

Section 13 Rent Increase Guide (UK, 2026)

How to raise rent lawfully on an assured periodic tenancy - notice periods, forms and tenant rights across the UK.

What is a Section 13 notice?

Section 13 of the Housing Act 1988 is the mechanism a landlord uses to propose a new rent for a periodic assured tenancy (for example a month-to-month tenancy). It is a formal written notice that starts the rent-increase process - it does not change the rent by itself if the tenant challenges it.

2026 rule changes that matter

- England: since 1 May 2026 (Renters' Rights Act 2025, in force), the minimum notice is 2 months - up from 1 month - and the correct form is Form 4A.
- Once per year: rent can only be increased once every 12 months, and not within the first year of a fixed term for assured shorthold tenancies.
- Start date: the new rent must start on the first day of a rental period, at least 2 months after the notice is given.
- No 'rent review clause' needed: s.13 works regardless of what the tenancy agreement says about rent reviews.

England - step by step

- 1. Give the tenant Form 4A (Landlord's notice proposing a new rent) at least 2 months before the proposed start date.
- 2. State the new rent, the date it starts (first day of a rental period), and sign the form.
- 3. Keep proof of service - the date the tenant received it counts, not the date you posted it.
- 4. If the tenant does nothing, the new rent takes effect on the stated date.
- 5. If the tenant disagrees, they can apply to the First-tier Tribunal (Property Chamber), which sets an open-market rent.
- 6. The increase cannot take effect until the tribunal decides, and the tribunal can only set the rent, not stop the increase.

Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland

Region	Form / route	Notice	Frequency	Challenge
England	Form 4A (Housing Act 1988 s.13)	2 months	Once per 12 months	First-tier Tribunal
Wales	RHW12 (Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2022)	2 months	Once per 12 months	Residential Property Tribunal
Scotland	Form R2 (PRT rent increase notice)	3 months	Once per 12 months	Rent officer / First-tier Tribunal
Northern Ireland	Written notice (Private Tenancies Act (NI) 2022)	2 months	Once per 12 months	Rent Tribunal NI

Northern Ireland: the Private Tenancies Act (NI) 2022 framework applies from 1 April 2025 - increases must be by written notice stating the new rent and start date. Scotland: PRT increases use the rent-increase notice route, not s.13.

What a valid Section 13 notice must contain

- The tenant's name and the property address.
- The proposed new rent (in the correct currency) and the date it takes effect.
- The correct statutory form for the region (Form 4A in England and Wales).
- Service at least the minimum notice period before the start date.
- A start date that falls on the first day of a rental period.
- Your signature and the date the notice is given.

A notice served too early, too late, or on the wrong form can be invalid - which resets the clock and delays the increase.

Tenant challenges - what happens

A tenant can challenge the proposed rent at the tribunal before the start date. The tribunal will decide an open-market rent for the property and tenancy. If the tribunal sets a different amount, that becomes the rent from the date in your notice. Tribunals cannot make the rent lower than the old rent, and landlords cannot serve a new s.13 notice for 12 months.

Common mistakes to avoid

- Serving the notice less than 2 months before the start date (England) - invalid.
- Increasing rent more than once in 12 months.
- Using the wrong form (e.g., an old Form 4 instead of Form 4A).
- Forgetting proof of service - you need it if the tenant disputes the date.
- Raising rent during the fixed term of an assured shorthold tenancy without a rent review clause.
- Trying to force a rent increase with a new tenancy agreement when a s.13 notice would be the lawful route.

Template notice - what to write

To [Tenant Name], [Property Address]

NOTICE OF RENT INCREASE

I give you notice, under Section 13 of the Housing Act 1988, that the rent for the above premises will increase from [current rent] per [month/week] to [new rent] per [month/week] with effect from [start date], being the first day of a rental period and at least 2 months after the date of this notice.

Signed: [Landlord Name] Date: [date]

This is a simplified outline. Use the official Form 4A for England and Wales - it includes the prescribed wording and information the tenant must receive.

Disclaimer

This guide is educational information, not legal advice. Rules differ by region and change over time; confirm the current form and notice period on GOV.UK / GOV.WALES / mygov.scot / nidirect before acting. Interactive checker: section13notice.co.uk.