appliances that have failed.

[Image 1](#) courtesy of Master isolated images at [FreeDigitalPhotos.net](#)

[Image 2](#) courtesy of Simon Howden at [FreeDigitalPhotos.net](#)

[Image 3](#) courtesy of Idea go at [FreeDigitalPhotos.net](#)

- At the circuit-breaker panel, all the switches on the panel should be ON. If one has switched to OFF, just turn it back on. Be aware, though, that some circuit-breakers have reset switches that trip to RESET when a fault occurs. The switch has to be pushed to OFF and then to ON after the circuit trips.
- If the power is restored to the lights or appliances and the circuit-breaker remains on, you'll know that it was a temporary overload that caused the power loss.
- If the circuit-breaker switches to OFF again, call your landlord or an electrician.

How to change a lightbulb

1. Turn off the power

First make sure the power is turned off.

2. Let it cool

Allow the bulb to cool before touching it.

3. Use a ladder

Ensure you can safely reach the bulb by using a stepladder.

4. Remove bulb

Take the bulb out of the socket. The way you do this will depend on whether your bulb has a bayonet mount or a screw fitting:

- **Bayonet Mount (two prongs, standard in the UK):**

Grasp the bulb lightly but firmly, push upwards gently and turn anticlockwise until it is released from the socket.



- **Screw Fitting (most common in Europe):**

Keep gently twisting anticlockwise until the bulb comes loose from the socket.

5. **Replace the bulb**

Insert a replacement bulb lightly but firmly into the socket.

Depending on the type, turn it clockwise until it locks into place or keep gently twisting clockwise until it won't go any further. Make sure the new bulb has the same fitting and same wattage.

6. **Restore power**

Once the bulb is in, turn the power back on again and switch on the light.

7. **Dispose old bulb**

The old bulb needs to be disposed of safely as the glass is fragile and very sharp. Use the packaging from the new bulb to wrap the old one for safe disposal.

As always, safety is crucial when working with electrical or wiring faults.

Remember:

- Check the wattage on the used bulb and replace it with a bulb of the same wattage
- Dispose of the bulb well out of the reach of children
- Don't put your fingers in the exposed light socket

Nuisance Neighbours

If your neighbours are being very noisy, for example playing loud music for hours on end or crashing and banging late into the night, you can report them to the local council.

Image 1 courtesy of Master isolated images at [FreeDigitalPhotos.net](https://www.FreeDigitalPhotos.net)

Image 2 courtesy of Simon Howden at [FreeDigitalPhotos.net](https://www.FreeDigitalPhotos.net)

Image 3 courtesy of Idea go at [FreeDigitalPhotos.net](https://www.FreeDigitalPhotos.net)

It is important that you yourself are considerate of your neighbours and do not play loud music, carry out DIY work late at night, vacuum late at night or shout. If you do this, it could cause you to get into trouble as your neighbours may make a complaint about you.