

New renter checklist - moving in



Renting for the first time can be exciting and there are things you can do at every stage to help make the process go smoothly. Use the checklist below to know where you stand and what to do before you start looking, when you apply for a rental property and during your agreement. When you're ready to move out, use the [moving out checklist](#).

Before you start looking

Having a plan before you start looking is important and can save you time and money later on.

- ☐ Know your [rights and responsibilities](#)
- ☐ Work out a budget and know what you can afford
- ☐ Know what property features you need based on your study, work and lifestyle (e.g. location, size, parking, public transport accessibility)
- ☐ Think about the type of rental options that would be best for you (e.g. designated student accommodation, a private rental or a homestay)
- ☐ Have copies of [documents](#) and information you will need for the application. This usually includes: identification, evidence of income, and contact details of a personal reference.

Applying for a rental property and signing the agreement

Once you find a rental you like, you'll need to apply for it using a [Rental application \(Form 22\)](#) for general tenancy agreements or a [Rental application – Rooming accommodation \(Form R22\)](#) for rooming accommodation. You may be competing with other people so it is best to put in your application as quickly as possible. The property manager/owner will decide whether your application will be approved.

If you are approved, you will have to sign an agreement and at this time the property manager/owner may ask you to pay rent in advance (your first rental payment) and/or a bond. Property managers/owners must offer tenants at least two options to pay rent. One of these options must not exceed reasonable transactional costs, and it must be reasonably accessible to the tenant.

Property managers/owners must disclose any financial benefits they receive if the tenant/resident uses a specific rent payment method. For example, if a property manager/owner receives an incentive payment from a third-party platform this must be disclosed to the tenant/resident upfront.

If you are joining an existing agreement (such as in a sharehouse) the property manager/owner will still need to approve your application. Before signing the agreement, confirm whether you are a co-tenant or a sub-tenant. If you are a sub-tenant, the [sub-letting fact sheet](#) outlines rules and responsibilities. If you are a co-tenant, you will be jointly responsible for the terms of your tenancy with the other tenants.

- ☐ Read the agreement and before signing:
 - ask questions on things you don't understand
 - be clear about the cost of the rent and what it includes (e.g. electricity, water, furniture, yard maintenance)
 - check it contains the day the rent was last increased for the premises

Note: Rent increase requirements do not apply to exempt lessors or exempt providers. For properties being rented for the first time the date of the last rent increase is the date the property is first rented.
 - know you can ask to negotiate the length of the agreement (i.e. 6, 8, 12 months, or another period)
 - know you can ask to negotiate any additional or special terms in the agreement as long as these don't conflict with the Act
 - confirm any promised repairs have been completed or have it in writing they will be completed.
- ☐ Confirm you have not been asked to pay more than two weeks rent in advance for a periodic agreement, or 1 month in advance for a fixed term agreement.
- ☐ Pay the bond. The maximum bond allowed to be taken is equivalent to 4 weeks' rent, regardless of the weekly rent amount.
- ☐ Lodge your bond with the RTA via the [Bond Lodgement Web Service](#) or the paper [Bond lodgement \(Form 2\)](#). You can alternatively pay the bond to the property manager/owner who must give you a receipt. They will then need to lodge the bond with the RTA within 10 days. You will get an RTA notification once lodged.
- ☐ If you move into a house, unit or townhouse, you need to be given a copy of:
 - the [General tenancy agreement \(Form 18a\)](#)
 - a [Pocket guide for tenants – houses and units \(Form 17a\)](#)
 - any body corporate by-laws
 - the [Entry condition report \(Form 1a\)](#).

Note: to help avoid disputes, check and record meter readings in the entry condition reports.
- ☐ If you move into rooming accommodation, you need to be given a copy of:
 - the [Rooming accommodation agreement \(Form R18\)](#)
 - house rules
 - [Condition report \(Form R1\)](#) – only required if a bond has been taken.
- ☐ Fill out the [Entry condition report](#) or [Condition report](#) and return a copy to the property manager/owner within the specified timeframe. Take photos to provide further evidence.
- ☐ Consider home contents insurance to cover belongings in case of theft, fire and natural disasters or a burst internal pipe. The property owner's building insurance (if they have it) will not cover your personal belongings.

During the agreement

- ☐ If you have an issue with the property manager/owner during the tenancy, try to resolve it by discussing it directly with them. If the issue remains unresolved, you may issue a [Notice to remedy breach \(Form 11\)](#). You can also access the RTA's free [dispute resolution service](#) for assistance. **You are still required to pay rent while you resolve any issues.**
- ☐ Keep the RTA informed of any changes to personal details including email, address, phone numbers and bank details as this is important for your bond refund at the end of your agreement. You can do this via the [Update Your Details Web Service](#) or the [Update your details form](#).

Accessing RTA forms

The RTA's forms can be obtained electronically or in person via:

- rta.qld.gov.au ▪ 1300 366 311 (Mon to Fri, 8:30am to 5:00pm) ▪ Level 11, Midtown Centre, 150 Mary Street, Brisbane



Other languages: You can access a free interpreter service by calling the RTA on 1300 366 311 (Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5:00pm).

Further information

For more information contact the Residential Tenancies Authority.



rta.qld.gov.au



1300 366 311



[RTA Web Services](#)

Disclaimer

This checklist is prepared for information only. The Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 (the Act) is the primary source on the law and takes precedence over this information should there be any inconsistency between the Act and this checklist.

