



Accommodation

FAQs

Before moving -in

1. What are my housing options?

- On-campus accommodation - [Swinburne Residences](#) at Hawthorn campus
- Off-campus [student apartments](#)
- Homestay - [Australian Homestay Network](#)(AHN)
- Private [rental property](#) - renting unfurnished property by yourself or with a friend
- [Share house](#) - moving into an established furnished property
- [Rooming house](#) - A rooming house is a building where 4 or more people can live in rented rooms, some of which might be shared.

Click on the [Study Melbourne online accommodation quiz](#) to discover what kind of accommodation matches your preferences.

2. Where should I live in Melbourne?

This depends on your budget and lifestyle. [Melbourne](#) is very diverse, with [each suburb](#) offering something different. You can live anywhere in Melbourne but fifteen minutes walking distance to a train station will make it convenient for you. Some popular areas where our international students live are Melbourne CBD and surrounding areas, Hawthorn, Camberwell, Kew, Box Hill, Burwood, Glen Waverley, Clayton, Dandenong, Footscray, Tarneit, Craigieburn. Public Transport Victoria's [journey planner](#) is a handy tool to get around Melbourne and work out the traveling distance.

3 Should international students book long-term accommodation prior to their arrival in Australia?

We recommend international students book short-term accommodation (2-4 weeks) before arrival. This gives you time to inspect long-term rental options in person to ensure they meet your expectations. However, we suggest the most secure options if you wish to secure something before arriving are if the property is a **university-managed accommodation**, a trusted student housing provider recommended by someone you know well who has been there, or if you have friends or family in Australia who can help arrange it. Alternatively, the [Australian Homestay Network](#) (AHN) have a handy [Start with Us program](#).

4 What's the average rental price in Melbourne?

It depends on your accommodation type, condition and location. On average you should budget minimum of \$275 per week for share house and \$350 per week for other housing options, not including utilities (Utilities may be power, internet, or other provider services not always included in the rental price).

5 What you need to rent a property?

- ✓ Submit rental application form
- ✓ Proof of Identity - passport, visa documentation, student ID card, driver's license, Medicare
- ✓ Proof of Income – Bank statement, Guarantor letter, Pay slips, Employment letter
- ✓ References - A reference from your current or previous rent providers or employers (even from overseas MAY help)
- ✓ Rental history – a record of where you have lived before.
- ✓ If you don't have the rental history, make sure you provide adequate evidence to support your ability to pay rent

6 How can I tell if I am being *scammed?

A scam is where people take your money or personal details, and the property does not exist. Always STOP and THINK 'Could this be a [scam?](#) Be suspicious if:

- Any listing which seems too good to be true. (you can get a sense of this by comparing across many listings)
- Not allowing you to inspect the property.
- Prospective rental provider is not local (in Australia / Melbourne).

- Being asked for any money upfront or in cash
- Being asked to provide your personal & banking details
- If you experience scam, [report it immediately to Scamwatch](#)

*International students: suspect a scam? ASK EARLY: [Ask an ISA](#)

7 What standard should I expect a rental property to be in, in Victoria?

Rental properties must meet the [minimum standards](#) to ensure the basic levels of health, safety, security and comfort for renters.

8 Do you have to inspect a property before renting?

Yes, property inspection is highly recommended to ensure it exists! And that your needs and [minimum standards](#) are met before signing a rental agreement.

9 Do I need to sign a rental agreement?

Yes, typically you need to sign a [rental agreement](#) which protects you and the landlord. The agreement which is also called a lease will specify the rent and bond amount, move in date, lease duration, address of the property, rental provider and your contact details and other terms and conditions of renting. Verbal agreements may still be legally binding, but they are much harder to enforce if there is a disagreement.

10 What is the rental bond?

A [rental bond](#) is a security deposit of an equivalent of one month rent for weekly rent of \$900 or less, you will be asked to pay when you sign the rental agreement. If a rental provider asks for a bond, they must give you 2 copies of a [condition report](#) before you move in. You must return the condition report to the rental provider within 5 business days of moving in to confirm agreement on the *condition of the property. The rental provider must lodge your bond money with the [Residential tenancies Bond Authority](#) (RTBA). This is returned to you from the RTBA when you leave the property, provided you leave the property in good *condition.

11 What is a *condition report and what is expected of me?

A condition report is a record of a property's condition at the start of a rental agreement. It is advisable to take photos of the property when you move in for your own records, including photos of anything in the report that you do not agree with. Make sure to note any agreements/disagreements on the condition report at the beginning. *You must return the condition report to the rental provider within 5 business days of moving in* to confirm your agreement with the condition of the property. You

should also discuss any discrepancies with the agent or landlord at this time. Doing this will help with any discussions about return of rental bond when you vacate the property.

12 What's not included in the rent?

Usually rent doesn't include utilities (water, electricity, gas) and internet but check with the rental providers (real estate agent/landlord) who can help. Otherwise, you will have to secure utilities directly from the provider companies. It is advisable to look for common providers in your area, and to [compare prices and deals](#).

While renting

13 Can my rental provider enter the property without notice?

No, unless it's an emergency. At least 24 hours' notice is usually required. The [notice period](#) depends on the reason for entering the property.

14 Who is responsible for repairs?

Renters are responsible for leaving the property in a good condition. The rental provider must ensure the rented home is 'maintained in good repair'. Renters may be responsible for small fixes or damage they cause but not for normal wear and tear. The renter must tell the rental provider if anything needs repair or is damaged. [Repairs](#) are either 'urgent' or 'non-urgent'. Rental providers must make urgent repairs immediately and non-urgent repairs within 14 days of getting a written request.

15 Can my rental provider evict me?

No, a rental provider cannot physically [evict a renter](#). To evict a renter, they must first give an enough notice to vacate and follow legal procedures, including [court orders](#) if needed.

16 Can my rental provider increase the rent?

Not during a fixed-term agreement unless the agreement explicitly allows it. The rental providers must provide at least 90 days' notice in advance to [increase the rent](#).

17 Can I break the rental agreement early?

If you leave the property before the end of your rental agreement or leave without giving notice, you might be [breaking your agreement](#). You can break the rental

agreement, but you still must give a minimum notice period otherwise you will be charged for the notice period, and you might be liable for any loss of income suffered by the rental provider, such as lost rent, advertising cost and re-letting fee. There are some reasons a renter can leave early without breaking the agreement and having to pay costs for example personal violence and severe hardship but may have to apply to VCAT (Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal). You should talk to the rental provider first to try to reach a mutual agreement, and seek help from [Tenants Victoria](#) or [Rental Dispute Resolution Victoria](#) and [legal advice](#). (international students: ASK EARLY: [Ask an ISA](#))

18 Can I sublet a room or room share with another person?

You might be able to but must get written permission from your rental provider. If you [sublet](#) without permission, the rental provider can end the rental agreement by serving you and other renters a 14 days' notice to vacate.

19 Can I have a pet in a rented property?

Renters can have [pets](#), but they must get written consent from the rental provider, and keep the property clean, avoid damage and not be a nuisance to others.

20 How to deal with noise problem?

The residential tenancy legislation enshrines the right of tenants to reasonable peace and quiet enjoyment. But what is reasonable or not is subject to the timing and noise level/types. To resolve the issue;

- keep a record of the noise occurrence, such as start-end time, description of noise, effect on you etc
- communicate politely, quickly and openly with the housemate/neighbour/rental provider
- Consider mediation through the [dispute settlement centre](#)
- If necessary, seek help from the authorities such as the [local council](#) and police

21 What can I do if I have a conflict with my rental provider or roommate?

- Know the issue and tenancy law clearly
- Try to resolve it informally by communicating politely and clearly.
- Keep records of all communications
- If necessary, write a formal letter summarising the issue and stating what resolution you expect

- Contact Student [Accommodation Adviser](#), [Tenants Victoria](#), [Rental Dispute Resolution Victoria](#), [Dispute Settlement Centre](#) and seek [legal advice](#) before taking a legal action

Moving out

22 What do I have to do to move out?

Your tenancy ends when you vacate the property and return the keys.

- ✓ Give enough [notice to vacate](#) (this is outlined in your lease agreement)
- ✓ Leave the property in a reasonably clean condition
(the condition of the property should match the condition report when you moved in)
- ✓ Take all your belongings with you
- ✓ Discuss with the rental provider on the return of the bond payment
- ✓ Check your responsibilities for disconnecting utilities
- ✓ Return the key on the day you move out otherwise you may be liable for rent

23 How do I get my bond money back?

The bond must be fully refunded to renters unless the rental provider makes a legitimate claim. You should start the process of bond claim as soon as possible after you move out. The bond should be held by the Residential Tenancies Bond Authority (RTBA). At the end of the tenancy agreement either the rental provider or the renter can [start the bond claim](#). However, if it is not the end of the lease and someone else takes over your lease, you should receive the bond payment directly from the new renter before signing the [bond/lease transfer form](#).

24 Do I have to professionally clean at the end of tenancy?

The renter is expected to leave the property in a reasonably clean condition. As a rule, leaving the property in the same condition as you first moved in, apart from wear and tear. If the property was professionally cleaned immediately before you moved in, and you were told about this, you may have to get it professionally cleaned. This may also be a condition of your rental agreement in which case it must be done this way.

25 How can I dispose of unwanted items?

Renters must take all their belongings including unwanted items. Consider donating to charity shops, selling through online Market places or giving away items for free through joining [buy nothing group](#) etc. Check with [your local council](#) services for the

free collection of general waste and recycling or you might have to use a paid rubbish removal service. Remember dumping rubbish on public or private land without permission is illegal. Fines apply and are pursued by the authorities.