

The Rent House Ltd | Tenancy handbook



Your Introduction and Guide to Renting with The Rent House





Contents

- 4. **Welcome**
- 5. **Getting started - What you must do first!**
 - 5. Utility connections
 - 5. Wanting us to get you connected?
 - 5. Power and gas
 - 5. Telephone and internet
- 6. **Granting of possession of the property**
- 7. **Moving into your rental property**
 - 7. Changing address
 - 7. Contact details
 - 7. Keys
- 7. Payments and lodgement of your bond
- 7. Property condition report
- 7. Tenant contents insurance
- 8. **During your tenancy**
 - 8. General repairs
 - 8. Emergency repairs
 - 8. Routine inspections and photos
 - 8. Inside the property - routine inspections
 - 8. Outside the property - routine inspections
 - 9. If you have an approved pet - routine inspections
 - 9. Rent reviews
 - 9. Lease renewals
 - 9. Landlord mail and contact

10. **Your rent payments**
 10. Zero tolerance policy for late rentals
 10. The national internet tenancy database – rent default
 10. Dishonoured cheques
 10. Paying your rent into the office
 10. Calendar monthly payments
 11. Understanding ‘rent in advance’
12. **Taking care – inside the property**
 12. Misplaced keys
 12. Property damage
 12. Noise/disruption
 12. Heat pumps
 12. Fireplaces
 12. Pot plants
 12. Aquariums
 12. No smoking policy
 12. Tenant painting
 13. Smoke alarms
 13. Picture hooks
 13. Washing curtains
 13. House cracking and movement
 13. General cleaning
 13. Carpet cleaning
14. **In the kitchen**
 14. Chopping boards
 14. Bench-top joins
 14. Grouting/tiling/taps
 14. Oven and stove tops
 14. Exhaust fans/vents and range hoods
 14. Cupboards/drawers
 14. Dishwashers
15. **In the wet areas – bathroom, toilet and laundry**
 15. Shower screens
 15. Blocked sinks/drains
 15. Foreign objects down drains
 15. Loose tiles
 15. Wall water damage
 15. Taps leaking
 15. Toilets leaking
 15. Hot water cylinder leaks
16. **Taking care – outside the property**
 16. Watering systems
 16. Weeding and shrub trimming
 16. Supplied hoses/fittings
 16. Rubbish
 17. Oil drippage
 17. Parking on lawns and gardens
 17. Swimming pools and outdoor spas
 17. Pool/spa cleaning
 17. Supply of chemicals
17. Pool/spa covers, accessories, equipment and pool furniture
17. Pool/spa fences and gates
18. **Pets at the property – right expectations**
 19. Bond – changing tenants
 19. Sub-letting
 19. Property for residential use only
20. **Your safety – being aware**
21. **Saving power – some tips**
 21. Keeping warm and saving power
 21. Other useful power saving tips
22. **Strata title/body corporate**
 22. Common property
 22. Parking
 22. Noise and disturbance
 22. Taking responsibility for your visitors
23. **Vacating the property**
 23. Notice in writing
 23. Ending a fixed term
 23. Ending a non-fixed (periodic) term
 23. Breaking a fixed term
 23. Getting your bond back quickly – criteria
 23. Outstanding rent
 23. Cleaning
 23. Carpet cleaning
24. **The final inspection**
 24. Outstanding monies/damages
 24. National internet tenancy database
25. **Getting the property ready for vacating – checklist**
 25. Inside the property
 26. Outside the property
 26. If you have a pet
27. **Trades guide – get some help to get property ready**
 27. Who we use and recommend



Welcome to renting with The Rent House

Congratulations on your tenancy approval. You have been approved because we are confident that, like all our tenants we believe you will be able to pay the rent on time, keep the inside clean, and maintain the property, lawns and gardens.

We have created this guide to assist you with being prepared for your tenancy induction, and also to assist you with having the right expectations during your tenancy with us.

We believe that a smooth relationship can only occur when we all have the right expectations and work diligently to ensure we fulfil our tenancy obligations.

Getting started – what you must do first!

Utility connections – getting connected

It is a tenant responsibility to ensure your power, gas, phone, internet, etc have been connected into your name.

Wanting us to get you connected?

If you have already indicated on your application form what connections you would like us to do on your behalf, we will arrange for someone from Fast Connect to contact you to arrange the connection of utility services for you as soon as possible. Otherwise, let us know and we will arrange for Fast Connect to contact you to get all your connections with your preferred providers done – this is a free service to you!

Should you wish to arrange connections yourself, that is of course completely an option and here are some useful contact details to help you.

Power and gas

There are a large amount of retailers in New Zealand, but many only operate in certain regions. Depending on where you live, you should have a choice of between 4 and 9 retailers. Visit www.powerswitch.org.nz or call 0800 266 786 to see the suppliers in your area.

Telephone and internet

Spark	0800 800 123	www.spark.co.nz
Vodafone	0800 438 448	www.vodafone.co.nz



When possession will be granted

Possession granted - please note that possession will be granted once the following has been fulfilled:

- a) **Tenancy start date** - your tenancy start date has commenced, as per your tenancy agreement.
- c) **Rent** - your first weeks rent has been received by our agency.
- d) **Bond** - your full bond payment has been received by our agency.

Important - keys issued early

It is important to note we are unable to issue keys early, or grant access to the property any earlier than the allocated tenancy start date.

An example of this is where access to the property is required to move boxes into a garage or bedroom to get the moving process started earlier, or a removal truck company requires access a couple days earlier.

Under all circumstances we cannot issue any keys earlier than the start date of the tenancy, for legal and security reasons.

Moving into your rental property

Changing address

Ensure that you let financial organisations, road departments and other important bodies know of your change of address.

Contact details

Once your new contact details are available like a landline phone number and postal address, (if different from your residential rental property address) please email these details to us on info@renthouse.nz

Keys

Should you wish to copy keys it is important to note we will need back all keys given to you at tenancy start, and also all extra copies created during your tenancy period. If you change the locks during tenancy, you are obligated to provide us with a full new set of keys for property access immediately.

Payment and lodgement of your bond

Your bond will be lodged with The Ministry of Business & Innovation and you can expect confirmation from them indicating your lodgement number.

Property condition report

Please ensure that you return your signed/amended copy of your property condition report to us within ten days of the tenancy start date. If this is not returned please be aware that the original inspection will be used for end of tenancy comparison, regardless of whether you agree to the original report or not.

Tenant content insurance

It is crucial that you take out your own tenant contents insurance.

It is important to note that should your goods be damaged or destroyed by circumstances affecting the owner's property (i.e. fire, storm damage, power outages etc) then your goods and possessions are not insured by the owner.

Example one:

An electrical fault in the building starts a fire and the property is destroyed. Your possessions will not be covered by the owner's insurance.

Example two:

You are away on holidays and the power cuts out due to an electrical fault in the building. You return home to find your fridge/freezer goods spoilt. The owner's insurance will not cover your fridge/freezer goods.

Example three:

A storm blows a tree onto the house and in the process, your belongings are damaged. The owners insurance will not cover your possessions.

Example four:

In places like Christchurch, you must check with your insurer if your tenant contents policy will cover you for damage and loss from events like earthquake. The Building Insurance will not cover you for this type of loss or damage.

In the cases specified in the above first three examples, quality tenant contents insurance should cover your goods. However please check with your insurer for the cover they can provide you- this is your responsibility to ensure you have adequate cover for your possessions against loss and damage.

You need to ensure that all your goods are adequately insured and the owner/agent will not be liable for damaged or destroyed tenant possessions.

Fire damage to your possessions is not covered by the owner's building or landlord insurance. You need to ensure you have adequate tenant contents insurance cover.

During your tenancy

General repairs

We insist that all repairs are lodged in writing. You can lodge written repair requests by emailing your property manager.

Emergency repairs

Emergency items are generally those that could cause injury to the tenant or damage to the property, and may include:

- Water pipes have broken or burst.
- Blocked or broken toilet (if a second toilet is not available).
- Serious roof leak or gas leak.
- Dangerous electrical fault, dangerous power point, loose live wire etc.
- Flooding, rainwater inundation inside the property, or serious flood damage.
- Serious storm, fire or impact damage (i.e. impact by a motor vehicle).
- Failure or breakdown of the gas, electricity or water supply to the premises.
- Failure or breakdown of an essential service or appliance on the premises for water or cooking.
- Hot water service failure on a weekend, or long weekend (this would not be considered an afterhours emergency if this occurs on a week night).
- Fault or damage that makes premises unsafe or insecure.
- Fault likely to injure a person, cause damage or extreme inconvenience.

After hours emergency repairs

Should an emergency repair be required after hours then you need to in the first instance text and phone your property manager. Should you not have a response within four hours then you are authorised in emergency situations only to engage a reputable and licenced local contractor.

It is always important to know if a repair is an emergency or a general repair. Getting this wrong may be costly to the tenant if the repair is conducted after hours!

Routine inspections and photos

We will conduct a routine inspection at the property approximately every three months. The main purpose is to provide a report to the owner that you are maintaining the property, and also to check for any repairs and make any recommendations to the owner. Please see a detailed list of what we look out for below.

Photos

Also note that the inspection will also involve taking photos or videos of any repairs required, the overall condition of the property and a photo of the grounds front and back.

Routine inspection guide - what we look out for at inspections

Inside the property

- ☐ Walls/ light switches/doorways and doors are clean from marks
- ☐ The carpets are clean and stain free
- ☐ The windows and screens are clean
- ☐ The kitchen area clean and oven/stove top is free of burnt on food and carbon staining
- ☐ Shower, bathroom and toilet, laundry and all tiling is clean
- ☐ All areas and rooms are fully accessible (not locked)

Outside the property

- ☐ The lawns are freshly cut/edged and maintained
- ☐ Gardens tidy and presentable/weeds removed
- ☐ Rubbish/lawn clippings removed
- ☐ No unregistered car bodies on the property
- ☐ Oil stains removed from carports, garages and driveways
- ☐ All areas, garages, store rooms etc are all accessible
- ☐ Swimming pool/spa - water and sides/bottom are clean



If you have an approved pet

- ☐ Any droppings are picked up and removed
- ☐ Any pet damage or rubbish scattered is repaired and cleaned up
- ☐ Ensure all/any dogs are properly restrained for the inspection

Rent reviews

Rent reviews generally occur at lease renewal time and are adjusted in accordance with market conditions. Please also note that a rent review may occur during a 12 month fixed term lease, as long as this is indicated with a clause in the tenancy agreement terms and conditions. Any rent increase must be preceded with 60 days notice of such increase.

Lease renewals

Provided that your rent has been paid on time, and the property has been kept clean and undamaged, the grounds well maintained and the landlord is happy to continue your tenancy, you can expect to receive an invitation of renewal.

Once your invitation is received, it is important that you let us know whether you accept the renewal invitation or you wish to vacate. We need this advice in writing from you as soon as possible.

Landlord mail and contact

Should you receive any mail addressed in their name (the landlord name is on your tenancy agreement) please forward this mail to us as soon as possible. It is important also to know that under no circumstances can the landlord be contacted directly. As the duly appointed agent the landlord can only be contacted through us. We are employed as the acting landlord of the property.



Your rent payments

Zero tolerance policy for late rent payments

We pride ourselves in our careful tenant qualification and screening processes. Applications are approved **ONLY** on the grounds that we are confident that the rent will be paid on time, every time. However a minority of tenants still get behind in their rent, despite all of our tenant screening procedures. As we do not know who this will be when we sign tenancy agreements, we need to advise each tenant our Zero Tolerance policy for late rent payments.

Follow-up involves phone calls and persistent personal contact. This has caused some people upset, embarrassment and also resentment. However we cannot apologise for such action as **we believe that the rent must be paid on time...all the time!** We make it clear that our clients who own the rental property have taken out a mortgage. This person has approved your application **ONLY** on the grounds your rent will be paid on time...**every time!**

Therefore if you believe you may be late with a rent payment, **you must notify us at least 3 working days beforehand** so we can inform the landlord to prepare and make other arrangements with their mortgage payments,

should this be required. In some cases we ask you to do all that you can do to borrow the money from other sources (i.e. your family, friends, employer, bank, credit cards, pawnbroker etc) should you not be able to make a payment on time. **However, should we not be contacted our policy will then be...**

- 1-2 days late – you will be contacted and a 14 day notice to remedy will be issued
- 10 days late – an application will be made to the tenancy tribunal for remedy of the rent arrears and possibly termination of the tenancy.

EVICTION will follow if the problem is not fully remedied!

Sometimes, some tenants are continually late with payments. If we have a tenant that is consistently behind despite all of our best efforts, we will recommend to the landlord for this lease not to be renewed. The tenant will then be required to vacate the property at the end of their lease and also be furnished with a poor performance reference should a new landlord or agent require one.

The National Internet Tenancy Database - rent default

In extreme cases, details of the tenancy are lodged on a **National Internet Tenancy Database**. This will affect further tenancy arrangements with other Property Managers not only in your local area, but across New Zealand. **This will cause you severe inconvenience and hardship** for your future accommodation prospects. It is important to note that all Property Managers check this tenancy database when they receive an application for tenancy. If your details come up, you find they will automatically reject your application.

Therefore we encourage everyone to ensure their rent is paid on time, so that our business relationship remains beneficial for both parties.

Please call us should you have any queries regarding our Zero Tolerance Late Rent Policy.

Paying your rent into the office

We ask that you only pay your rent as agreed on your tenancy agreement, and as discussed in your tenancy induction. We are unable to accept rent payments into our office, cash or otherwise.

Calendar monthly payments

Should you request to pay by calendar month, it is important to understand that the term 'calendar month' does not refer to 4 weeks or 28 days. As each month has either 28, 30 or 31 days, then a calendar monthly amount is more than 4 weeks rent.

To calculate this properly and evenly, we use this simple calculation.

- a) Weekly Rent divided by 7 days = Daily Rent
- b) Daily Rent x 365 days = Yearly Rent
- c) Yearly divided by 12 months = Calendar Monthly Rent

This calculates 12 equal calendar monthly payments, which will be due on the same date each month (i.e. the 1st of each month); instead of the same day (i.e. every second Friday) as is the case with fortnightly payments.

Please note that a calendar month payment is approximately 4.33 of a week's rent.

Understanding 'rent in advance'

Please ensure your rent is always paid in advance. Some tenants find this concept hard to understand, and some mistakenly believe that the first week of rent paid is held in trust for use at the end of tenancy, like a bond. It is important to note the first weeks rent paid is for your first week of tenancy.

Rent in advance concept is simple to understand. If you go into a shop and you select a can of drink from the fridge. If you open the can, drink the contents and then walk to the counter to pay you would agree you might find the store owner not pleased with your actions! The right thing is to pay for the can of drink first, then consume the contents after paying!

Paying rent in advance works exactly the same way. You purchase the time period in advance, and then consume the time period by living in the property. Once the time period is finished or consumed, you then pay for the next time period again before using it, by continuing in the lease and living in the property. This is the meaning of rent in advance.

Taking care – inside the property

Misplaced keys

If you have misplaced your keys during business hours you may come to our office, and borrow our office set. The borrowed set of keys must be returned in the same day.

If you have misplaced your keys after hours, you may call a locksmith to assist you back into the property. This is at the tenant cost.

IMPORTANT! Most modern window flyscreens can only be removed from the inside of the property. Attempting to remove them from the outside will result in damage to the flyscreen frame work, and will result in the flyscreen having to be repaired or replaced at your cost. This may cost more than what it would cost to have a locksmith attend the property to allow you access back in.

Property damage

If property damage has occurred you are obligated to let us know immediately, or on the next business day if occurring on a weekend or public holiday.

Noise/disruption

It is important to note that the utmost care must be taken to ensure that you do not infringe on disrupting your neighbours with noise. Loud music, parties or otherwise can disrupt a neighbour's right to peace and the quiet enjoyment of their residence.

In the case of units and apartments, particular care must be taken with respect to noise due to the close proximity of other properties, usually located on the other side of the wall. This also includes your obligation to ensure that your visitors are not disrupting neighbours when walking from your premises to their parked vehicles.

Heat pumps

Please regularly clean any filters and intake vents to ensure there is no build up of dirt and dust, and that the unit is able to draw in air effectively, not hindering performance, or in the worse case scenario, causing the unit to breakdown resulting in costly repairs and/or replacement. Please also note that if a heat pump breaks down due to filters and vents not being kept clean, costs to rectify the damage or even replace the unit might be charged to tenants.

For other heaters, please ensure that no combustible or flammable material is placed on or near heaters to avoid a fire risk.

Fireplaces

If the property you are renting has a fireplace, this cannot be used unless you have been given permission from us in writing. Sometimes these are ornamental, or the flue/chimney has been blocked up. Using them could cause a fire to occur.

If this is the case, please ensure a spark catcher is used at all times in front of the fire to protect carpets and flooring from coal burns and ash damage.

Pot plants

Please keep pot plants outside the property at all times. Pot plants placed inside on hard surfaces, tiles and floors like lino, may leave a circular indent, stains and damage. Pot plants placed on carpet areas run the risk of carpet rot underneath, should moisture overflow or escape even with plates and containers placed underneath to attempt to prevent this.

Aquariums

Like pot plants, aquarium stands can leave rust marks to floors and can cause carpet rot if placed on carpets. Furthermore, if placed on carpets the weight of the aquarium filled with water may cause permanent indentations and damage in the base of the carpet pile.

Strict no smoking policy

All properties have a strict 'no smoking inside' policy. If tenants don't abide by this they will be responsible for specialised cleaning and deodorising of the inside of the property to reduce and eliminate unpleasant smoke odours. This can easily run into the hundreds of dollars, and is charged to the tenant.

Tenant painting

It is company policy that tenants do not paint any part of the property themselves. We have found in the past that some tenants have not painted the property to a professional standard, resulting in a professional painter being called in to rectify work. It is a policy that any painting can only be carried out by experienced, professional painters with our written permission.

Fixtures and fittings

If you wish to install or remove any fixtures or fittings, you must request this beforehand in writing.

Smoke alarms

Should you believe for any reason the smoke alarm(s) installed are not working, please let us know immediately. Protect your safety by being vigilant and report to us any issues, to ensure your safety in the case of a fire. If the batteries are not functioning, please replace them.

Picture hooks

If you wish to install any new picture hooks, please let us know in writing what type of hooks you wish to use. Please assess the type of walls that are in the property, and the type of picture hooks that are suitable. We will let you know in writing before you are permitted to install appropriate picture hooks.

Washing curtains

Most curtains and netting are machine washable but it is vitally important that this be established before any washing occurs. Drapes may only be suitable for dry cleaning, so please check all labels first. Sun damaged, brittle curtains or netting may disintegrate should they be machine washed, so it is best to check the strength of fabric by gently tugging on the material with your fingers. If the material easily pulls apart in your fingers, the material is unsuitable for washing.

House cracking and movement

Please let us know if you notice any cracks to walls, ceilings and movement. If cracks were in place when you moved in, please let us know if you notice them worsening or growing larger. Please either report these in writing or point them out to us at the routine inspection.

Wall Movement– cracking to walls and ceilings can create extensive damage. Be sure to report to us immediately should you notice any wall movement or cracks to walls or ceilings.

General cleaning

It is expected that the property be kept reasonably clean, and this is also a tenancy agreement requirement.

Pay particular attention to:

- a) **Walls, switches, power points, skirtings, doors and doorways** – please keep these free from marks and dirty finger marks.
- b) **Cobwebs/dusting** – please remove cobwebs from windows, walls and ceilings. Keep vents dusted. Light fittings and ceiling fans – keep them dusted regularly.
- c) **Curtains/blinds** – keep these cleaned, dusted and also (if suitable) machine or dry clean curtains and netting on an annual basis.
- d) **Windows/sills/window tracks and flyscreens** – keep regularly cleaned and dusted. Please note most modern windows are easily removed from their tracks by lifting the sliding window up at the bottom, and pulling this out for easy cleaning.

- e) **Floors** – please keep regularly swept and mopped. Floors in the kitchen and wet areas may need to be scrubbed to keep surfaces, tiles and grouting looking clean.
- f) **Ventilation** – please ensure that all rooms are kept adequately ventilated to avoid problems associated with condensation, causing mould and possible health problems.
- g) **Wet Areas, bathroom, toilet and laundry grouting/tiles** – please ensure all tiles are kept free from grime, soap scum and mould.

Carpet cleaning

All carpets should be cleaned on a six to twelve month basis, simply because of general living. The best time is after winter or at the end of a wet period.

We recommend professional steam cleaning and we do not recommend the use of 'do-it-yourself' hire machines. These machines lack the ability to adequately withdraw soapy water the machine may have squirted in. Sometimes it is tempting to not have the carpets cleaned on vacating because they have been used only minimally, and some rooms hardly used at all.

We liken this type of situation to borrowing a shirt. Even if we may have worn this for only an hour and not a full day, it is expected that it be returned clean. It is the same for carpets as the next tenants taking possession also need to have clean carpets so this expectation can be transferred to them.

Always use a professional carpet cleaner and do not use 'do-it-yourself' hire machines!



In the kitchen

Chopping boards

Please ensure chopping boards are used on bench tops, so that bench tops are preserved from unnecessary cut marks and associated damage.

Bench-top joins

Be on the lookout for joins in the bench-top that have gaps, and the surface laminate has started to bulge or lift at a join. Please let us know if this is starting to occur as this may indicate moisture has seeped into a join, and is swelling the chipboard wood underneath.

Grouting/tiling/taps

Be sure that if you notice grouting or silicone sealing coming off/loose around any tiles near or around the taps and/or taps dripping/leaking to let us know by repair request. If moisture should get in between tiles, this can damage the wall behind, and even seep into chipboard that is usually present in bench tops causing swelling and irreversible damage to the wood.

Oven and stove tops

Please ensure that stove tops, grillers and ovens are kept free of burnt on food. Food, crumbs and spills when left long enough become burnt on, blackened and carbonised, making them very difficult to remove.

Please use care when using scourers as these may scratch and damage enamel surfaces. When cleaning stoves/ovens use a spray-on oven cleaner. Be sure to read and follow the product instructions carefully, as even though these types of products are very effective, they tend to contain harmful caustic fumes and require rubber gloves to be worn at all times when using the product.

Please also check that the product is suitable to the type of surface you are applying this to, as some surfaces like stainless steel may become permanently marred/stained using an oven cleaner.

Exhaust fans/vents and rangehoods

Please ensure any vents and rangehood filters are kept clean.

Ensure the exhaust fan cover is clean and kept free of grime build up. From time to time these should be taken down and removed to be soaked in hot soapy water, and then scrubbed clean. Please use extreme caution when removing these. If you believe this is unsafe (i.e. a high exhaust fan), then let us know so we can arrange to have these cleaned.

Cupboards/drawers

Most cupboards and drawers are lined with white lining, which is great for easy cleaning. However substances spilled like sauces will in time prove difficult to remove and may leave permanent stains. Cupboard shelving, doors, doorframes and inside drawers/cutlery tidies should be cleaned at least on an annual basis. Also keep food in sealable containers to avoid insects and vermin gaining access to food and breeding and also creating a disease risk from germs, faeces and urine.

Dishwashers

Dishwashers provided as part of your tenancy need to be cleaned on a regular basis, and any build up of food remains removed.

In the wet areas

Shower screens

If you notice cracking to glass in shower screens or shower doors please report this to us immediately. Wired shower screen glass can crack under thermal expansion (consistent hot and cold temperatures) where as toughened glass usually only cracks if impacted (hit by something). If the shower screen is cracked due to impact damage, this will in most cases need to be paid by the tenant.

Blocked sinks/drains

Should a sink or basin become blocked, first try a drain cleaning product like draino. Be sure to follow the product instructions carefully. If the sink or basin is still blocked after treatment, please let us know so we can arrange for a plumber to attend to the problem.

Foreign objects down drains

Please take care not to allow children to place toys or other items down drains. If your property has a septic tank system, please do not flush foreign objects like sanitary products down the toilet. Septic tank systems are not able to process this type of material.

If a plumber is employed by us to clear pipes, drains, basins or sinks and it is determined that the blockage was caused by something considered foreign, this expense will be billed to the tenant for payment.

Loose tiles

Should you notice loose tiles to walls, the shower recess or to tiles over the laundry trough etc, please be sure to let us know.

Wall water damage

Should you notice water damage to a wall adjacent to a shower recess, bathroom basin etc please let us know immediately. This can be identified by bubbling or peeling paint, or even water or mould marks to the flooring/carpet. This usually identifies either loose tiles or a broken/leaking pipe in the wall, and will need attending to immediately to prevent further damage from occurring.

Taps leaking

Please report any taps leaking either from a tap head or tap handles. This includes washing machine taps. Sometimes washing machine taps will leak only when connected to automatic washing machine hoses as the tap water pressure exposes leakage in the taps.

Toilets leaking

Water trickling or leaking into the bowl from the cistern usually indicates a worn cistern washer and needs to be fixed by a plumber. Water left to trickle into the bowl continuously may inflate your water bill and therefore needs to be reported to us when noticed. Also leaking may occur to the tap behind the toilet.

Hot water cylinder leaks

Should you notice the hot water cylinder leaking from the valve or from the base of the unit please let us know. The leaking valve is usually fixable by a plumber, however water leaking from the base of a water storage unit usually indicates the unit has rusted through and may need replacement in the near future.





Taking care – outside the property

Watering systems

Please ensure that all watering systems are working properly, and are checked regularly throughout the tenancy to ensure they continue to work effectively. Watering systems can only be used should current water restrictions allow.

Weeding and shrub trimming

Weeding of gardens beds, inside lawns, paths, paving and other outside areas are the responsibility of the tenant. Trimming of bushes and shrubs in and around the garden are also the responsibility of the tenant.

Lawn maintenance

Please ensure that lawns are regular mowed and edged, keeping them neat and tidy. Should you wish to have someone regularly mow your lawn, let us know and we would be happy to recommend a service to you. This is at tenant cost.

Supplied hoses/fittings

Supplied hoses, fittings and accessories must be kept in good condition and please ensure that everything is returned and in place upon vacating of the property, free of any damage.

Rubbish

Please ensure any rubbish is regularly removed from the property. This includes car parts, tyres and things like lawn clippings, drink bottles as well as other items that can easily be considered rubbish or general junk. Formal household rubbish and waste must be removed weekly from the property, or otherwise as required. This cannot be allowed to accumulate.

Please visit <https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/rubbish-recycling> for details of bin collection for your area.

Oil drippage

Any cars parked on driveways, under carports and garages must have a drip tray placed underneath. Only if the vehicle does not drip any oil at all is a drip tray not required. Please also note that any visitor's cars must be parked off the premises if they drip oil. Should oil drippage occur at anytime, this must be cleaned up immediately to prevent oil seeping in and permanently staining. Please note any permanent staining will result in compensation being charged to the tenant.

Parking on lawns/gardens

It is important that at no time can cars or any type of vehicle be parked on any lawns, gardens or any area not created for, or designated as a vehicle parking area. Damage to lawns and landscaping can be costly. Engine oil drippage to gardens and lawns will also create permanent damage to the soil area, being costly to rectify. Any damage of this type will be charged to tenants in full.

Please do not park on lawns or garden areas. Also oil stains are difficult to remove from driveways. Prevention is always better than costly cleaning and repairing lawns and gardens!

Swimming pools and outdoor spas

If the property you are renting has a swimming pool and spa please pay attention to the following.

Pool/spa cleaning

Pool/spa cleaning and maintenance, unless it is agreed that the landlord will be supplying a regular cleaning and maintenance service as per your tenancy agreement, this will be a tenant responsibility.

Please note that if regular cleaning does not occur by the tenant, high costs can be incurred to bring it back to its original clean state. If this occurs, this will be at tenant cost. It is also a tenant responsibility to ensure that the pool/spa is kept topped up with water, and must not empty the pool/spa without written approval from us.

Supply of pool chemicals

Supplying of pool treatment chemicals will be a tenant responsibility, at tenant cost.

Pool/spa covers, accessories, equipment and pool furniture

It is the responsibility of the tenant to maintain and keep in good condition any accessories, cleaning and maintenance equipment. This also includes any outdoor/pool furniture supplied. Pool cleaning/equipment must be kept out of the sun and stored responsibly. Supplied pool/spa covers must be neatly rolled or folded up and stored away out of the weather when not in use to preserve its lifespan and usefulness.

Pool/spa fences and gates

We must be notified immediately if fences and gates are not functioning correctly, and the gate fails to self-close promptly when opened. New Zealand pool/spa regulations must be kept at all times.

These regulations can be found at <https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/building-and-consents/building-renovation-projects/install-residential-small-heated-pool/Pages/default.aspx>



Pets at the property – right expectations

Should the landlord have granted permission to keep pets as per your tenancy agreement and/or written and signed pet lease agreement, the following conditions apply for the duration of this tenancy, and any renewal or extension:

- a) **Yard kept clean** – keep the yard clean and free from animal faeces.
- b) **Rubbish kept cleared** – clean up any rubbish/ items scattered by the pet.
- c) **Flea infestation** – in the event of any fleas or flea eggs being present as a result of the animal, you will need to arrange for flea fumigation of the property prior to and upon/after vacating the premises. This is at tenant cost.
- d) **No pets inside** – pets are not allowed inside the residence at any time.
- e) **Damage rectification** – repair any damage to the premises caused by the animal, and protect and immediately rectify any damage caused to garden irrigation systems and fittings.
- f) **Garden damage** – replace plants or vegetation damaged or destroyed by the pet directly, or indirectly (ie. plants died because a garden irrigation system was damaged by the pet).
- g) **Additional pets** – other than any pet listed above and approved by the owner, you may not keep any other animals of any kind on the rental premises, (even on a short-term or temporary basis), including dogs, cats, birds, fish, reptiles, or any other animals.
- h) **Temporary pets** – the tenant will not harbour, substitute or “pet-sit” any other pet, and will remove any of the pet’s offspring within 45 days of birth (should this occur).
- i) **Food and water** – not to leave food or water for the pet outside the premises where it may attract other animals and/or insects (i.e. european wasps).

- j) **Bi-laws and local council** - abide by all local, city or national laws, licensing and health requirements regarding pets, including vaccinations.
- k) **Disturbance and noise** - the pet shall not cause any sort of nuisance or disturbance to neighbours. Noise, day or night, must not disturb others. You must do whatever is necessary to keep the pet from making noise that would annoy others, and take steps to immediately rectify complaints made by neighbours or other tenants.

Failure to comply with these terms shall give the owner the right to revoke permission to keep the pet, and is also grounds for further action and possible eviction action.

Pets not permitted inside

Unless otherwise agreed in writing, pets are not permitted inside the property at any time.

Bond changing tenants

Should permission be granted for tenants to change/ transfer during a tenancy agreement, then the outgoing tenant must liaise and arrange with the incoming tenant to be paid their share of the bond lodged. Please ensure that you then liaise with us for any transfer of names required on the original bond lodged with the bond authority.

Sub-letting

Subletting is not permitted without written approval from us. This includes assigning the tenancy over to a third party, or allowing other occupants to move in without our express permission. This also includes allowing any part of the property to be used for Air B'n'B or similar. Permission usually involves a formal application being completed and submitted by the prospective tenant/ occupant.

Property for residential use only

The property is for residential use and can only be used a place of dwelling unless otherwise agreed in writing by us. The property cannot be used for commercial, industrial or illegal purposes. The use of the property cannot breach local council zoning regulations and also cannot be in breach of the law.



Your safety – being aware

The highest priority always must be for your safety, and the safety of your children, occupants and your visitors.

Some things to be aware of include:

- Exposed wiring
- Faulty power points and switches
- Gas smell or odour
- Damage to paving and pathways that could cause someone to trip
- Suspicious or dangerous plants in the garden that are poisonous/toxic or that you may be allergic to
- Bee swarms coming onto the property mainly during spring, especially if someone is allergic to bee stings
- If you need to clean a property with high ceilings or light fittings that are hard to reach, please do so with care and use the appropriate equipment and do not do anything considered unsafe
- Loose floorboards that could cause someone to fall through them and cause injury
- Loose balcony railings, steps or decking woodwork
- Loose or faulty locks, in particular entry doors and screen doors
- Broken or cracked windows, and broken/loose window locks

Saving power – some tips

Keeping warm and saving power – some tips

Use electric blankets

Instead of warming a room before going to bed, just heat your bed with an electric blanket then switch this off before going to bed.

Close doors

Keeping doors closed is one way to keep heating centralised to certain living areas, conserving heat and power.

Door snakes

Ensure gaps at the bottom of doors are blocked up by door snakes to stop cold drafts and help keep rooms warm.

Exhaust fans

Close doors with rooms that have exhaust fans like bathrooms and the kitchen, as cool air will enter the home through these vent holes.

Extra clothing

Wear extra clothing when it gets cold, and throw an extra blanket on the bed.

Use a thermometer

Purchase a thermometer and keep your temperature between 18 and 21 degrees. For every degree warmer, this will add approx 10% to your power bill to maintain. Want it warmer? Put on an extra jumper!



Other useful power saving tips

Use cold water

Use cold water for your washing machine instead of warm or hot water.

Drying clothes

If it's sunny hang your clothes to dry outside instead using the clothes dryer.

Lights

Switch off lights after use and do not leave lights on in rooms if not being used.



Strata title / body corporates

If you are renting a strata title/body corporate property, including a unit, apartment, townhouse or duplex, there are some extra things that you need to be aware of. These include the by-laws of the complex and areas of common property or exclusive use.

Common property

Within the strata title/body corporate complex there will be areas assigned as common property. There are several standard by-laws that relate to common property that we would like to bring to your attention:

- Should you wish to transport furniture or park a vehicle for the purpose of carrying/transporting furniture, you will need permission from the body corporate body. In some cases this will not be permitted.
- You cannot use any part of the common area to plant/maintain your own garden or vegetable patch.
- You must not obstruct any person's legitimate and lawful use of the common property.
- No child under your control can be permitted to play in common areas, or in areas that could be dangerous to children (around rubbish bin areas etc).

Parking

Only parking bays assigned to you can be used by you and your visitors. In some cases visitors are not permitted to park on the property. You are unable to use parking bays assigned to other residents.

Noise and disturbance

Excessive noise and inappropriate/offensive behaviour that causes a nuisance or disturbance to other occupants is not permitted under the by-laws of the complex. All occupants are not permitted to dispose of rubbish, dirt or other material in an area of common property and must also remain properly clothed when on common property.

Taking responsibility for your visitors

It is your responsibility to ensure that your visitors obey by-laws, including parking and their behaviour within common property areas. This also includes ensuring they do not disrupt other residents with noise when walking to and from the car park.

Vacating the property

Notice in writing

When you intend to vacate the property, in all instances we require your notice in writing.

Ending a fixed term

If you are leaving at the end of your current fixed term lease, we require at least 21 days notice prior to the expiry of your fixed term in writing. Please note that this amount of notice needs to commence when we have received your notice, not when it was posted.

Ending a non-fixed (periodic) term

If you are leaving on a non-fixed term (periodic) lease, we require at least 21 days notice in writing. Please note that this amount of notice needs to commence when we have received your notice, not when it was posted to us.

Breaking a fixed term

Should you wish to leave during a fixed term lease, we require your notice in writing. We are unable to accept your intention verbally.

In the case of breaking a fixed term lease, the following costs will be incurred:

- (a) Rent until a tenant approved by the landlord takes possession, or the lease expires (whichever occurs first).
- (b) Reletting fees and advertising costs to relet the premises.
- (c) Should the premises be vacant before a new tenant is secured, it is also your responsibility to ensure the grounds are watered and maintained for this period.

Getting your bond back quickly- criteria

At the end of your tenancy you will no doubt want your bond refunded quickly after you vacate.

For your full bond to be paid quickly, you will need to ensure the following:

- a) **Rent** - any outstanding rent is paid promptly.
- b) **Property ready** - the property is cleaned, carpets professionally cleaned and grounds returned to their ingoing condition. Please follow the final vacating guide at the end of this handbook. The property must also pass the final inspection conducted by this agency.
- c) **Outstanding accounts** - please ensure that any monies outstanding like water, any damages, compensation amounts and break lease fees are paid.
- d) **Keys** - ensure that all keys, remote controls etc have been returned.

Once these criteria have been met we can then refund your bond. Delays to this in all cases relates to one or more of these criteria not being met.

Outstanding rent

Please note that it is against the tenancy legislation to withhold rent at the end of your tenancy with the intention for this to be deducted from the bond. Your rent must be paid in full, leaving your bond intact.

Cleaning

Please use the 'Getting the property ready for vacating' guide at the end of this booklet.

It is also important to understand that cleaning thoroughness can be hampered by tiredness after moving into another property. We encourage you to employ a cleaner so this process is not compromised. Should the cleaning process not be completed thoroughly, this can result in extra costs associated in rectify any cleaning issues and will also delay the return of the bond.

Carpet cleaning

Please ensure the carpets are clean. Be aware that using cheap 'do it yourself' carpet cleaning hire machines may initially save on cost, but in the long run may cost you a lot more, as they generally do not have the power to get carpets properly cleaned. This can result in professional carpet cleaning still required after you have paid to hire a machine as well!



The final inspection

Only once the property has been fully vacated, cleaned and grounds made ready with keys returned can we commence our final inspection. It is important to note that if a final inspection time has been made and if you are aware that you will not be fully ready for the inspection, please call us as soon as possible to rearrange another time.

We do not wish to travel to the property ready for the inspection and find the property not 100% ready.

Outstanding monies/damages

It is important to note that if you vacate with outstanding monies and damages, your details will be lodged on a national internet tenancy database. Even if your monies are eventually paid, this doesn't mean your details will be withdrawn from the database. ***It is important to know your details may still be lodged for 5 years after your debt has been cleared, indicating there was originally a problem.***

Therefore due to the serious nature of these databases and how they can affect your future renting prospects, it is best that all monies owed be paid as soon as possible so no monies are owing.

Eviction

Should an eviction occur, your details will be lodged on the national internet tenancy database.

National internet tenancy database

The national internet tenancy database is a collection of tenancy information on an internet website lodged by Property Managers, mostly regarding tenant default action like property damage, outstanding monies and eviction. All Property Managers use this database to lodge tenant details. However, when Property Managers are processing application forms, this database is also cross-checked. We are confident that should a Property Manager checking an application find tenant default details lodged; the application will be promptly declined.

So we urge all of our tenants to ensure they pay their rent on time, keep the property clean, maintain the grounds and ensure the tenancy is finalised satisfactorily with no monies left owing, to avoid an unfortunate lodgement of their details.

For specific details regarding the database we use, see www.tenancy.co.nz

Getting the property ready for vacating - checklist

- ☐ Mail Redirection - please ensure that all mail is re-directed to your new address. You can complete a form with New Zealand Post to assist with this.
- ☐ Utilities - electricity, gas, phone, etc. Please ensure all accounts are advised and cancelled accordingly.
- ☐ Appliance manuals - please leave them on the kitchen counter.
- ☐ Keys - please ensure you have all keys as handed to you at the start of tenancy. Also hand over any extra keys you have arranged to have cut.

Inside the property

- ☐ Walls - please clean off any dirty marks, removable scuff marks, finger or food marks etc.
- ☐ Ceilings - please remove any cobwebs and fly dirt.
- ☐ Ceiling mould - please clean off (particularly in wet areas and sometimes in bedrooms).
- ☐ Light fittings - clean off dust and remove any dead insects inside.
- ☐ Ceiling fans - wipe fan blades and tops of fittings to remove dust build up.
- ☐ Skirting boards - wipe down with a damp cloth.
- ☐ Doorways and doors - wipe off finger marks and any other removable marks.
- ☐ Windows - clean inside and out. Please note - nearly all modern sliding aluminium windows can be lifted and pulled out for easy cleaning. Also sills and runners (wipe out dust build up and any dead insects. A vacuum cleaner and paint brush can really help here).
- ☐ Screen doors - front and back including frames - wiped clean and screen hand brushed.
- ☐ Stoves - clean stove top, control display, knobs, panels around knobs, any pull out or in-built drip trays, griller racks, trays and any inserts, oven racks, trays and oven bottom, walls and oven roof. A good oven cleaner will clean most ovens - however it is of importance that you read carefully the instructions on the product. Some cleaners can actually hinder oven surfaces (like stainless steel), and also some products have dangerous caustic fumes. Therefore use with extreme caution!
- ☐ Kitchen rangehood - clean pull out filters and framework.
- ☐ Bathroom - clean sink, mirror, cabinet, vanity unit and drawers, shower recess, glass screen and screen doors, bath and wall tiles. Please ensure both the sink and bath has a plug available.
- ☐ Toilet - clean cistern, seat, bowl inside and also outside around the base. Don't forget the skirting tiles around the toilet.
- ☐ Laundry - clean both the inside and outside of the trough, and underneath. Please ensure a plug is present.
- ☐ Tiling - make sure all tiling and grouting to the kitchen, toilet, bathroom and laundry areas are clean.
- ☐ Exhaust vents and fan covers are to be clean of any dust and dirt.
- ☐ Heat Pumps - front vents and filters cleaned of built up dirt. Modern systems (wall type) - filters easily pull out and can be brushed down with a hand brush. If there is a HRV unit, the air intake filter should be cleaned. This is usually on the ceiling in the passage area.
- ☐ HRV ceiling duct vents - please clean down if dusty or dirty.
- ☐ Cupboards/drawers - please clean/wash inside and out. Also doors and door frames, front and back of doors need to be cleaned.
- ☐ Curtains - wash any washable curtains and netting. If other curtains are visibly dusty or dirty, consider dry cleaning.
- ☐ Blinds - if you have venetian blinds, clean off the blind slats. Any other type of blinds should be able to be wiped down.
- ☐ Floors - floors to be mopped/washed if needed - please ensure corners and hard to get areas are also cleaned.
- ☐ Carpets - please ensure the carpets are clean. Be aware that using cheap 'do it yourself' carpet cleaning hire machines may initially save on cost, but in the long run may cost you a lot more as they generally do not have the power to get carpets properly clean. This can result in professional carpet cleaning still required after you have paid to hire a machine as well!



Outside the property

- ☐ Lawns - freshly mowed and edged (best done a couple of days before returning the property.)
- ☐ Gardens - remove any weeds, any rubbish and built up leaves etc.
- ☐ Rubbish - remove any rubbish that you have placed at the property. Be sure to check behind sheds, under shrubs and trees. This includes lawn clippings piled and compost left.
- ☐ Sweep paths and paving areas.
- ☐ Oil spillage removal - check and clean carport and garage floors, paths and driveway. If you have used a barbeque, check for any grease spots and spillages etc.
- ☐ Cigarette butts - if there are cigarette butts lying around - please pick up and remove.
- ☐ Garages and tool sheds - please remove any items from inside and behind garages and tool sheds that belong to you, including rubbish.

If you have a pet

- ☐ Pet droppings - please remove from gardens, lawns and any out of the way areas. Please dispose of in the bin - please do not bury them.
- ☐ Dog urine - remove/clean where your pet may habitually urinate (base of walls, verandah posts etc.)
- ☐ Dog stains - to outside walls. Check where your dog regularly lies down, there might be 'tell tale signs' on walls etc.
- ☐ Dog/cat claw damage - check screen doors, flyscreens and curtains. Please replace the screen wire if required.
- ☐ Dog chew damage - please ensure watering systems are free of dog chew damage and are repaired accordingly.
- ☐ Pet hair - please ensure any visible pet hair inside is removed.
- ☐ Fumigation - if your lease stipulates fumigation, please ensure this is arranged.

Trades guide – get some help to get the property ready

Getting the property ready on time for inspection can be exhausting and sometimes employing some extra help is a smarter and better way to go.

The tiredness factor when moving out to another property and then having to return to the original rental property to clean and get the grounds and garden ready can be a real headache. That is why so many tenants cut corners and not do a thorough job. This only then delays the bond refund process.

Therefore to get your bond back quickly here are some tradespeople we trust, use and recommend on a regular basis. We use them also because of their reasonable rates.

Who we use and recommend:

Professional Cleaning – We use and recommend

Meticulous Maids 021 039 9744

Window Cleaning – We use and recommend

Endeavour Property Services 021 266 6939

Carpet Cleaner – We use and recommend

Endeavour Property Services 021 266 6939

Lawn Mowing/Gardening – We use and recommend

Jims Mowing – Sandeep 021 059 3018

Driveway Sprayer/Cleaner – We use and recommend

Endeavour Property Services 021 266 6939

Rubbish Removal – We use and recommend

Counties Property Maintenance 021 276 2766

Handyman – We use and recommend

Counties Property Maintenance 021 276 2766

Pest Controller/Fumigator – We use and recommend

Metro Pest Control 0800 555 507

The Rent House Ltd

Property Management Services

☎ 0800 900 111

✉ info@renthouse.nz

📍 Shop 7, Meadowlands Plaza, Whitford Rd

🌐 www.renthouse.nz

