

Your Guide to Renting

HELP WITH HOUSING FOR NEW ARRIVALS



Housing types

Houses are generally free-standing buildings (the house sits by itself on a block of land), or attached buildings (the house is joined up to the next house by a common wall or is in a row of houses joined together), but with no neighbours living above or below you. If joined to one house, it is called a **semi-detached**. If in a row, it is called a **terrace**, and if in a small group together on a block, it is a **townhouse**.

Units or apartments generally have at least two floors of homes in a building, so your neighbours may live beside, above or below you. Units and apartments are sometimes also called flats.



Finding a property to rent

There are a number of ways you can find properties to rent:

1. Go to www.domain.com.au/ and select 'Rent', type in the suburb you want to find a property to rent in and then select the type of property you are looking for (eg house, unit, apartment) the number of bedrooms and bathrooms you want and whether you want a car space.
2. Go to www.realestate.com.au/rent to find rental properties. Type in the area you want to live in and then select the property type, number of bedrooms, bathrooms and your minimum and maximum amount per week you are willing to pay.
3. Or, go to a Real Estate Agent and ask for a list of properties for rent in the area. The agent is a person or business that arranges the renting, managing and selling of properties.

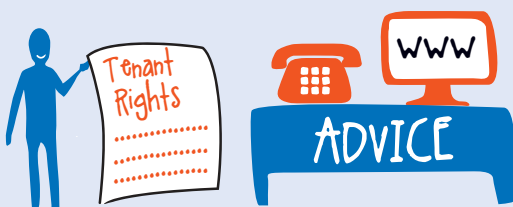
What to do next

- If you see a property you like, look to see when the inspections are on – often they are on a Saturday morning but can be at other times too. Sometimes you will need to contact the Real Estate Agent to arrange a time to have a look at the property.
- Sometimes there will be inspection times listed with the property. An inspection time is the date and time that you can go to the property and have a look at it to see if you would like to live there.
- Real Estate Agents organise for inspections of the rental properties. The Real Estate Agent will be there to let you in and show you around. There will be other people having a look around as well as you.
- If you like the property, ask for an application form. The application form is the way the owner of the property can find out about you to see if they think you will be suitable for their property.
- On the application form you have to answer questions about yourself. For example, where you have lived before, how much rent you paid, your employment and how much you earn.
- Sometimes you can also fill in the application form on line.
- Payment of a bond, equal to one month's rent, plus one month's rent in advance, is usual practice when renting. The bond is normally returned when tenants vacate, minus any costs for repairs or cleaning if required.

Getting advice about your rights when renting

The rights of tenants (the person who rents a property to live in) and landlords (the person who owns a property and rents it to the tenants) are set out in the *NSW Residential Tenancies Act 2010*. The Act covers most tenants in private rental or social housing and is important especially when there is a problem. When renting, if you have problems, you can get free advice:

Northern Sydney Area Tenants Service 8198 8650
Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service 8117 3700
Website: www.tenants.org.au/tenants-rights-factsheets



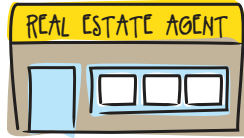


NEW ARRIVALS

Private rental

Help with housing

Dealing with a real estate agent



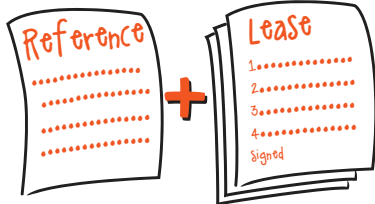
Financial assistance

- Help with bond and rent
 - Rentstart
www.housingpathways.nsw.gov.au/ways-we-can-help/private-rental-assistance/rentstart
 - Centrelink
www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/rent-assistance

Housing organisations

- Link Housing
www.linkhousing.org.au/
- Community Housing
www.communityhousing.org.au/F3_directory.html
- Housing NSW
www.housing.nsw.gov.au/

Signing a Lease



Paying a bond



Moving in and being a good neighbour



Renting rules and regulations

Before you start looking for a home, you should know about the rules and regulations of the real estate and home rental industry. These include:

Starting a new lease

A lease is a contract between you and the landlord. It records details such as:

- how long you can live in the house
- how much rent you must pay and when you must pay it
- whether there are any special conditions about your home (such as keeping pets).

At the start of every tenancy, the landlord or agent must give you a copy of a Fair Trading publication called the [New Tenant Checklist](#). This fact sheet contains important information to be aware of before signing a lease. Read the checklist carefully and ask your landlord or agent about anything you do not understand.

The checklist is also available in: [Arabic](#), [Chinese \(Simplified\)](#), [Chinese \(Traditional\)](#), [Dari](#), [Dinka](#), [Farsi/Persian](#), [Indonesian](#), [Japanese](#), [Korean](#), [Nepali](#), [Spanish](#), [Swahili](#), [Tamil](#), [Tibetan](#), [Thai](#), [Tongan](#), [Turkish](#) and [Vietnamese](#).

See: www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/ and click on Languages.

Any issues with the rental property should be agreed with your real estate agent and recorded on a rental inspection sheet before you sign a lease.

Paying a bond

The cost of the bond is generally around one month to six weeks rent. Your bond is kept by the Residential Tenancies Bond Authority until you move out. When you move out, the bond you paid will generally be refunded, less any costs for cleaning or repairs that were your responsibility.

If you keep the property in good order and clean it when you move out, your bond will be paid back to you. If it is not you can get advice. See the section on **Getting advice about your rights when renting**.

Rental Bonds can be done online through NSW Fair Trading. You can lodge a bond and apply for a refund. They also have advice in Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese and Arabic. See:

www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/ftw/About_us/Online_services/Rental_bonds_online.page

Completing a condition report

Before you move in, check that everything works as it should (like the oven, taps and drains, lights, heating, security systems and locks) and is in good order (like paint, floors and carpets, and glass or other window fittings).

You should note anything that needs to be fixed or replaced on the condition report, and bring it to the attention of your real estate agent or landlord, so that they are aware of it.

Shared accommodation

Depending on your circumstances, you might find it easier to apply to share accommodation.

People who rent or own houses sometimes rent out a single room. You can also apply together to rent a home as a group.

Rooms to rent are sometimes advertised on noticeboards in local shops, post offices and libraries or on websites such as www.flatmatefinders.com.au



Produced by the Lower North Shore Multicultural Network

For further information, 9911 3592 or 9936 8193