Landlords can enter their rental properties at certain times, for certain things. They must give the right amount of notice, or get their tenant’s permission. They must also respect the tenant’s reasonable peace, comfort and privacy.

The property is the tenant’s home

The landlord owns the property, but while the tenant rents it it’s their home. This means the landlord must respect their peace and privacy (this is called quiet enjoyment (http://www.tenancy.govt.nz/maintenance-and-inspections/quiet-enjoyment/)).

If the landlord needs to come inside (for example, to do an inspection or to fix something) they need to give the correct amount of notice, or get the tenant’s permission. Otherwise they may be breaking the law.

The landlord can also come inside if they have a Tenancy Tribunal order allowing entry, or if there’s an emergency, like a fire or flood.

Inspections (http://www.tenancy.govt.nz/maintenance-and-inspections/inspections/) tells you how inspections should happen.

Landlords can enter the property to fix something

Landlords must give tenants at least 24 hours’ notice before entering the property to do any necessary repairs or maintenance. These repairs should be done between 8am and 7pm.

Landlords can also access the house to do work to comply, or prepare to comply, with the healthy homes standards. They must still give 24 hours’ notice to the tenants before entering.

About the healthy homes standards (http://www.tenancy.govt.nz/healthy-homes/about-the-healthy-homes-standards/) Any repairs or maintenance that is not necessary, like cosmetic improvements, may only be done at a mutually agreed time.

Repairs and damage (http://www.tenancy.govt.nz/maintenance-and-inspections/repairs-and-damages/) explains who’s responsible for fixing and paying for any damages or repairs in a rental property.

On 27 August 2019, new legislation took effect, which will affect tenants’ liability for damage.

Landlords will be able to test for methamphetamine contamination during a tenancy, but they will still have to provide the correct notice before entering the property.

Landlords can enter the property to test for methamphetamine (meth)

Landlords must give tenants at least 48 hours’ notice before entering the property to carry out an inspection, or to test for meth contamination at the property. You should do this between 8am and 7pm. For boarding houses, landlords must provide 24 hours’ notice before entering the boarding house room.

If you are testing for meth, you need to tell the tenant before you start. You also need to provide the tenant with the results in writing within seven days of getting them.

Landlords can’t give notice for open homes

You can’t give notice to your tenant if you want to have an open home or show potential buyers through the house. Sale of a house (http://www.tenancy.govt.nz/ending-a-tenancy/change-of-landlord-or-tenant/selling-a-rental-property/) tells you everything you need to know about gaining access when a rental house is on the market.

Landlords showing potential tenants through the property

A landlord may want to show potential tenants through the house before the final day of the tenancy. To do this, the landlord must have the tenant’s permission. Tenants can’t unreasonably withhold permission, but they can set reasonable conditions.

Find out more about the end of a tenancy (http://www.tenancy.govt.nz/ending-a-tenancy/ending-a-tenancy-checklist/)

Landlords can enter the grounds without giving notice

Landlords don’t need to give notice to come onto the property (the land). This usually happens when the landlord has agreed to do things (like mow the lawns for the tenants). The landlord is also usually responsible for maintaining the outside of the house and property (like pruning trees and cleaning the guttering), so they will need to come on to the grounds for those reasons. But the landlord does have to avoid interfering with the tenant’s peace, comfort and privacy.

Landlords must not use force to enter the property

The landlord must not use force, or threat of force, to enter or attempt to enter the property while the tenant, or anyone with the tenant’s permission, is inside. A landlord who does this commits an offence and is liable on conviction for a financial penalty or imprisonment.

Boarding houses have special rules for entry

When the landlord can enter the boarding house (http://www.tenancy.govt.nz/starting-a-tenancy/types-of-tenancies/boarding-houses/) explains the rules for entering boarding houses and conducting inspections.

Top tips for access

At the start of a tenancy

For both landlords and tenants

- Recognise some landlord/tenant situations need very clear agreement about access. For example where a landlord is a next door neighbour, lives on the same property or maintains the grounds.
- Discuss any specific access requirements, such as suitable times or days.

For landlords

- Mention any plans for future maintenance.

During a tenancy

For landlords

- Discuss plans with your tenant if you want to renovate inside the property during the tenancy.
- Get your tenants' agreement first if you're planning any property renovations. You don't have to give notice to come on to the grounds but renovations, like house painting, could cause disruptions so you should get the tenant's agreement.

For tenants

- Contact your landlord immediately if you have concerns about the access time or your circumstances change. Landlords can enter the property as long as they've given the right notice. However you may be able to negotiate another access time.

At the end of a tenancy

For both tenants and landlords

- Make sure all keys have been returned to the landlord.
- Bring and complete a bond refund form.
- Check what your rights and responsibilities are when a tenancy is ending.

What to do at the end of a tenancy (http://www.tenancy.govt.nz/ending-a-tenancy/ending-a-tenancy-checklist/)


Your rights and responsibilities (http://www.tenancy.govt.nz/starting-a-tenancy/new-to-tenancy/key-rights-and-responsibilities/)