

TENANCY CHECKLIST

When inspecting a property its easy to feel rushed and overlook problems or the absence of important amenities or facilities. It is important to take the time needed to properly check the property, to read and understand the lease and to consider all aspects of your tenancy including costs, length etc.

→ CONSIDER what type of housing you want to be in, where you want to live.

→ BUDGET for costs at the start of the tenancy, this is on top of ongoing costs for rent and living costs:

- moving
- furniture
- Insurance
- connection fees: electricity, gas, phone
- house needs: food staples, crockery/utensils/bedding
- rent in advance
- bond

→ **CHECK OUT PLACES CAREFULLY, TAKE YOUR TIME. Make sure the property suits your needs and there aren't any surprises when you move in. You can use the list below as a guide:**

All rooms:

- Do all the doors and windows open and shut properly?
- Do all the external doors/windows have secure locks as required by law (many insurance companies will not offer contents insurance if the house isn't fitted with deadlocks)
- Do opening windows have fly screens?
- Are there security screen doors?
- Are there smoke detectors?
- Are there adequate power points?
- Is there adequate storage space?
- Are there adequate blinds/curtains on the windows?
- Does the hot water capacity meet your needs?
- Is the property insulated? (an important consideration for Canberra winters)
- Does everything work? Power points, lights etc
- What type of heating (and air-conditioning) is there? Does it work? What rooms are heated? Is it affordable?
- Are there manuals available for appliances?
- Are there keys for all locks?

Living Room:

- Does the living area have heating that works efficiently? Does it work? If there isn't heating supplied, how easy will it be to heat?
- Is there an antenna outlet for your TV? Is there an antenna?
- Is there a phone connection? Is there a phone line to the property?

Kitchen

- Is there an extractor fan over the stove?
- Is there adequate space for your fridge?
- Is there enough bench space for food preparation?
- Is there enough space for food and utensils?
- Does the stove (and other appliances) work?
- Are there any signs of vermin (eg rats, cockroaches)?

Bathroom/Toilet

- Does the toilet work properly?
- Is there an extractor fan? (very important in Canberra winters)
- Are there signs of mould? (many tenants have problems with mould in winter)
- Are there signs of leaking (toilet, taps)?

Laundry

- Are there taps for your washing machine?
- Is there space for your appliances?

Outdoor areas

- Are there outdoor lights/security lights?
- Are there taps/garden hoses?
- Will you be able to maintain the garden? (if it is a big garden who will pay for the water?)
- Is there a clothesline?

Miscellaneous

- Is the property close to public transport, shops, parks etc?
- Are there any potential noise problems? (neighbours upstairs, busy roads, schools etc)
- Do you need parking? What are the parking facilities?
- Is the it properly fenced and secure

➔ If there is not time to check all things listed ask the agent or landlord about them.

➔ If you identify some issues/problems ask the agent or landlord about them. If they give an undertaking that it will be addressed, confirm this in writing.

➔ READ tenancy agreements, understand or don't sign immediately. If your landlord/agent offers to do anything, get it in writing before you sign your lease.

➔ START AND KEEP a tenancy file, keep receipts, confirm everything in writing, DOCUMENT EVERYTHING

➔ MAKE written agreements in share housing clarifying potential issues:

- bills (payment, proportions)
- moving out (notice, advertising)
- cleaning, washing, cooking etc
- visitors
- use of common areas
- Read our booklet, "[Crowded House: A Legal Guide to Share Housing in the ACT](#)"

BE AWARE OF YOUR RIGHTS

SEEK ADVICE IF YOU AREN'T SURE

TAS leaflets provide strategies (phone 6247 1026 for copies)

or go to

www.tenantsact.org.au

Phone 6247 2011 for free tenancy advice

FINALLY, GET INVOLVED

JOIN the Tenants' Union, help us make a difference