

August 2026

Office relocation playbook.

SPACEPOINT

Your guide to relocating in London.

This playbook sets out everything you need to work through when relocating or finding a new office in London.

It gives you a clear picture of what to expect at each stage, and a place to capture the decisions you make along the way. Share it with relevant stakeholders at each stage and refer to it throughout your search.

Work through each of the six stages in order, ticking things off as you complete them. Every stage builds on the last, so the earlier you capture accurate information, the smoother the rest of your search will run.

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2 Search timeline

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Identify key dates & triggers

Get your notice dates and deadlines understood first

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The playbook

Before starting an office search, it's critical to understand what is driving your timeline. Most searches are triggered by one of two events: an upcoming break clause or a lease expiry - and it's essential to define which applies to you.

Break clause notices must be served by a specific date, in a specific form, and often to a specific address, exactly as set out in your lease. Miss any condition and you lose your ability to break.

A Lease expiry should terminate by the effluxion of time, without any required notice.

What this means for you

Identify your trigger event, then record the key dates and conditions – this sets your search timeline.

- Confirm whether you're driven by a break clause, a lease expiry, or is this a move with no immediate lease pressure
- If a break, note exactly how notice must be served - form, address and method - as set out in your lease
- Be aware of any pre-conditions to exercising a break, such as no arrears, vacant possession
- Confirm whether your lease sits inside or outside the 1954 Act
- Always instruct a solicitor to serve notice one you've decided on what to do.

What are you dealing with?

Break Clause or Expiry .....

What's the date .....

Notice Period (months) .....

Serve notice by (date) .....



Search timeline

Work backwards from your exit date

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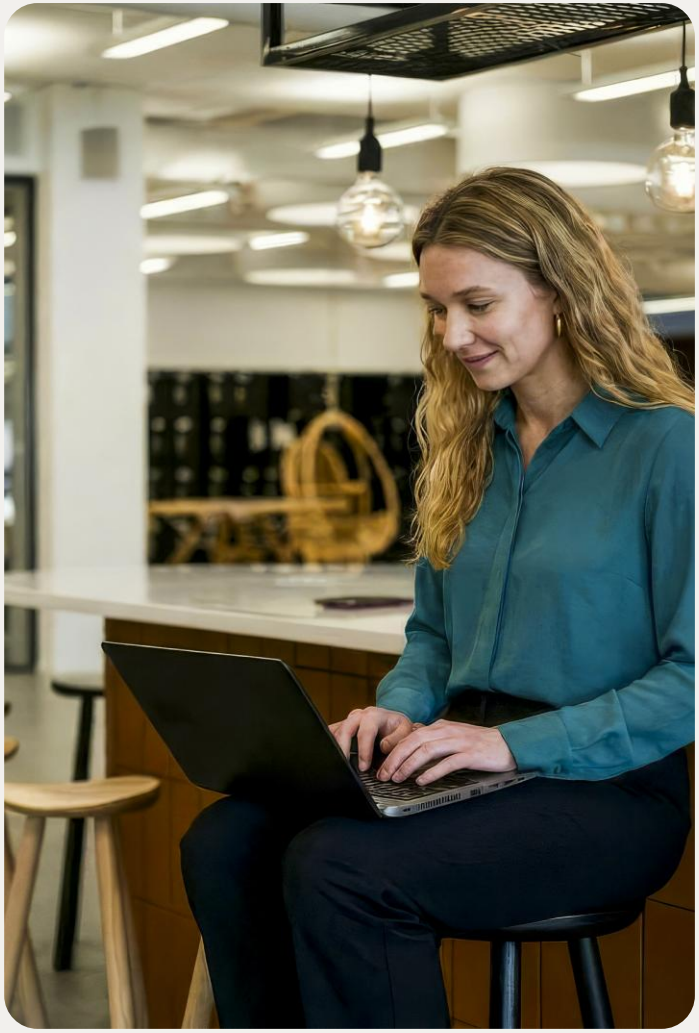
The playbook

Once you know your exit date, work backwards to establish when you need to have completed each stage of the search.

A typical London office search and transaction takes four to twelve months, depending on size and required fit-out works.

Map each stage against a target date, then total the weeks required to establish your project start date, counted backwards from your exit date.

Stage	Typical Duration	Your Answers
Brief agents and begin your search	Week 1	
Viewings and shortlisting	4-16 weeks	
Negotiate and agree heads of terms	2-6 weeks	
Solicitors and legal exchange	6-10 weeks	
Fit-out, if required	6-16 weeks	



Define your brief

Capture what you need before you view a single space

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The playbook

Before beginning any search, align internally on what you need. Capturing your requirements clearly at this stage saves significant time later and ensures every property you view is measured against the same criteria.

Start with headcount; project it forward at one, three and five years, then identify any specialist spaces you need: a larger boardroom, a bigger comms room - and agree your minimum meeting room count and sizes (see next page).

Alongside space, compile:

- Staff postcodes for location analysis
- Preferred London submarkets
- Any required proximity to key clients and partner
- Transport hubs

Jot your brief down

- ☑ Current headcount .....
- ☑ Projected headcount (1-5yr) .....
- ☑ Estimated size needed (sq ft) .....
- ☑ Must haves .....
- ☑ Nice to have spaces .....
- ☑ Location(s) .....
- ☑ Budget per year .....
- ☑ No. of meeting rooms & sizes .....
- ☑ Manned building reception .....

Why location matters

Where your team can easily get to work shapes recruitment, retention and client perception just as much as the space itself - postcode mapping is worth doing properly.



How to calculate your office size.

Start with a sq ft per person allowance, then add meeting rooms, phone booths and support spaces. Finally, apply a 15–20% uplift for circulation space.

Step 1: What's your layout style? A, B or C?

A) Spacious/traditional layout

100–120 sq ft per person

Common in law and finance, where private offices are the norm, large desks with multiple screens. A more generous allocation is needed.

B) Regular office user

70–80 sq ft per person

The standard allowance for most office-based teams.

C) Dense occupation

50–60 sq ft per person

Typical for high-density, desk-focused teams. Typical with recruitment and call centers.

How to calculate your office size.

Start with a sq ft per person allowance, then add meeting rooms, phone booths and support spaces. Finally, apply a 15–20% uplift for circulation space.

Approx. Size guide

Space	Approx. Size
Phone booth / focus pod	25-40 sq ft
Small meeting room	100-150 sq ft
Medium meeting room	180-250 sq ft
Boardroom	280-350 sq ft
Exec / director office	120-180 sq ft
Kitchen	5-10% floor area

Step 2: Calculate your desired number of meeting rooms. Use the size guide.

Worked example: 20-person company

Space	Qty	Sq ft ea.	Subtotal
No. of desk / open plan	20	75	1,500 sq ft
Phone booth	2	35	70 sq ft
Boardroom	1	300	300 sq ft
Medium meeting room	2	200	200 sq ft
Total	-		2070 sq ft
Circulation space			+ 20%
TOTAL			**2,484sq ft**

Step 3: Use this template to calculate your size PLUS allowance for flow space.

Budget for more than just the rent.

Beyond the ongoing rent, a relocation involves significant one-off costs that many teams underestimate. Build them into your total budget from the outset.

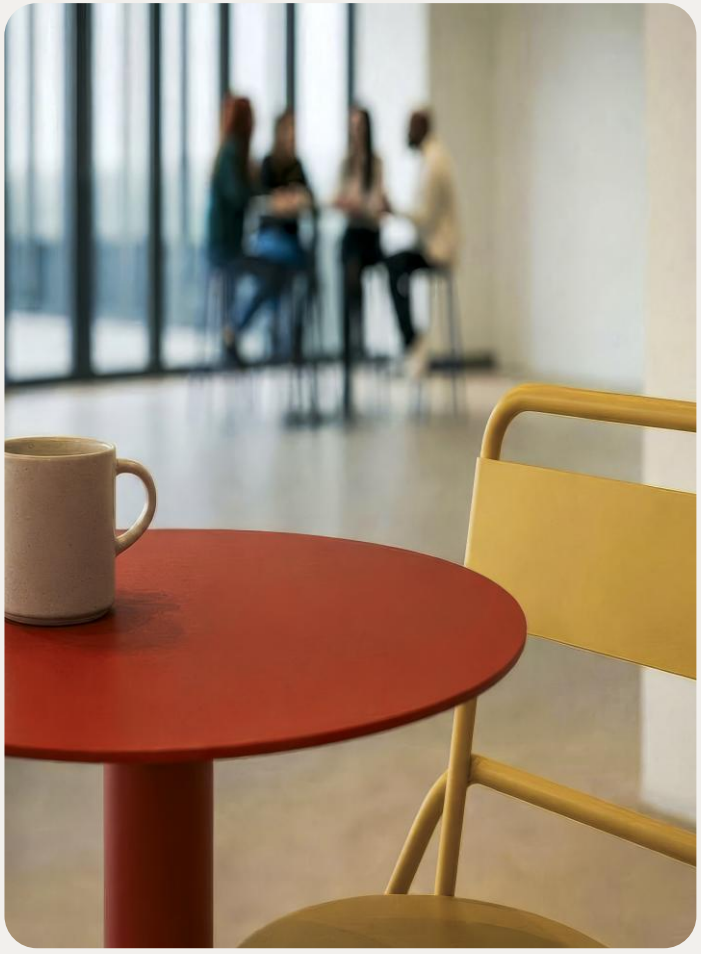
Other significant costs to plan into your budget:

- [x] Solicitors Fees / professional Fees
- [x] Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT)
- [x] Fit-out/refurbishment/ furniture
- [x] AV / IT & connectivity set up
- [x] Dilapidations (current office)
- [x] Removals
- [x] Overlap/double rent
- [x] Deposit
- [x] Schedule of Cond. (if fitted office)
- [x] Utilities & Insurance premium
- [x] Health & Safety
- [x] Office Cleaning

A rent deposit is typically the equivalent of four to twelve months' rent plus VAT - one of the largest upfront costs to plan for.

Landlords will review company accounts to determine the required deposit level. The stronger the covenant, the lower the deposit should be.

4 - 12 months



Build your search team & appoint third parties

Line up the people you will need, early

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The playbook

Once your brief is defined, it's time to build your internal search team. Appoint an internal project lead, get budget signed off by Finance authority and confirm who in leadership holds final approval.

Alongside your internal team, line up your external team too.

Your property agent will have a trusted network you can rely on for any introductions.

Keep it lean

A small, empowered team with clear sign-off keeps decisions fast; most delays come from unclear approval chains, not the search itself.

Third parties to appoint

Agent:……

Solicitor:……

Fit-out Contractor (if needed):……

Project Manager (if needed):……

Removals Firm:……

IT / AV Supplier:……

Dilapidations Surveyor (current office)……



Things to consider with your new building
Running your office day to day

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The playbook

Once the move is complete, a tenant's focus shifts to the day-to-day running of the space, and getting to grips with the practicalities early makes life much easier.

Things to sort with new office

- Know who the new property manager is and get their details
- Set up business rates with local council
- Ask about new fire strategy
- Know about waste collection days and times
- Set up health and safety for the new office
- Is the Air-conditioning your responsibility or the landlords. If yours, ensure you have AC maintenance set up
- Know who your utilities providers are and set up relevant account
- Document key dates such as break dates, notice periods, rent reviews and your expiry.



Summary Checklist

Three phases, from pre-move to post-move

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The playbook

Pre-move, your agent will drive the project, arranging viewings and co-ordinating any third parties needed at that early stage. In move month, confirm your move date with solicitors and schedule with your removals firm, arrange IT cut-over and connectivity testing, prepare for post redirection, and take final meter readings. After the move, complete your final inspection and hand back your old office.



Pre-move:

- [ ] Appoint all third parties involved
- [ ] Budget & brief sign off from internal stakeholders.
- [ ] Commence viewings with your chosen agent
- [ ] Meet with a few fit-out contractors
- [ ] Begin dilapidations assessment at current office

Move month:

- [ ] Confirm move date with solicitor and co-ordinate that with your removals team & new landlord.
- [ ] Arrange IT cut-over plan and test connectivity
- [ ] Arrange key handover and access cards/keys
- [ ] Arrange redirect for post from old address
- [ ] Take meter readings
- [ ] Tell staff about new address and move date

Post-Move:

- [ ] Complete final inspection and hand back old office
- [ ] Chase dilapidations settlement & deposit repayment
- [ ] Confirm all utilities closed at old address
- [ ] Notify key clients, suppliers, banks of new address
- [ ] Set up business rates with the local council
- [ ] Update website, signatures, directories & registered address

The right conversation starts here.

Tell us about your search and we'll tell you exactly what we can achieve. Every search is led personally by Mark or Laurie, with the expertise and the time to give your brief the attention it deserves.

Mark O'Neill

Co-founder of Spacepoint Real Estate with 20 years of experience in the London office market, including 10 years advising landlords and investors alongside occupiers. He now specialises in tenant representation, particularly for businesses in the finance and technology sectors. Mark is valued for his considered approach to complex real estate decisions, combining broad market experience with a strong understanding of his clients' businesses to build trusted, long-term relationships.

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Laurie Thomasson

Co-founder of Spacepoint Real Estate with over 10 years' experience advising occupiers on office strategy across London. He has worked with SMEs, multinational businesses and government organisations, always representing tenants. Laurie genuinely invests time in understanding how each business operates, building long-term relationships and supporting clients through every stage of their workplace journey. He is known for his responsive and straightforward approach.

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Need help lining up your team? Speak to Spacepoint directly.

Questions about your relocation?

If you'd like help with any stage of this playbook - from your rent guide to your first viewings, get in touch with us.

SPACEPOINT

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