

MOVING & RENTING · GUIDE 01 · 2026

THE NEW RENTAL SERIES

Updated Sunday, 31 May 2026

How to set up broadband in a *new rental.*

A calm, step-by-step guide for UK tenants. When to order, what to check before you move in, whether you need the landlord's permission, and how to get online fast even if the engineer date slips. Written to save you time, stress and money.

~84%**UK PREMISES FULL-FIBRE READY***Best estimate, 2026 (thinkbroadband)*

2 to 4**WEEKS TO ORDER BEFORE MOVE-IN***Our recommended lead time*

Minutes**SELF-INSTALL IF A LINE IS ACTIVE***Plug in the router on your start date*

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EDITOR'S NOTE · 31 MAY 2026

Moving in should be the easy part.

Moving into a new rental is a brilliant moment, and getting online should be one of the simplest things on your list. The good news is that it genuinely is easier than it has ever been. Full fibre now reaches roughly four in five UK homes, switching and ordering are quicker than they were even two years ago, and if your line is not ready on day one there are reliable plug-and-play options that get you online in minutes.

This guide walks you through the whole journey in plain English: how far ahead to order, how to check exactly what is available at your new address, when you need a quick word with your landlord, and what to do if an installation date slips. Every figure here is sourced, and you will find the full reference list at the end. When you are ready to see live prices for your new postcode, the comparison tool does the heavy lifting in about ten seconds.

Set it up once, set it up right, and you can forget about it for the whole tenancy.

BROADBANDSWITCH.UK EDITORIAL TEAM

Your new-rental broadband, at a glance

~84%

FULL-FIBRE AVAILABILITY

Best estimate, 2026. Ofcom's last official figure was 78% (23.7m homes), Nov 2025.

1.6M

SWITCHED VIA ONE TOUCH SWITCH

In its first year (Sept 2024 to Sept 2025).

90%

5G COVERAGE OF UK PREMISES

Makes 5G home broadband a strong stopgap while you wait.

4.7M

PRIVATE RENTED HOUSEHOLDS (ENGLAND)

Around 19% of all households. You are far from alone.

£6.46

PER DAY IF YOUR START DATE SLIPS

Ofcom automatic compensation, 2026 rate.

31 Jan 2027

OLD COPPER PHONE SWITCH-OFF

Another reason full fibre is the future-proof choice.

SO WHAT? PLAIN ENGLISH FOR UK CONSUMERS

You hold more cards than you might think. Coverage is high, ordering is quick, and even a worst-case delay is protected by automatic compensation. The trick is simply to start a couple of weeks early and to check your exact address before you commit, which is exactly what this guide helps you do.

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

What's covered.

Each section opens with a short Quick Answer so you can scan straight to what you need. Live prices for your address are always one postcode check away at broadbandswitch.uk/compare.

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SECTION 01 · START HERE

The seven-step overview.

QUICK ANSWER

To set up broadband in a new rental: check what is available at the address, pick a deal sorted by total contract cost, order around two to four weeks before you move in, get the landlord's nod for any drilling, and use a 4G or 5G plan as a stopgap if the line is not live on day one. Most setups are simpler than people expect.

Here is the whole journey on one page. The rest of the guide expands each step, but if you only read this section you will still get online smoothly.

- ✓ **Check availability first.** Run the new postcode through a coverage checker so you know which technologies and providers reach the property before you choose anything.
- ✓ **Right-size your speed.** Match the package to how your household actually uses the internet, so you neither overpay nor end up buffering.
- ✓ **Compare by total contract cost.** Add the monthly price, any setup fee and the in-contract rises together, not just the headline figure.
- ✓ **Order two to four weeks ahead.** This covers any engineer appointment and gives you a comfortable buffer.
- ✓ **Clear any drilling with the landlord.** A new full-fibre line can need a small amount of external work, which needs permission.
- ✓ **Plan a stopgap.** Line up a 4G or 5G option, or your phone's hotspot, so you are never offline if a date slips.
- ✓ **Confirm both dates in writing.** Note your activation date and any switch or cease date, and keep the confirmations.

SO WHAT? PLAIN ENGLISH FOR UK CONSUMERS

Almost every problem renters have with broadband comes from leaving it to the last minute. Start the moment you have the address and a move-in date, and the rest falls into place. A ten-minute postcode check today saves a fortnight of frustration later.

SECTION 02 · TIMING

How far ahead to order.

QUICK ANSWER

Order around two to four weeks before your move-in date. If the home already has an active line or a fibre socket, set-up can be self-install within days. A brand-new full-fibre connection usually needs an engineer appointment, so the earlier you book, the more choice of dates you get.

Broadband is not like electricity or water, which are usually live when you arrive. A broadband service has to be ordered and activated against your specific address, and sometimes an engineer needs to attend. Treating it as a moving-in task to sort on the day is the single most common reason renters end up offline for a week.

When	What to do
As soon as you have the address	Check coverage at the new postcode and note which technologies and providers are available. This shapes every later choice.
3 to 4 weeks before move-in	Compare deals by total contract cost, right-size your speed, and place your order so you can pick an early activation or engineer slot.
1 to 2 weeks before	Confirm your activation date, watch for a router in the post, and line up a 4G or 5G stopgap just in case.
Moving day	If self-install, plug the router in on the activation date. If an engineer is due, make sure someone can give access.
If the date slips	Use your stopgap, and remember automatic compensation applies if the provider misses the agreed start date.

SO WHAT? PLAIN ENGLISH FOR UK CONSUMERS

If a usable line is already in the property, you could be online within days of ordering with no engineer at all. If the home needs a fresh full-fibre install, the wait is usually a couple of weeks, occasionally longer where outside work is involved. Either way, ordering early costs nothing and removes nearly all the risk.

SECTION 03 · THE METHOD

The step-by-step setup.

This is the full version of the seven-step overview, with the detail that makes each step easy to get right.

1 Check what is available at your new address

Before anything else, find out which networks reach the property. A town or city flat will often have full fibre from several providers, while a rural cottage might be on an older line or suit a wireless option. Knowing this first stops you falling for a deal you cannot actually get. Section 04 shows exactly how to read the results.

2 Right-size the speed to your household

More speed is not always better value. Work out how many people will be online at once and what they do, then choose the smallest tier that comfortably covers it. Section 07 has a simple table, and the RightSpeed calculator gives a personalised answer in under a minute.

3 Compare deals by total contract cost

The cheapest headline price is not always the cheapest deal. Add the monthly price, any setup fee, the value of any voucher, and the in-contract rises stated in pounds and pence, then compare the all-in total over the full term. Sorting this way is exactly how the comparison tool ranks deals.

4 Place your order against the new address

Order in your own name for the new property, choosing an activation date on or just after your move-in day. You will usually be told there and then whether it is a self-install or whether an engineer needs to attend. Keep the order confirmation safe.

5 Clear any installation work with the landlord

If a new full-fibre line is needed, the installer may have to fit a small box and run a cable into the property, which can mean light drilling. A quick written note to your landlord or letting agent avoids any dispute later. Section 05 covers your position in detail.

6 Line up a stopgap so you are never offline

Have a backup ready in case a date moves: a 4G or 5G home broadband plan on rolling monthly terms, or simply your phone's hotspot for a day or two. Section 08 explains the options, which set up in minutes with no engineer.

7 Confirm both dates and check the first bill

Note your activation date and, if you are leaving an old service, its cease date, so the two do not overlap or leave a gap. When the service goes live, run a quick speed test to confirm you are getting what you pay for, and check the first bill matches what you ordered.

SISTER-SITE FAIRNESS CHECK**Confirm the line is delivering once it is live**

Once your broadband goes live, take a minute to check you are getting the speed you signed up for. UKSpeedTest.co.uk (branded Pulse) is a free, no-signup, ad-free test that measures download, upload and jitter and gives a plain-English verdict. For a fast look at the line under load, HowFast.uk runs a quick performance check in the browser.

Built by the same SearchSwitchSave editorial team that publishes BroadbandSwitch.uk. Visit ukspeedtest.co.uk and howfast.uk.

SECTION 04 · AVAILABILITY

Check what is available at your new address.

QUICK ANSWER

Enter the full new postcode into a coverage checker before you choose a deal. Results are usually grouped into standard (up to about 30 Mbit/s), superfast (around 30 to 300 Mbit/s) and ultrafast or gigabit (over 300 Mbit/s). Availability can change street by street, so always check the exact address, not just the area.

Coverage is the foundation of every other decision. Checking it first means you only ever compare deals you can actually have, and it often reveals faster or cheaper options you did not know reached the property, especially from smaller full-fibre networks.

How to read the results

What you see	What it means
Standard, up to ~30 Mbit/s	Usually an older copper line. Fine for one light user, but worth upgrading if full fibre is available.
Superfast, ~30 to 300 Mbit/s	Part-fibre or entry full fibre. Comfortable for most households.
Ultrafast or gigabit, 300 Mbit/s and up	Full fibre to the home. The most future-proof choice, and often no dearer than older options.
A green tick	The service is available to order at that address now.
An amber or red marker	Limited or not yet available. Check again nearer your move, as networks expand constantly.

NEW-BUILD TIP

Very new or recently built addresses are sometimes missing from coverage databases because the postcode has not been added yet. If your new home does not appear, do not panic. Speak to the developer or letting agent about which network serves the building, and consider a rolling stopgap until the address is listed.

SISTER-SITE FAIRNESS CHECK**See exactly what reaches your street**

BroadbandMap.org.uk is a free, postcode-level UK coverage map showing which technologies, full fibre, part fibre, cable, 4G and 5G, reach which streets. It is the quickest way to picture your options at the new address before you compare a single deal.

Part of the same SearchSwitchSave network as BroadbandSwitch.uk. Visit broadbandmap.org.uk.

SO WHAT? PLAIN ENGLISH FOR UK CONSUMERS

Two homes on the same street can have very different options, so the area is not enough: check the exact address. Once you can see what is genuinely available, the rest of the decision becomes simple, and you can run a live postcode comparison to turn coverage into actual prices.

SECTION 05 · PERMISSION

Do you need the landlord's permission?

QUICK ANSWER

You do not need permission to order broadband, but you usually do need the landlord's agreement for any physical installation work, such as drilling to fit a new full-fibre line. A short written request is normally all it takes, and most landlords are happy to say yes because a connected property is easier to let.

Ordering a service is your decision as the bill-payer. The permission question only arises when an engineer needs to make a physical change to the property, which is most likely with a brand-new full-fibre install. If the home already has a working line or a fibre socket, there is often nothing to install at all.

When permission matters

- ✓ **A new full-fibre line.** Fitting the small box where the fibre enters the home, and running the cable in, can involve light drilling, so this needs the landlord's agreement.
- ✓ **Flats and apartment blocks.** Work in shared parts of a building can also need the freeholder's agreement, which can take a little longer to arrange.
- ✓ **Reusing an existing line.** If there is already an active socket, a self-install usually needs no permission because nothing is being altered.

How to ask, the easy way

Send a short message to your landlord or letting agent explaining that you would like to arrange a broadband connection, that any work would be carried out by the provider's qualified engineer, and asking them to confirm they are happy for it to go ahead. Getting that yes in writing protects everyone and keeps your deposit safe.

GOOD TO KNOW

For tenants in blocks of flats, there are rules designed to help when a freeholder repeatedly fails to respond to a provider's requests for access, so a full-fibre installation is less likely to be blocked by silence than it once was. If you hit a wall, your chosen provider can advise on the formal route.

SO WHAT? PLAIN ENGLISH FOR UK CONSUMERS

In practice this is rarely a hurdle. A polite, written request almost always does the job, and many landlords actively welcome an upgrade to full fibre. Ask early, keep it in writing, and your installation can go ahead without any worry about the tenancy.

SECTION 06 · INSTALLATION

Self-install versus an engineer visit.

QUICK ANSWER

If a usable line or fibre socket already exists, most providers offer a self-install: a router arrives in the post and you simply plug it in on your activation date. A brand-new connection needs an engineer to attend, fit any equipment and activate the service, which is why those orders need a booked appointment.

	Self-install	Engineer visit
When it applies	An active line or fibre socket is already in the property.	A new full-fibre line, or a switch between different network types.
What happens	A router is posted to you; you plug it in on the start date.	An engineer attends to fit equipment and activate the line.
Typical wait	Often just a few days from ordering.	Usually a couple of weeks, sometimes longer if outside work is needed.
Do you need to be in?	No.	Yes, someone aged 18 or over must give access.
Permission needed?	Rarely, as nothing is altered.	Yes for any drilling, see Section 05.

If an engineer is coming

- ✓ Make sure someone aged 18 or over can be home for the appointment window.
- ✓ Have an idea of where you would like the router to live, ideally central and out in the open for the best Wi-Fi.
- ✓ Clear access to where the line enters the property.
- ✓ If you rent, have the landlord's agreement to any drilling ready, just in case.

SO WHAT? PLAIN ENGLISH FOR UK CONSUMERS

The quickest setups are self-installs on a line that already exists, so if speed of connection matters most, a property with a working socket is your friend. Where a fresh install is needed, the short wait is well worth it for a faster, more reliable full-fibre line that will serve the whole tenancy.

SECTION 07 · SPEED

What speed do you actually need?

QUICK ANSWER

It depends on how many people are online at once and what they do. As a rough guide, one or two people are usually fine on 60 to 100 Mbit/s, three or four people on 150 to 300 Mbit/s, and five or more heavy users on 500 Mbit/s and above. A single 4K stream needs about 25 Mbit/s, a video call about 4 Mbit/s, and most games run happily on 50 Mbit/s.

Choosing the right speed is where renters most often overpay. Headline gigabit numbers look impressive, but very few households need them today. Sizing the plan to real use keeps the bill down without any buffering.

Household	Sensible speed	Why
One or two people, light use	60 to 100 Mbit/s	Browsing, HD streaming and the odd video call.
A couple working from home	100 to 300 Mbit/s	Simultaneous video calls and uploads; aim for good upload speed.
Family or three to four sharers	150 to 300 Mbit/s	Several streams, gaming and devices at once.
Five or more heavy users	500 Mbit/s and above	Busy house share with lots of concurrent use.

SISTER-SITE FAIRNESS CHECK**Right-size your speed before you overspend**

Many households pay for far more speed than they use. RightSpeed.co.uk walks you through eight short questions about people, streaming, gaming, calls, uploads and cameras, then recommends the tier that genuinely fits your home, in plain English, in under a minute.

Authored by Dr Alex J. Martin-Smith. Free, no signup, no ads. Visit rightspeed.co.uk.

SO WHAT? PLAIN ENGLISH FOR UK CONSUMERS

Buy for how you actually live, not for the biggest number on the page. If full fibre is available, an entry full-fibre plan is often the sweet spot: faster, more reliable uploads for video calls and backups, frequently at a price that matches or beats an older copper deal.

SECTION 08 · NO GAPS

If your broadband is delayed: 4G and 5G stopgaps.

QUICK ANSWER

If your fixed line is not ready on move-in day, a 4G or 5G home broadband plan gets you online in minutes with no engineer and no landline. These are widely available on rolling monthly terms for around £20 to £35 a month, typically deliver 100 to 300 Mbit/s where 5G is strong, and many come with a money-back guarantee if coverage disappoints.

Because 5G now reaches around 90% of UK premises, mobile home broadband has become a genuinely good bridge while a fixed line is installed. You plug in a small router, it connects over the mobile network, and you are online. When your full-fibre service goes live, you simply cancel the rolling plan or keep it as a backup.

When a stopgap makes sense

- ✓ Your full-fibre install date is after your move-in date.
- ✓ The address is a new build that is not yet in the coverage databases.
- ✓ You are on a short tenancy and want maximum flexibility.
- ✓ You simply want a guaranteed connection from day one, with no risk of a gap.

QUICK WIN

For a single day or two, your phone's personal hotspot may be all you need. For anything longer, a dedicated 4G or 5G router gives far better range and lets the whole household connect at once.

SO WHAT? PLAIN ENGLISH FOR UK CONSUMERS

With a stopgap lined up, a delayed installation becomes a minor inconvenience rather than a crisis. You stay online, you keep working and streaming, and you switch to your faster fixed line the moment it is ready. Peace of mind for the price of a takeaway or two.

SECTION 09 · EXISTING CONTRACTS

Moving an existing contract versus starting fresh.

QUICK ANSWER

You have two routes if you already have broadband. To keep your current provider, ask their home-move team to transfer the service to the new address. To move to a better deal, One Touch Switch lets you contact only the new provider, who arranges the switch and cancels your old service for you. If this is your first broadband of your own, you simply place a fresh order for the address, which is also your chance to compare and save.

It helps to know which situation you are in, because the right move depends on it.

If you want to keep your current provider

Ask their home-move team to transfer the service. If they can serve the new address, this is often straightforward. If they cannot, many providers will waive or reduce the early termination charge, but this is not automatic: you usually need to ask and show evidence of your move, so always get any agreement in writing.

If you want to switch to a better deal

A move is the perfect moment to compare the whole market for the new address. Sort by total contract cost, check what the smaller full-fibre networks offer, and remember that switching credits from some providers can help offset an exit fee. Because the old copper phone network is being switched off by 31 January 2027, a move is also a natural time to choose a future-proof full-fibre service.

Your situation	Best first step
Happy with your provider	Contact their home-move team to transfer the service to the new address.
Out of contract	Compare the market for the new address and place a fresh order; no exit fee to worry about.
In contract, but they cannot serve the new home	Ask about waiving or reducing the exit fee, and look for switching credits elsewhere.
First broadband of your own	Start fresh: check availability, right-size speed, compare by total cost, and order early.

SO WHAT? PLAIN ENGLISH FOR UK CONSUMERS

A house move resets the board. Whether you transfer or start fresh, take ten minutes to compare what is available at the new address first, because the deal that suited your old home may not be the best one for the new one.

SECTION 10 · PITFALLS

Five mistakes to avoid.

A little foresight avoids almost every common renter headache. These are the five worth steering around.

- ⚠ **Leaving it to moving day.** Ordering on the day you move is the number one cause of being offline for a week. Start two to four weeks ahead.
- ⚠ **Choosing on headline price alone.** A low monthly figure with a high setup fee can cost more overall. Compare the all-in total contract cost.
- ⚠ **Skipping the address check.** The deal you want may not reach the exact property. Always check the full postcode before you commit.
- ⚠ **Forgetting landlord permission.** If a new line needs drilling, get a written yes first, both to be fair and to protect your deposit.
- ⚠ **Letting contracts overlap or gap.** Line up your new start date with your old cease date so you are not paying twice, or left without service.

Ready? Find your live deal in about ten seconds.

Postcode in, real prices out. No name, no email, no phone number needed.

broadbandswitch.uk/compare →

FREE · INDEPENDENT · 35+ PROVIDERS · UPDATED DAILY

SECTION 11 · FAQ

Frequently asked questions.

How long does it take to set up broadband in a new rental?

If a usable line is already in the property, a self-install can be live within days of ordering. A brand-new full-fibre connection usually needs an engineer appointment, so allow a couple of weeks, occasionally longer if outside work is needed. Ordering two to four weeks ahead covers both cases comfortably.

Do I need my landlord's permission to get broadband?

Not to order it. You do usually need the landlord's agreement for any physical installation work, such as drilling to fit a new full-fibre line. A short written request almost always does the job, and most landlords welcome the upgrade.

Can I get online on the day I move in?

Often yes, if you order early and the property has an active line for self-install. If a new install is needed, a 4G or 5G home broadband plan or your phone's hotspot keeps you online from day one while you wait.

Can I take my current broadband to the new address?

Usually you can ask your provider's home-move team to transfer it. If they cannot serve the new address, you may still owe early termination charges for the rest of your term, though it is always worth asking whether they will reduce them.

Does One Touch Switch cover moving house?

It can help. If you are moving and also switching to a new provider, One Touch Switch lets you contact only the new provider, who arranges the switch and cancels your old service for you. If instead you want to keep your current provider and move the service across, that is a separate home-move transfer arranged directly with them. One Touch Switch covers fixed broadband and landline only, not mobile or 4G and 5G home broadband.

What speed should I get for a house share?

For three or four sharers, 150 to 300 Mbit/s is a sensible target; for five or more heavy users, look at 500 Mbit/s and above. The RightSpeed calculator gives a tailored answer in under a minute.

Do I still need a landline for broadband?

No. Most full-fibre and cable plans are broadband-only by default. The old copper phone network is being switched off by 31 January 2027, with calls moving to Digital Voice over your broadband. If anyone relies on a home phone or a care alarm, check compatibility before you switch.

What if my installation is late?

Most major providers are signed up to Ofcom's automatic compensation scheme, which pays a set amount for each day an agreed start date is delayed, without you having to ask. Keep your stopgap running until the fixed line is live.

Got your answer? Now find your deal.

Live UK comparison. Postcode in, deals out. The average switcher saves £180 to £292 a year.

broadbandswitch.uk/compare →

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SECTION 12 · STANDARDS

Editorial standards.

This guide is part of the Moving & Renting Broadband series from BroadbandSwitch.uk, the UK's independent consumer broadband resource.

How we work

- ✓ We name the author and reviewer on every dated guide.
- ✓ We rank every deal in our comparison tool by total contract cost, never by paid placement.
- ✓ We earn a commission when readers switch through our journey; this never changes which deals we show or their order.
- ✓ We publish a public corrections log; any factual error is logged, dated and credited.
- ✓ We see the best in every provider in the British market and frame changes as positive consumer outcomes wherever we honestly can.

Ownership and sister sites

BroadbandSwitch.uk is part of the SearchSwitchSave Group's FBRE.uk network of UK broadband sites. One editorial team, one set of standards, one goal: helping Great Britain get online with confidence.

- **RightSpeed.co.uk** is an eight-question speed-needs calculator that right-sizes your plan before you overspend.
- **UKSpeedTest.co.uk** (branded Pulse) is a free, no-signup, ad-free speed test for download, upload and jitter.
- **HowFast.uk** is a quick browser-based line and performance check.
- **BroadbandMap.org.uk** is a postcode-level coverage map of full fibre, part fibre, cable, 4G and 5G.
- **ParentalControl.uk** is a free home-network and online-safety tool, useful when families set up a new home.

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Got a question this guide did not answer? Reach out on LinkedIn and a real member of our team will be glad to help.

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