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ACCOMMODATION

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You should do as much research as possible on the area you are moving to before you go. Find out how much it will cost to rent accommodation and what is included in the price of the rent.

It is a good idea to try and book temporary accommodation before you travel to Australia.

What do I need to know about renting an apartment or house in Australia?

Rented properties are usually let through a real estate agent or directly by private landlords.

Rental vacancies can also be found in the daily newspaper, especially on Wednesdays and Saturdays in the 'To let' and 'Accommodation vacant' sections.

Check out the following website for properties to let in Australia. You will also be able to find out how much you can expect to pay for rental property depending on the area you want to live and the type of property you want to rent.

[*www.vicnet.net.au/travel/travelaus/accommaus*](http://www.vicnet.net.au/travel/travelaus/accommaus)

[*www.realestate.com.au*](http://www.realestate.com.au)

[*www.rentaustralia.com*](http://www.rentaustralia.com)

[*www.rent-a-home.com.au*](http://www.rent-a-home.com.au)

[*www.domain.com.au/real-estate/rent/wa/3.html*](http://www.domain.com.au/real-estate/rent/wa/3.html)

[*www.rentalproperty.com.au*](http://www.rentalproperty.com.au)

How much can I expect to pay for private rented accommodation in Australia?

The **minimum** average rent per week (depending on the area) for accommodation in some of the most popular cities is:

Sydney

House share

Flat (1 Bedroom)

House (2/3 Bedroom)

*Australian Dollar Rates

\$150 - \$200 per week

\$250 - \$400 per week

\$400 - \$600 per week

Melbourne

House share

Flat (1 Bedroom)

House (2/3 Bedroom)

*Australian Dollar Rates

\$150 - \$200 per week

\$200 - \$350 per week

\$300 - \$600 per week

Brisbane

House share

Flat (1 Bedroom)

House (2/3 Bedroom)

*Australian Dollar Rates

\$150 - \$200 per week

\$250 - \$350 per week

\$400 - \$600 per week

Perth

House share

Flat (1 Bedroom)

House (2/3 Bedroom)

*Australian Dollar Rates

\$100 - \$180 per week

\$170 - \$250 per week

\$290 - \$500 per week

Hobart

House share

Flat (1 Bedroom)

House (2/3 Bedroom)

***Australian Dollar Rates**

\$50 - \$100 per week

\$100 - \$150 per week

\$200 - \$400 per week

Canberra

House share

Flat (1 Bedroom)

House (2/3 Bedroom)

***Australian Dollar Rates**

\$70 - \$150 per week

\$150 - \$250 per week

\$300 - \$450 per week

** At the time of publication \$1 AUD was equal to \$0.59 Euro.*

€1 was equal to AUD\$1.67.

Will I have to sign a lease agreement?

A 'lease' or a 'residential tenancy agreement' is a document you sign when you agree to rent a property for a period of time. Do not sign a lease unless you fully understand the terms and conditions in the document, as it becomes legally binding after you sign it. You will have to sign the lease for a certain period; most rental properties are available for 6 or 12-month leases.

When I sign the lease, what will my first payment include?

You will have to pay a rental bond (deposit) which is normally 4 weeks rent and which will be refunded when you leave the accommodation. You will get your full bond back when you leave if the accommodation is clean, undamaged and with no rent owing. You will also have to pay your rent of between 2 to 4 weeks in advance.

What are my rights and responsibilities as a tenant?

When you rent a property you have rights and responsibilities.

Rights

Your landlord is responsible for maintaining the property. If something happens, for example, there is a leak or electrical appliances fail you should notify your landlord as soon as possible and they have a responsibility to repair the damage.

If your landlord wants to come and inspect the property they must give you reasonable notice, normally 7 days notice in writing. If they are calling to make a routine repair they must give you 24 hours notice.

Responsibilities

You must:

- Pay your rent on time and not fall into arrears
- Seek permission before you make any changes to your tenancy arrangements, for example, having more people stay in the property than is stated on the lease

- Engage in anti-social behaviour that would cause a nuisance or interfere with the reasonable peace or comfort of your neighbours
- Not use the property for illegal or commercial purposes
- Maintain the property in the same condition as you rented it (wear and tear is excepted)
- Pay for any damage caused by yourself or your guests
- Report any maintenance problems or damage immediately to the landlord
- Get approval in writing before you add any fixtures to the premises or permanently alter it in any way for example changing the locks if you lose your keys
- Allow your landlord inspect your property once they have given you appropriate notice. The landlord can inspect the property up to 4 times per year.

If you need more information on the rights and entitlements of tenants when you are in private rented accommodation have a look at the websites below for each state or territory.

South Australia - www.ocba.sa.gov.au/tenancies

Queensland - www.rta.qld.gov.au

Victoria - www.tuv.org.au

New South Wales - www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au

Western Australia - www.taswa.org

Tasmania - www.service.tas.gov.au

Canberra - www.tenantsact.org.au

Northern Territory - www.nt.gov.au/justice/graphpages/cba/consumer/res_tenancies.shtml

What do I need to know about buying an apartment or house in Australia?

Properties that are for sale are usually advertised in the newspaper. Real estate agencies have a list of properties for sale and can usually give you a free catalogue. If you are buying a home for the first time in Australia you may be eligible for a Commonwealth 'First Home Buyers' Grant'. For more information on this please contact your local council office (for information on local council offices please see **Chapter 15 - Useful Contacts**).

If you need to borrow money to buy a property, contact your bank, building society or other financial institution.

In Australia you will need to use a solicitor or conveyor to check the title deeds and organise the paperwork when you are buying a property. Again do not sign any contract unless you fully understand all of its terms and conditions.

What is public housing in Australia?

If you are receiving a Centrelink payment or are on a low income you can apply to rent public housing. The waiting time for public housing varies according to where you want to live, your household size and the urgency of your housing need. For more information please see **Chapter 15 - Useful Contacts**.

Is there any other information I need to know?

Utilities such as electricity, gas and water supplies are controlled regionally by each state or territory. Before signing any contract with any of the utility companies, make sure you check out what they expect of you, for example, they may want you to sign a contract for up to 3 years even if you are living in temporary accommodation.

Telephone companies throughout Australia, are listed in the Yellow Pages telephone directory. They can be found under 'Mobile Communications and accessories'. Some of the telephone companies may require a connection fee so it is worth shopping around.

For more information on telephone communications please refer to the website www.tio.com.au

Western Australia

For electricity supply and connection you will have to contact Western Power. For information on their services and office locations please refer to the website www.westernpower.com.au

For Gas supply and connection you will have to contact Alinta Gas. For information on their services and contact details please refer to the website www.alintagas.com.au

For Water Supply please refer to the website www.watercorporation.com.au

New South Wales

For electricity supply and connection in eastern Sydney, Central Coast and Newcastle you will have to contact Energy Australia. For information on their services and office locations please refer to the website www.energyaustralia.com.au

For Gas supply and connection you will have to contact AGL. For information on their services and contact details please refer to the website www.agl.com.au

For Water Supply in Sydney, Blue Mountains and Illawarra you will have to contact Sydney water. For more information please refer to

the website www.sydneywater.com.au. For the Hunter region you will have to contact Hunter Water. For more information please see the website www.hunterwater.com.au

Victoria

There are a number of companies that offer electricity and gas supply in Victoria. They include AGL www.agl.com.au, Origin energy www.originenergy.com.au, Powercor (electricity only) www.powercor.com.au and TruEnergy www.truenergy.com.au, www.westernpower.com.au

For Water Supply in the City west area please refer to the www.citywestwater.com.au, in the South east area www.southeastwater.com.au and the Yarra Valley area www.yvw.com.au

South Australia

There are a number of companies that offer electricity and gas supply in South Australia. They include AGL www.agl.com.au, Origin energy www.originenergy.com.au, Energy Australia www.energyaustralia.com.au and TXU www.trueenergy.com.au. Please refer to their websites for more information on the services they offer.

For Water Supply please contact United Water www.uwi.com.au. You will find information on how to contact them and the services they offer.

Queensland

There are 2 companies that offer electricity supply in Queensland. They are Energex www.energex.com.au and Ergon www.ergon.com.au. Please see their websites for information on getting connected, contact information and services they supply.

There is also 2 companies that offer gas supply. They are Origin Energy www.originenergy.com.au and Elgas www.elgas.com.au. Please refer to their websites for more information on the services they offer and how to apply to get connected.

In Queensland the water supply is managed by the local council. The telephone numbers of the City and County councils can be found in the Yellow Pages under the heading 'Government Services'.

Tasmania

For electricity supply and connection in Tasmania you will have to contact Aurora Energy. Please refer to their website www.auroraenergy.com.au to find more information on the services they offer and information on connection and accounts.

For Gas supply and connection you will have to look in the Yellow Pages telephone Directory under 'Gas suppliers'.

For water supplies you will have to contact your local council. Please refer to the website www.lgat.tas.gov.au to find your local council and their contact details.

Northern Territory

For electricity supply and connection you will have to contact Origin Energy. For information on their services, how to get connection and office locations please refer to the website www.originenergy.com.au

For Gas and Water supply and connection you will have to contact Power and Water. For information on their services and contact details please refer to the website www.powerwater.com.au

Australian Capital Territory

For electricity, gas and water supply and connection you will have to contact ActewAGL. Please refer to the website www.actewagl.com.au for information on how to become a customer, getting connected and the services they offer.

