

Tenancy Deposit Deductions - Have you Explained Why?

At [Tenancy Deposit Scheme](#) (TDS) we regularly see deposit dispute cases where tenants ‘mull over’ the dispute but do not challenge it further once they have understood the reason behind the deduction. There is increasing evidence to show that when agents and landlords use the [deductions template](#) to set out their ‘story’ in a logical and concise manner, it is better understood by tenants.

This TDS adjudicator case study illustrates how a little explanation goes a long way towards resolving disputes early and maintaining good relationships with tenants.

The Agent’s Claim

In this case, the agent made a claim for several items including cleaning, gardening, and a damaged armchair. The tenants disputed the claims because they did not understand the agents’ reasoning for why they were responsible, or for how the amounts claimed had been calculated. One area of disagreement was about the lifespan of the armchair. The tenants and agents reached an impasse, and the dispute found its way to TDS.

When the agent submitted their claim and supporting evidence, they used the TDS deposit deductions template to set out what they wanted and why. It was quick and easy for the agent to complete this, and it helped them present their case in a logical manner. They provided an email address for the tenants, copies of the check-in and check-out reports, and accompanying invoices and estimates.

The agents’ claim and evidence appeared in the TDS disputes evidence portal, which is visible to the tenants. TDS emailed the tenants to invite them to view this, giving them 10 working days to respond to the dispute.

The Tenant’s Response

During those 10 days, the tenants viewed the email correspondence received from TDS on several occasions, and also contacted TDS by phone to seek guidance on viewing the evidence and asked for advice on product lifespans. They were able to speak immediately with the resolution executive assigned to their case who was able to explain the nature of the claim to the tenant, and signpost them to [TDS’ product lifespan guide](#).

In due course, the tenants did not respond to the dispute, and the amounts claimed were awarded to the agent and landlord.

So, what are the key points here?

- Agents and landlords should explain to tenants why they plan to deduct from the deposit and show evidence that will help the tenant to understand.
- You can take this a step further by using the TDS deposit [deductions template](#) to set out your proposed deductions to tenants when negotiating. This template has been well received, with great feedback telling us that using this early in the discussion makes agreeing deposit deductions much easier.
- Point tenants to information that helps them to understand what their responsibilities are, what is considered wear and tear, and more about the lifespan of products. Quick and easy access to guidance is available from the [Information Lounge on the TDS website](#), both before and after disputes reach us.

At TDS, resolving disputes is not just about us making adjudication decisions, but also about giving you the tools to make those end of tenancy negotiations easier. Learn more about the free resources available to TDS customers at [Tenancy Deposit Scheme](#).

If you aren't a customer yet and would like to know more about how easy it is to switch to TDS, visit [Why Switch?](#)