



Renting Private Accommodation in Oxford

How much can I expect to pay in rent?

Approximate rents as of October 2020 depending on area and size of property are as follows:

Single/Double Room/En-suite	£400 - £950 per month
Studio Flat	£600 - £1395 per month
1 Bedroom Flat	£750 - £1650 per month
2 Bedroom Flat/House	£950 - £2750 per month
3 Bedroom Flat/House	£1050 - £3750 per month

Private Letting Agents

The letting market in Oxford is very seasonal due to the way the academic year falls as a lot of people like to move in the summer months, once their studies have finished or the school year ends. As a result of this, there tends to be more properties on the market during these months and landlords will look for a 12 month minimum tenancy, so their property always comes on the market at the best time of year. However, if you need a shorter term it is always worth discussing with your landlord or agent.

Agencies should only charge you once they have found a suitable property that you agree to let. It is worth checking what the administration fees are when you make an initial enquiry.

We would recommend that if you decide to use a private agency to find accommodation, to choose an agency that is a member of a professional trade organisation, as these will require their members to comply with a code of practice.

- ARLA – Association of Residential Letting Agents www.arla.co.uk
- OCC (Oxford City Council) Landlord Accreditation Scheme - www.oxford.gov.uk/PageRender/decH/Landlord_Accreditation_Scheme_occw.htm
- Safe Agent - www.safeagents.co.uk
- TPO – The Property Ombudsman www.tpos.co.uk

NAEA – National Association of Estate Agents www.naea.co.uk

The majority of letting agents advertise all of their available properties on Rightmove www.rightmove.co.uk Zoopla www.zoopla.co.uk or On the Market <https://www.onthemarket.com> <https://www.onthemarket.com/student/property/university-of-oxford-1/> but it is always worth discussing your requirements with an agency direct as they may know of properties coming on their lists that are not yet advertised. It is the individual's responsibility to research each agency's terms and conditions before entering into a tenancy.

Staff members moving from abroad

The **Welcome Service** maintains a comprehensive website with information about relocating to and living in Oxford, particularly aimed at international staff and their families, but also useful for those moving to Oxford from elsewhere in the UK. Sue Morris is the Welcome Service co-ordinator. <https://welcome.ox.ac.uk/>

Finding Pet-friendly Accommodation

[Makeurmove](#) and [Mitula](#) are dedicated pet-friendly property rental sites, which will help you locate properties for rent with landlords who welcome pets. You can find more information on how to find a pet-friendly landlord at [Lets with Pets](#).

If you search for properties in Oxford using www.zoopla.co.uk, you can then filter your results to pet-friendly rentals by ticking 'pets allowed' under 'rental type.'

It should also be noted that some landlords may be open to negotiation about allowing pets in their properties. Normally, where an agreement is reached it is subject to a higher deposit and payment for carpet cleaning at the end of the tenancy. It is always worth speaking with the landlord or letting agent about this possibility.

Online Resources

Accommodation may also be advertised directly online by the landlord. For example:

Conference Oxford- <http://conference-oxford.com/bb-self-catering> Some of the colleges have their own accommodation and can offer self-catering or bed-and-breakfast accommodation on an individual basis during the vacation periods and occasionally during term.

Student Castle <https://www.studentcastle.co.uk/locations/oxford-student-accommodation/>

Daily Info www.dailyinfo.co.uk – This site provides lots of information about what's on in Oxford, as well as providing a platform for property searches

Gumtree <https://www.gumtree.com/property-to-share/oxford/flat> similar to Daily Info

The Gazette www.ox.ac.uk/gazette - an Oxford University publication

Spare Room www.spareroom.co.uk

Short-Term Accommodation

Most private accommodation is offered on a long-term basis of 6 months to a year. If you are looking to let accommodation for a shorter period, you may wish to look into some of the below options:

Short Let Space – www.shortletspace.co.uk - Provide fully furnished short let accommodation.
Tel: 01993 811711 Email: stay@shortletspace.co.uk

Commonwealth House - www.comhouse.org - Commonwealth House offer study bedrooms complete with washbasin and refrigerator to international students and academic visitors, offering short and long stays. Kitchens, shower rooms and toilets are shared. Breakfast is provided on weekdays at no additional cost. Situated in Oxford city centre, within ten minutes' walk of libraries and laboratories.
Tel: 01865 793132 Email: commonwealthhouse@staldates.org.uk

Away Space Ltd - www.away-space.co.uk - Variety of properties in and around Oxford. Available by the night, the week or the month!
Call Mel on 07814 420769 or email mel.case@away-space.co.uk

Homestays – These are often offered to rent by the week, and often include some meals.

<http://www.homestayfinder.com/>

<http://www.homestay.com/>

If you are booking short-term accommodation from abroad, you may wish to wait until you arrive to begin your search, as this way you will be better able to protect yourself against scams. You could opt to stay in a Youth Hostel or B&B whilst you complete your search for longer-term accommodation:

Subletting - If you hope to sublet a room, you should first check that the landlord is aware of the situation, and you should also ask for the terms of your agreement in writing.

B&B and Holiday Apartments:

Some of the colleges offer their accommodation on a B&B basis. They advertise available accommodation here - www.oxfordrooms.co.uk

Abodes of Oxford - www.abodesofoxford.com – offer a choice of quality by affordable accommodation in Oxford. Tel: 01865 435229 Email: info@abodesuk.com

Best Western, Linton Lodge www.lintonlodge.com

You may also wish to consider Youth Hostels in the city.

Scams

Some warning signs:

- If you are asked to wire money via the Western Union, this will be a scam.

- The landlord is away/unable to show you the property.
- Faulty contact information
- The price of the property seems too good to be true

If you have doubts, you can check the ownership of a property via the UK Land Registry website for a small fee: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/land-registry>

Viewing Private Accommodation

It is always best to view a property before signing a tenancy agreement. Obviously if you are overseas this is not always possible, so ask the agent or landlord if you can arrange a Skype or Facetime viewing, as this will give you a good understanding of the property and its condition. Alternatively, if you have a friend or colleague in the area ask them to view on your behalf.

Some points to consider when viewing private accommodation:

- Is the property clean? If not, will it be cleaned before you move in?
- Are there any signs of damp? Can you smell damp or see mould, wet patches or peeling wallpaper? Renting a damp property should be avoided, as it can have serious health implications.
- Is the building well-maintained?
- Is the landlord planning any works during your tenancy?
- Is the property furnished? Check what furniture, if any, comes with the property.
- If you have the chance, ask the current tenants about their experience of living in the property.
- Does the kitchen come fully-equipped with white goods - fridge, freezer, microwave etc?
- Is the heating gas or electric? If there is gas in the property, the landlord should be able to show you a current gas safety certificate.
- Are there fire alarms?
- Ask to see an Energy Performance Certificate. This shows the efficiency of the accommodation, which will affect your bills
- Are bills included?
- Is there an internet connection? Is it possible to install one?
- If there is a garden, are you expected to maintain it?
- Do you like the location of the property?

Moving In

Tenancy Agreement

Before moving in, you should be asked to sign a tenancy agreement. You should read this thoroughly before signing it. If you have any concerns about the agreement seek advice before you sign.

Shelter offer a useful online tool to check you are signing the correct type of tenancy agreement – https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice/private_renting/types_of_renting_agreement

Inventory

Agree an inventory (or check-in report) with your landlord and, as an extra safeguard, make sure that you take photos. This will make things easier if there is a dispute about the deposit at the end of the tenancy. If you are happy with the inventory, sign it and keep a copy.

Deposit

Your deposit should be protected by one of the three government approved deposit schemes – <https://www.gov.uk/tenancy-deposit-protection/overview>

The Deposit Protection Service	A custodial scheme, free for landlords to use. The deposit is held by the deposit scheme during the tenancy, and during any disputes. There is no deadline for disputes. www.depositprotection.com
My Deposits	Insurance-based scheme. 3 month deadline from the end date of your tenancy to register a dispute. www.mydeposits.co.uk
The Tenancy Deposit Scheme	An insurance-based scheme. 3 month deadline for registering disputes. https://www.tenancydepositscheme.com/

If your landlord makes deductions, you should ask them to put this in writing for you, and provide receipts for any costs.

If, following discussion with your landlord, you then disagree on the amount deducted from your deposit, you can raise a dispute with the appropriate tenancy deposit scheme.

Meter Readings

Remember to take meter readings when you move in. This will help make sure you don't pay for the previous tenant's bills

Contact Details

Make sure that you have the correct contact details for the landlord or agent, including a telephone number you can use in case of an emergency.

What the landlord must provide you with:

- A copy of this guide “How to rent: the checklist for renting in England” either via a link or as a printed copy.
- A gas safety certificate. The landlord must provide one each year, if there is a gas installation.
- Deposit paperwork. If you have provided a deposit, the landlord must protect it in a government approved scheme. Make sure you get the official information from the scheme, and that you understand how to get your money back at the end of the tenancy. Keep this information safe as you will need it later.
- The Energy Performance Certificate. This will affect your energy bills and the landlord must provide one (except for Houses in Multiple Occupation).

Insurance

It is a very good idea to take out contents insurance when you move into private accommodation. This will insure your possessions against accidents and theft.

These start from around £44 per year (based on a search for a 1 bed flat conducted in October 2016 with an excess between £100 voluntary and £150 compulsory). There are various comparison websites available to compare quotes for contents insurance:

Money Supermarket - www.moneysupermarket.com/home-insurance

Compare the Market - www.comparethemarket.com/home-insurance/contents

Confused.com - www.confused.com/home-insurance/contents

Landlords should have their own insurance for their own belongings and the property itself. If the landlord's property is damaged due to the tenant's activities, however, it is the tenant's responsibility to pay for the repair/replacement.

Council Tax

If you are a full-time student, you are usually exempt from paying council tax, and can claim exemption by filling out an exemption form - www.oxford.gov.uk/PageRender/decCB/Exemptions_occw.htm

TV Licence

If you watch live television, you will need to get a TV Licence. If you are part of a joint tenancy, you will need only one TV Licence. If you each have individual tenancy agreements, a TV Licence is required for each person with a television. You will also need one if you download or watch any BBC programmes on iPlayer – live, catch up or on demand.

You can get a TV licence online here - www.tvlicensing.co.uk

Disputes

Unfortunately we are not able to get involved in disputes between landlords and tenants. If you have a dispute, you can contact the local Citizens Advice Bureau www.caox.org.uk/oxford Shelter www.adviceoxford.org.uk/get-advice/shelter or the Students Union <https://www.oxfordsu.org/wellbeing/student-advice/accommodation-living/> for advice.