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# THE ULTIMATE MOVING OUT GUIDE

FOR MELBOURNE RENTERS



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## Abstract

Moving out of a rental property in Melbourne is more than just packing boxes and returning keys. It is a detailed process that involves legal, financial, and practical steps that every tenant should understand before leaving. Many renters underestimate how complex this stage can be, especially when it comes to meeting landlord expectations, following notice periods, and ensuring the property is left in good condition. A single overlooked task can delay the return of a deposit or create unnecessary disputes.

This guide brings together reliable information from trusted Victorian and Australian sources to make the process clear and simple. It outlines what every renter should know before vacating a property, including notice requirements, safety checks, inspections, and common oversights that could cause issues later. Whether you are moving out for the first time or have rented for years, this comprehensive resource will help you plan ahead, stay compliant with regulations, and complete your move with confidence and peace of mind.



## Getting Started

Before you begin packing, cleaning, or booking movers, it is important to understand exactly what is required when ending a tenancy in Victoria. According to Legal Aid Victoria, tenants have several key responsibilities, including giving proper written notice, maintaining the property in a reasonable state, and ensuring that any damage beyond

normal wear is repaired. These obligations protect both you and your rental provider and help avoid disagreements at the end of your lease.

Start by reviewing your condition report, which details the state of the property at the beginning of your tenancy. This document is essential for comparison during the final inspection. Plan your move early to allow time for any repairs, utility disconnections, and safety checks. Take clear photos or videos of each room as evidence of how you left the property. Preparation and organization at this stage reduce stress later, ensuring your move out is smooth, lawful, and worry free.

**Moving house has never been so stressful. Which is why you need an elite squadron of helpers**



Late last year the lease on my flat came to an abrupt end. I'd read the headlines. I knew what was ahead of me. I was apprehensive, but determined.

Everyone dreads moving house. But as Australia and the world face a crippling housing crisis, with rental affordability reaching all-time lows, the experience has become even more stressful.

When I moved house five years ago, I got the first flat I applied for. We edged out one other couple who wanted it, and that was that – the deal was done. How times have changed.

After a month of searching, my housemate and I signed on the dotted line for a flat far superior than some of the ones we'd been passed up for. But the experience was made a little bit easier thanks to the people around me.

Moving house in 2025 requires you to assemble an elite squadron of friends and family with the perfect combination of skills and stamina. The first is someone who knows what a good floor plan looks like and won't scoff when you start talking about good light and the downsides of a south-facing balcony.

Come house inspections, you will need someone with an objective eye. One step removed from the process, they can help weigh up the pros and cons, helping you work out what you can and can't sacrifice. They can also point out red flags, or hidden benefits, and aren't afraid to strike hot property off the list because it doesn't feel right.



Once you hit the real estate websites and set up new property alerts, things start to get real. Enter the master planner. As a voice of reason, this person knows what you want almost as intimately as you. They understand your weak points, when to push you and how hard. Best of all, they bring your new life into focus, mapping out routes to the local supermarket, to work, and the nearest coffee shop from any number of prospective

homes. They strategise as if life depends on it. Thanks to this person, I know more streets, parks and bus routes in and out of my new locale than I'll ever need.

## Renting

Learn about the legal rights and responsibilities of renters, residential rental providers and real estate agents.

If you rent your home, the law says what rights and responsibilities you have. There are rules about rental agreements (also called tenancy agreements or leases), minimum standards, paying rent, eviction, repairs and your bond.

You can read about renting laws in Consumer Affairs Victoria's Renters guide. The person you rent from must give you a copy of this guide when you move in or before you move in. If you have agreed in writing to receive notices and other documents electronically (for example, to your email address) then the rental provider or agent can give you an electronic copy of this guide. Otherwise you must be given a printed copy.

You can also find most of this information on Consumer Affairs Victoria's website.

## Rental agreements



Your rental agreement can be written or verbal (spoken). The agreement can be for a fixed-term (up to five years, but often six or 12 months) or periodic (from month to month). Long-

term rental agreements of more than five years may also be an option if you and the person you rent from want better security and stability.

If the agreement is in writing, it is called a 'residential rental agreement' and it must be on a standard form. These forms are available on Consumer Affairs Victoria's website. It is important to read and understand your rental agreement before signing. If you do not understand the agreement, get legal advice before you sign.

Keep a copy of any agreement you sign.

### **Rental minimum standards**



Residential rental providers must make sure that the rental property meets basic standards. These are known as 'rental minimum standards' and include things such as:

- door locks
- supply of hot and cold water
- oven or stovetops that work properly
- a working toilet
- window coverings
- heating.

The property must also be free from mould and damp, and be structurally sound and weatherproof.

Read more about minimum standards on the Consumer Affairs Victoria website.

If your rental property does not meet these minimum standards, you can end the rental agreement before you move in. If you have already moved in, you can request the property meet the minimum standards as an urgent repair. Read more about arranging repairs to a rental property.

### **Paying rent**

When you pay rent to the real estate agent or your residential rental provider, always ask for a receipt. Keep your receipts as proof that you paid rent. This can help avoid disagreements about payment. If you ask for a receipt, the agent or rental provider must give you a receipt or a document called a 'rental ledger'.

### **If your rent is overdue**



If your rent is overdue by 14 days or more, your residential rental provider or the agent can give you 14 days' notice to vacate the property. The notice must be in writing.

If you get a notice to vacate, you may not have to move out. Try to negotiate with the residential rental provider or agent to repay the money owing. Ask for any agreement you make to be put in writing. You can write down the agreement and ask them to sign it. Or you

can ask them to write down the agreement and give you a copy. The agreement can be on paper or electronic (for example, by email).

If you pay the overdue rent by the termination date in the notice to vacate, the notice no longer applies. You do not need to do anything further.

If you have not paid the rent that you owe by the termination date, and the residential rental provider or agent wants you to move out, they must apply to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (the tribunal) for a possession order. A possession order means that you must move out.

You will get a notice telling you when the hearing is. It is important to go to the hearing. Currently most hearings are by telephone. You will be given a contact number to dial in to the hearing. At the hearing, you will be asked why you have not paid rent. The tribunal may decide:

- not to make a possession order. That means you can stay in your home. This might happen if you prove you can pay the overdue rent and you are not likely to miss rent payments again
- to adjourn (delay) your hearing and may refer you to a financial counselling service
- to put you on a payment plan so that you can pay the overdue rent bit-by-bit
- to make a possession order. That means you must leave your home.

### **Rent increases**

If you have a periodic (month-to-month) rental agreement, your rent must not increase more than once in 12 months.

If you have a fixed-term agreement, your rent must not increase before the end date, unless your agreement allows it.

Your residential rental provider or their agent must give you at least 60 days' notice of any rent increase. They must give you this notice in writing.

If you think the rent increase is too high, you can request a 'rent assessment' by Consumer Affairs Victoria. You can request this assessment if you believe:

- it is too much compared to current rental prices for similar properties
- the residential rental provider or agent has reduced or withdrawn services, facilities or other items that are part of the property.

To request a rent assessment, download the 'Request for repairs inspection or rent assessment' form from the Consumer Affairs Victoria website. You must make this request within 30 days of receiving notice that the rent is being increased.

If you disagree with Consumer Affairs Victoria's assessment, you have 30 days from receiving the report to apply to the tribunal for a hearing. The tribunal may set a maximum rent for the next 12 months.

### **Reasons for eviction**



Before you can be evicted from a rental property, a residential rental provider or their agent must give you a notice to vacate. For this notice to be valid, it must be given for a lawful reason. For example, if you have done one or more of these things:

- not paid rent
- caused serious damage to the property, made neighbours unsafe or you have threatened or scared neighbours, the rental provider, agent or people doing work for them
- given someone else a lease over all or part of the property without your rental provider's agreement

- not followed an order by the tribunal about your tenancy. For example, you had a pet when the tribunal ordered you not to
- used the property to make, grow or sell drugs or do something else that is against the law.

Your rental provider can also give you a notice to vacate if:

- they are moving back in, or their immediate family or people they support financially are moving in
- they are selling the property, or
- the property is to be repaired, renovated or demolished and you cannot live there while this happens.

There may be other reasons for your rental provider or their agent to try to evict you. If you are not sure if the eviction is lawful, get legal advice.

### **Arranging repairs to a rental property**



Your rental provider must keep your home in a safe and liveable condition. They must also make sure your home meets the rental minimum standards.

You are not responsible for fixing things that need repairing because of 'fair wear and tear' (things that are expected to wear out over time, like paintwork or carpets).

If your home needs repairs, write to your rental provider or agent asking for these to be fixed. You should use a 'Notice to rental provider of rented premises' form from the Consumer Affairs Victoria website to ask for repairs. Keep a copy of your notice.

### **Urgent repairs**

Any fault or damage which makes your home unsafe or insecure needs an 'urgent repair'. These may include:

- problems with water services, electricity, sewers and gas leaks
- broken air conditioner or safety device, such as a smoke alarm
- pest infestations, mould or damp caused by the structure of the building.

If your rental provider refuses to make urgent repairs, you can get them fixed if they do not cost more than \$2500. You must pay for these repairs. Make sure you keep the receipt. To get the money refunded from your rental provider or agent, send them a 'Notice to rental provider of rented premises' form on the Consumer Affairs Victoria website. They then have seven days to pay you.

### **Non-urgent repairs**



If your rental provider refuses to do non-urgent repairs after 14 days' notice, you can ask Consumer Affairs Victoria to inspect the property. If the inspector says repairs are needed,

but your rental provider still refuses, you can ask the tribunal to order your rental provider to do the repairs.

### **Getting your bond back when you move**



If you pay all your rent and leave the property in good condition, your rental provider should refund all your bond when you move out.

You can apply to the authority to have all or part of your bond refunded to you. The authority will notify your rental provider of your claim. Your rental provider must tell the authority within 14 days if they applied to the tribunal asking to keep your bond. Otherwise, the authority will repay your bond money to you in the way you asked in your claim form.

Your rental provider or agent can ask to keep some or all of your bond if:

- you or your visitors damaged the property deliberately or because you were not careful enough
- they need to pay for cleaning because you did not leave the property in a reasonably clean condition
- you abandoned the premises (left without telling them)
- you did not pay bills that you should have paid

- you took goods belonging to your rental provider's goods (for example, curtains or a stove)
- you did not pay all of your rent.

Your rental provider cannot ask for your bond because of 'fair wear and tear', such as carpets wearing out over a long time.

If you have a disagreement about your bond, you can ask the tribunal to decide what happens. You must apply to the tribunal for a 'bond repayment order' within 14 days of your rental agreement ending. You can apply to the tribunal about your bond if you are a renter or previous co-renter. Applying to the tribunal for the return of your bond is free.

## Tenants and renting laws



Learn about your rights as a renter and responsibilities as a rental provider.

### Amendments to Victorian renting laws

Victoria's rental laws came into effect on 29 March 2021. The changes to the law clarify the rights and responsibilities of renters and rental providers – from before a rental agreement is signed until after the agreement ends – and apply to all types of tenancies, private rentals, caravan and residential parks, and rooming houses.

On 31 May 2022 further amendments to the Residential Tenancies Regulations 2021 (RTR) were made to ensure that the gas servicing requirements of a Gas Safety Check are aligned with the Gas Safety (Gas Installation) Regulation 2018 which now mandate AS 4575 Gas Appliance Servicing of Type A appliances and prescribe reporting requirements.

The amendments commenced 1 June 2022.

There are over 130 reforms contained within the Residential Tenancies Regulations 2021.



### **Amendments to the Residential Tenancies Regulations 2021**

The objective of the Residential Tenancies Amendment Regulations 2022 are to align the servicing requirements for a Type A gas appliance with the servicing requirements under the Gas Safety (Gas Installation) Regulations 2018.

These requirements came into force 1 June 2022.

The RTR amendments provide for consequential amendments to the servicing and record keeping requirements for 'gas safety checks' in the RTR 2021 to align with the amendments to the Gas Safety (Gas Installation) Regulations 2018. From 1 June 2022, the Gas Safety (Gas Installation) Regulations 2018 mandates AS 4575 as the servicing standard, to ensure a minimum safety standard, for every Type A gas appliance serviced across public, owner occupied and rental properties.

The amendments to the RTR include:

- inserting new definitions of 'gas installation', 'licensed gasfitter', 'registered gasfitter', 'Type A gas appliance' and 'standard gas installation' into the RTR, which are consistent with the Gas Safety (Gas Installation) Regulations 2018

- substituting paragraph (c) of the definition of ‘gas safety check’ to require the servicing of all Type A gas appliances that are part of a standard gas installation and ‘note’ the requirements in the Gas Safety (Gas Installation) Regulations 2018
- requiring that the record of a gas safety check must include, for each Type A gas appliance serviced, a record of the work given to the rental provider in accordance with the requirements of the Gas Safety (Gas Installation) Regulations 2018.

Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV) is the agency responsible for these regulations. The CAV website provides detailed summaries and guides on the full range of changes included in the new renting regulations.

### **Gas and electrical safety obligations**



Under the new laws rental providers (previously referred to as landlords) have certain responsibilities for gas and electrical safety.

### **Rental providers must undertake gas and electricity safety checks:**

- For all new agreements after 29 March 2021 or
- Where there is a fixed term agreement of more than five years which rolls over into a periodic tenancy after 29 March 2021, must undertake gas and electricity safety checks.

Additionally, rental providers must keep, and be able to produce, records of gas and electrical safety checks conducted at the property.

### **Gas safety check**

The rental provider must ensure a gas safety check of all gas installations and fittings on the premises is conducted every two years by a licensed or registered gasfitter who is endorsed in the specialised class of Type A gas appliances servicing work (Gas Serving Type A on the Plumbers Identity Card).

Note: Registered plumbers engaging in specialised classes of plumbing must be under the supervision of a person licensed in the specialised class.

### **Electrical safety check**



Rental providers must ensure an electrical safety check of all electrical switchboards, wiring and fittings in the premises is conducted every two years by a licensed electrician.

If requested, they must also provide the renter with the date of the most recent safety check, in writing.

### **Evidence of safety checks**

#### **Gas safety check**

The gasfitter should provide a record of the gas safety check. The document must include:

- Their full name and business details, including licence or registration number of the gasfitter who performed the check
- the date the safety check was conducted, the results of the check, including repairs required and actions taken to address the repair
- a record of type A appliance service work including details outlined in schedule 14 of the Gas Safety (Gas Installation) Regulations 2018
- confirmation that all installations and fittings have been checked and found safe.

### **Electrical safety check**

The electrician must provide a written report (hard copy or digital) in regard to the electrical safety check.

The report must include details of those parts of the tenancy covered by the check and any part of that tenancy not covered by the safety check. The report should record the results of the testing undertaken.

### **Record keeping**

A record of the most recent gas and/or electrical safety check, along with the details of the tradesperson who performed the check, must be kept until a record of the next safety check is created.

A copy of the most recent gas or electrical safety check must be provided to the renter within seven days after the rental provider receives a written request from the renter.

## **12 Things You Might Be Forgetting To End Of Lease Clean**

Ever found yourself standing in an empty apartment after you've packed up, thinking, "I'm sure I've cleaned everything, right?" Only to have the landlord call you later and mention spots you missed? You're not alone. Many tenants miss key areas when cleaning for the end of their lease. With the stress of the move, loads of packing and ensuring that everything is in order, it is easy to forget cleaning the less obvious areas in the property that landlords and property managers inspect very meticulously. Unfortunately for you, missing these small areas can lead to unnecessary deductions from your bond.



### **1. Skirting Boards**

Skirting boards accumulate a lot of dust, dirt and scuff marks over time, yet they are often forgotten during regular cleaning routines. So, before you hand back the keys of your property, wipe these down with a damp cloth or use a vacuum with a brush attachment to remove all the built-up grime. A neglected skirting board can make an otherwise clean home appear dusty.

### **2. Light Switches and Power Points**

Light switches and power points are high-contact areas that end up collecting a lot of fingerprints, dust and bacteria. Use a damp cloth with a mild cleaning solution to wipe them down. Ensuring that these small details are clean and well taken care of will make a noticeable difference in your detailed end of lease cleaning in Melbourne task, earning you a lot of brownie points from the inspectors.

### **3. Ceiling Fans and Air Vents**



Ceiling fans are notorious for gathering a lot of dust within a short span of time, especially if they have been lying dormant for a while. The same can be said about air vents, which can trap dirt and even mould. To clean them, use a damp cloth or a vacuum cleaner with a brush attachment to remove all the dust and dirt from the fan blades and the air vents. This will not only improve the appearance of your home but will enhance the air quality inside.

#### **4. Window Tracks and Frames**

While most tenants will remember to clean the window glass, one thing that gets overlooked here is the tracks and the frames of the window itself. Dust, insects and grime can gather in these areas, making it difficult to clean them at the last minute. To make things easier for you, use a toothbrush and a mixture of vinegar and water to scrub the tracks and remove the stubborn gunk from them.

#### **5. Inside Cupboards and Drawers**

Kitchen and bathroom cupboards, along with the wardrobes in the bedroom, can accumulate a lot of crumbs, dust and spills over time. Ensure that you are wiping everything down – all shelves, handles, corners – before you hand back the property, as the inspectors will often check inside of these storage units to see if they have been left clean. Leaving them dirty could cost you money.

#### **6. Behind and Under Appliance**

While wiping down the benchtops in the kitchen is a standard practice, many tenants forget that cleaning behind and under large appliances, like fridges, ovens, and washing machines, are also mandatory. Grease, food particles and dust gather in these spaces over time, so during thorough end of lease cleaning in Melbourne, make sure to move these appliances from their spots and give them a good clean.

### **7. Rangehood and Exhaust Fans**

Rangehood filters and exhaust fans collect a lot of dust and grease over time, making them one of the dirtiest areas in the kitchen. To get them clean, remove and soak the filter in warm, soapy water or use a mild degreaser to clean the gunk away. If these are not addressed properly, it can become a red flag during the time of inspection.

### **8. Door Handles and Knobs**



Like the light switches, the handles and knobs on your doors are frequently touched, but rarely are they cleaned. For this, use disinfectant wipes or a damp cloth dipped in a mild cleaning solution to remove the dirt, grime and germs from them.

### **9. Toilet Base and Behind the Toilet**

Most tenants clean the toilet bowl and the seat, but they often forget about the base and

the area behind the toilet. Dust, hair, and grime accumulate in these spaces quite often, making them a common inspection point for property managers.

### **10. Walls and Scuff Marks**

Walls often have scuff marks, fingerprints or stains left behind that are not noticeable until the room has been bared of its contents. To get rid of such things, use a magic eraser or a damp cloth dipped in mild detergent to remove the marks from the walls and pay special attention to the high-traffic areas like the hallways and near the door frames.

### **11. Outdoor Areas**

If your rental property includes an outdoor space like a balcony, patio or backyard, you will have to ensure that these areas are thoroughly cleaned as well. Neglecting outdoor spaces often leads to deductions from your bond, especially if they were well-maintained when you first moved in.

### **12. Garbage Bins**

Last but not least, if your property has indoor and outdoor garbage bins as part of the lease contract, cleaning them is a must before vacating the property. Property managers will expect a fresh and hygienic environment, so clean the bins to leave behind a good final impression.

## **Three things you do that drive removalists mad**



Packing up and moving house is a dreaded task at the best of times, and many of us turn to the professionals to get our treasured trinkets from one home to another, unharmed. Professional removalists are the unsung heroes of moving day. They manage to skilfully manoeuvre heavy furniture into trucks and tight spaces without a scratch, and shuffle boxes of books and clothes around in a Tetris formation that ensures they won't slide around during the journey. However, there are three little things we clients are doing that drive removalists mad, and here's how you can avoid an awkward or time-consuming situation come moving day.



### **1. Packing books in large boxes**

This removalist pet peeve is a pretty obvious one. No one can lift a huge box packed to the brim with hardcovers and paperbacks, let alone when it has a single line of tape holding the bottom of the box together. Instead, pack books and other heavy items into smaller boxes that are easier for one person to lift, with a few extra lines of sturdy tape on the bottom to ensure it doesn't give out when the box is lifted.

### **2. Not labelling your boxes clearly or correctly**

Failing to label boxes or labelling them incorrectly will result in you being asked several times where a box goes, only for you to have to open and unpack it to determine its end

location. Not only does this slow the process down and make for a longer moving day, but it's frustrating for all parties involved to continually ask where things need to go. As you're packing up your home, label each box clearly with large block letters in permanent markers with the room the box should go. Even better, pop a few notes below the label about what's in the box, so you'll be able to find essentials like towels, plates and bed linen quickly when you're unpacking.

### **3. Not packing fragile items correctly**



Removalists do not enjoy being accused of carelessness when your treasured items turn up at the new location broken to bits, when you're the one who failed to protect the item with bubble wrap and pack them securely into durable boxes. In fact, a lot of removal and courier companies will refuse to move items if they don't believe they've been securely packed. Removalists do not intentionally set out to break things, however accidents will happen if you pile your collection of glass vases into one box without taking appropriate packing and shock-absorbing measures. Ensure anything that is breakable is well wrapped in bubble wrap, newspaper or in a box filled with Styrofoam peanuts so a bump in the road or movement in the truck doesn't result in shattered items or broken hearts.

### **Moving out of your property**

If you want to move out of your public housing property, you must tell your housing services officer in writing.

### **I need to move urgently**

If you need to move out urgently, contact your housing services officer as soon as you can before you leave.

You will still need to complete a General Notice of Termination form and return the keys to ensure your tenancy is finalised and rent is no longer charged. We can also discuss your housing needs and accommodation options.

### **What do I need to do before I leave?**



We would like to meet with you before you leave to complete a final inspection and discuss the condition of your home.

Before the keys are handed in, you are expected to leave your home clean and tidy. If there is damage, a mess or any rubbish, you may have to pay for repairs or to have the home cleaned.

If you made alterations, you might need to have them removed. Ask your housing services officer if you need to do this.

- Provide 28 days written notice of your intention to vacate by completing and signing a Tenant's General Notice of Termination form.
- Clean all internal areas, including the living room, kitchen, bathroom, laundry, toilet and bedroom(s)

- Clean the stove top, hot plates, grill and oven
- Wash out all the drawers and cupboards
- Wash the floors and vacuum the carpets

### **Before you leave**

- A final inspection is to be completed with a housing services officer from your local housing office
- Ensure all items are removed, including things you don't want anymore (items should not be left in any storage sheds, common areas, stairs, landings, passages or nature strips)
- Make sure it is in a reasonably clean condition and lock all windows and doors
- Return the keys to your local housing office and sign a Tenant's General Notice of Termination form (if not already completed during the intention to vacate process)

### **What if it is decided that I need to pay repair costs?**



Before final decisions are made about your responsibility to pay repair costs (outside of normal fair wear and tear), we would like to talk to you to understand your circumstances.

The department will consider reducing or waiving repair costs when factors such as family violence, a disability, a physical or mental health condition or an unknown person (such as someone breaking into your home) contributed to the repairs needed.

### **Conclusion**

Moving out of a rental property marks the end of one chapter and the beginning of another. For Melbourne renters, this stage can be straightforward when approached with careful planning and an understanding of the required procedures. Taking time to meet your responsibilities, follow proper notice periods, and ensure the property is left in a satisfactory condition can make the process far less stressful.

Completing all tasks methodically helps protect your deposit and maintain a positive rental history, which is valuable for future applications. By staying informed through reliable Victorian and Australian resources, you can complete your move efficiently, leave your rental in good order, and move forward with confidence and peace of mind.

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