



HomeGround
Real Estate Canberra

TENANT WELCOME BOOKLET

2025



Welcome.

Congratulations on securing your new rental home! We hope your move is as stress-free as possible and that you settle in quickly and comfortably.

At HomeGround Real Estate Canberra, we aim to ensure our tenants are well informed about what to expect from our agency throughout their tenancy. We would like to take this opportunity to highlight our expectations of tenants and outline the responsibilities that come with signing a Residential Tenancy Agreement. You can find the renting booklet [here](#).

The following pages contain important information regarding your tenancy and form part of your agreement. By signing the Residential Tenancy Agreement, you accept its terms as well as any other conditions outlined within. An Ingoing Condition Report will be sent to you via email from Inspection Express.

If you have any questions or concerns during your tenancy, please don't hesitate to contact our office. One of our team members will be happy to assist you.

Office details

Operating Hours: Monday - Friday: 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Agency Name: HomeGround Real Estate Canberra

Phone: 1300 208 888

Email: enquiries@homegroundcanberra.com.au

Postal Address: 224/29 Braybrooke St, Bruce ACT 2617

Web: www.homegroundrealestate.com.au

For the fastest response, please contact your Property Manager via email. If you would like to meet with your Property Manager, please make an appointment at a mutually agreed time.

Condition Report.

You will receive an online Entry Condition Report via email from Inspection Express. Please complete, sign, and return within 14 days, as required under the Residential Tenancies Act. If the report is not returned within this period, our agency's copy will be retained as the true and correct version.

What is an Entry Condition Report?

The Entry Condition Report records the property's condition at the start of your tenancy. Within 24 hours of collecting the keys, you'll receive an email from Inspection Express with a link to complete the report.

You have 14 days to review, sign, and return it online. If not returned within this period, our copy will be considered accurate, and you may be held responsible for any unreported issues.

To protect yourself, carefully check the report, note any discrepancies, and attach supporting photos or videos.

Why is this report so important?

As a tenant, you are expected to return the property in substantially the same condition and level of cleanliness as at the start of the tenancy, allowing for fair wear and tear. You are not required to improve the property beyond its original condition.

When vacating at the end of your lease, your Property Manager will inspect the property against the Entry Condition Report to identify any repairs, maintenance, or damage that occurred during the tenancy. We'll provide more information about this process closer to your vacate date.

How do you fill it out?

Entry Condition Reports are now completed digitally. To fill out the report, simply follow the prompts provided by Inspection Express. It can be completed on a smartphone or tablet with internet access, allowing you to take photos and add additional comments.

If you prefer a paper copy, you can download and print the report.

Your tenancy.

General renting rules.

- Pay your rent in advance and on time.
- Keep the property clean, tidy, and undamaged.
- Comply with the terms of your tenancy agreement.
- Respect your neighbours' right to peace and quiet.
- Maintain the garden, lawn, hedges, and control weeds (unless otherwise stated in your agreement).
- If you are renting a unit, please refer to the body corporate by-laws for additional requirements.

For more details, please refer to our [Tenant Charter](#).

Rent arrears.

We understand that unforeseen circumstances can sometimes lead to delays in rent payments. If you anticipate a delay, please contact our office as soon as possible to discuss your situation.

It's important that all tenants are aware of the process for managing rent arrears. Open communication helps us support you and ensures we can work together to find a solution.

Days in arrears Action taken

3 days	Tenant will be contacted via email. A reminder SMS will then be sent each day until the rent is up to date.
7 days	Tenant will be issued an email after 7 days to remedy the breach.
8 days	Tenant will be issued notice to remedy via email and post and owner will be informed.
10 days	Tenant will be issued an email after 10 days to remedy the breach and owner will be informed.
15 days	If rent is not paid, a 14-day Notice of Termination may be issued. All arrears must be cleared by the notice expiry date. Depending on the outcome, the tenancy may continue or end. If arrears remain unpaid, an application may be lodged with ACAT.

Rent reviews.

As part of managing your tenancy, HomeGround conducts rent reviews in accordance with the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (ACT) and the terms of your lease agreement.

Rent can only be increased once every 12 months, either from the start of your tenancy or from the date of the last rent increase. You will always receive a minimum of 8 week's written notice before any rent change takes effect.

How Is the Rent Increase Calculated?

Any rent increase must comply with ACT tenancy laws. The law limits increases to what is known as the "prescribed amount", which is:

No more than 10% above the change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for rents in Canberra since the last increase.

We also consider:

- The market value of the property
- Any changes in property condition or features
- Relevant government requirements for affordable housing (where applicable)

What If I Have Concerns?

If you believe the proposed increase is higher than permitted, you have options:

- You can contact your Property Manager to discuss the increase and request a review.
- You may apply to the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal (ACAT) to assess whether the increase is fair and lawful.

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Fixed-Term Leases and Rent Reviews

If your lease is nearing expiry, you will receive an email 75 days before expiry date and a rent increase may be proposed, we may offer you a new fixed-term lease at the updated rent. You will have the opportunity to review the new terms before deciding whether to renew.

Our Commitment to Transparency

We are committed to fair, transparent, and lawful rent practices. Our aim is to ensure you are informed well in advance and have access to support or advice if needed.

If you have any questions about your rent review or would like assistance understanding your rights, please contact your Property Manager, we're here to help.

Routine Inspections.

Routine inspections help ensure the property is well maintained and to identify any repair, maintenance, or safety issues.

We'll inspect the property three months after you move in, then every six months. You'll receive an email with full details 14 days prior, plus SMS reminders three days before and on the day of the inspection.

Please note: the property owner may attend the inspection as well.

Keys.

If you lock yourself out or your keys/remotes are lost, stolen, or damaged, you are responsible for the cost of access and replacement.

You may contact a locksmith directly at your own expense and must notify your Property Manager if locks are changed. Alternatively, HomeGround can arrange a locksmith, but all associated costs will be charged to you. Please note: after-hours services will incur additional fees.

Parking.

Please park only in designated parking areas. Do not park on grass, footpaths, or common areas.

Tenants are responsible for any damage caused by improper parking, including oil stains or surface damage.

Pools.

If your rental property includes a swimming pool, you are responsible for its day-to-day maintenance unless otherwise agreed.

Do not install a new pool without written approval from the owner via HomeGround. If approved, the pool must comply with all legal requirements.

This does not apply to small inflatable pools.

Pest Control.

Tenants are responsible for day-to-day pest control (e.g. cockroaches, ants, spiders), including general pest sprays.

If you notice a significant infestation within six weeks of moving in, please notify your Property Manager. A small number of pests is not considered an infestation.

Wildlife and Outdoor Pests

Tenants are responsible for the removal of:

- Snakes
- Wasps or bees
- Possums
- Dead animals outside the property

Preventing termite damage to the property

If you detect termite activity, report it to your Property Manager immediately.

To help prevent termite damage, tenants must:

- Clean gutters regularly
- Keep mulch, firewood, and debris away from the house
- Trim vegetation near the property
- Remove dead trees or timber from the yard
- Fix leaking taps or pipes
- Avoid leaving timber, cardboard, or paper on the ground

Gutters.

We recommend cleaning your gutters at least twice a year—ideally in late spring and early autumn—to remove collected debris. However, more frequent cleaning may be necessary if there are nearby trees that shed leaves or needles.

To clean gutters, use a gutter scoop, brush, or hose to remove leaves, twigs, and other debris from the gutters and downspouts. It's also a good idea to check for any signs of leaks or clogs, especially after heavy rain or storms.

Ending your tenancy.

Notice of intention to vacate.

To end your tenancy, you can submit a [Notice to Vacate form](#) via our website or by providing written notice to your Property Manager. The standard notice period is 21 days, though this may vary depending on your situation. You can give notice at any time—it does not need to align with your rent cycle.

Your Property Manager will confirm the final payment amount up to your vacate date.

Your notice must include:

- The property address
- Reason(s) for vacating
- Intended vacate date and key return date
- A statement confirming the tenancy will end on that date

Note: Rent will continue to be charged until all keys are returned.

Change of shared tenancy.

If there is a change in the number or identity of occupants listed on the lease, the following steps must be followed:

1. Notify our office in writing of the change.
2. Submit application forms for any new occupants.
3. Applications will be sent to the owner for approval.
4. Once approved, we will complete the necessary shared bond/lease change forms.

Important: These steps apply only if at least one original leaseholder remains in the property. If all original leaseholders are vacating, it will be treated as a break lease.

Break Lease.

A fixed-term tenancy agreement ends when the end date is reached and the correct notice has been given. If you are unable to stay until the lease end date, you must provide a minimum of 21 days' written notice to your agent.

Your tenancy agreement includes a break fee clause, which is a penalty you agree to pay if you vacate before the end of the fixed term. Break fees vary by state:

Australian Capital Territory

- 6 weeks' rent if you break the lease in the first half of the fixed term
- 4 weeks' rent if you break the lease in the second half

New South Wales

For agreements 3 years or less (signed after 23 March 2020):

- 4 weeks' rent if less than 25% of the lease has expired
- 3 weeks' rent if 25%–50% has expired
- 2 weeks' rent if 50%–75% has expired
- 1 week's rent if more than 75% has expired

Fair wear-and-tear.

We understand that some deterioration will occur over time due to normal use and ageing—this is known as fair wear and tear.

Non-fair wear-and-tear

Damage caused by mistreatment, neglect, or pets is considered non-fair wear and tear and is the tenant's responsibility to repair.

If damage occurs, your Property Manager will discuss:

- How repairs will be carried out
- The cost involved
- Payment arrangements

If you arrange repairs yourself, they must be completed to a professional standard. Any substandard work may result in additional charges.

Vacating the property.

Before leaving the rental property, please ensure you:

- Remove all personal belongings.
- Contact utility providers to disconnect services in your name.
- Update your mailing address or set up mail redirection through [Australia Post](#) (note: this may take up to 2 weeks to activate).
- Arrange professional end-of-lease cleaning and provide a copy of the invoice.
- Steam clean all carpeted areas and submit the receipt.
- Return all keys at the final inspection.
- Provide the agency with your forwarding address.

Your Property Manager will send you a vacating checklist once your notice to vacate is received to help guide you through the process.

Final inspection and condition report.

The Property Manager will conduct an exit inspection within two business days after the keys are returned. The purpose of this inspection is to compare the property's condition against the Ingoing Condition Report signed at the start of your tenancy.

The property should be returned in the same condition of cleanliness and repair as when you moved in, allowing for fair wear and tear.

A copy of the Outgoing Condition Report will be provided to you once the inspection is complete. Tenants should review this report carefully before signing.

If any damage is identified, the Property Manager will notify you of the items that need to be addressed. You will be required to either:

- Repair the damage, or
- Pay the cost of repairs (this may be deducted from your bond, if agreed)

Any agreement regarding repairs should be recorded in writing.

Note: The property owner may be present during the exit inspection.

Releasing the bond.

Once the tenancy ends, either you or the owner can request a bond refund from the ACT Revenue Office.

HomeGround, on behalf of the owner, can claim deductions from the bond for:

- Damage to the property caused by the tenant
- Replacing keys or changing locks if the tenant fails to return all sets of keys
- Any rent owing

If the owner wishes to make a claim on the bond, they must complete and sign a bond release application. The application must include both:

- A written statement outlining the reasons for the deduction
- A written estimate of the cost of repairs or restoration

For more information about bonds, [click here](#).

In the event that we are claiming repairs from the bond, the Property Manager or the owner must provide proof—such as invoices or quotes—of the repairs.

Mould.

What is mould?

Mould is a furry growth of tiny fungi that can develop due to condensation, poor ventilation, or water leaks that aren't promptly addressed. Minor mould issues can usually be resolved by treating the cause early and preventing further growth.

How to prevent mould?

Tenants are expected to take reasonable steps to prevent or reduce mould growth:

Ventilation

- Use exhaust fans when cooking.
- Ensure bathrooms and laundries are well-ventilated.
- Open windows regularly and move furniture away from walls to allow airflow.
- When conditions allow, air out your home when the outdoor humidity is below 65%. Avoid doing this during rain or high humidity, as it can make conditions worse indoors.

Reduce Humidity

- Limit indoor plants or manage the humidity they create.
- Avoid using unflued gas heaters.

Control Moisture

- Wipe down damp surfaces and dry furnishings promptly.
- Report leaks or water damage immediately.
- Use dehumidifiers or air conditioners in dehumidify mode during wet weather.
- Drying clothes inside adds significant moisture to the air. If weather prevents you from opening windows, consider using a dehumidifier. Ideally, isolate clothes drying to one room and run the dehumidifier there to manage humidity levels.

How can you remove mould from your home?

- For routine cleaning, use a mild detergent or a vinegar solution (4 parts vinegar to 1 part water).
- Always dry the surface completely after cleaning.
- Absorbent materials like carpet may need professional cleaning or replacement.
- Avoid using standard vacuum cleaners, as they can spread mould spores.

Water Bills.

If the property is separately metered, you are responsible for all water usage. Charges will be invoiced accordingly.

Note: Please make a separate payment using the same reference number as your rent, to the same account.

Smoke Alarms.

Smoke alarms are installed in accordance with legislation. As the tenant, you are responsible for their upkeep. This includes, regular testing, changing batteries (if required), and keep alarms clean and dust free to ensure they are in good working order.

You should **not** deactivate a smoke alarm or interfere with its operation in any way. If you identify a fault, or the smoke alarm is not working, notify your Property Manager immediately.

Renters Insurance.

Renters insurance protects your personal belongings in the event of damage, loss, or theft. It can cover:

- Fire or storm damage
- Theft
- Floods (may be optional)
- Debris removal and temporary accommodation
- Legal liability

While we can't recommend specific providers, we strongly advise reading the Product Disclosure Statement (PDS) carefully before purchasing any policy.

Break In or Vandalism.

If the property is damaged due to vandalism or a break-in, you must:

- Report the incident to the police and obtain a Police Report Number.
- Notify your Tenancy Officer as soon as possible and provide the Police Report Number.

Failure to report the damage may result in you being held responsible for repair costs at the end of your tenancy.

Maintenance & Emergency repairs.

All general repairs and maintenance requests must be submitted in writing to our agency. You can do this via the [maintenance request form](#) on our website or by emailing us at enquiries@homegroundcanberra.com.au.

When submitting a request, please provide as much detail as possible, including photos if available. Additionally, we require authorisation to access the property in order to carry out the repairs.

Important: If a tenant attempts to compel the lessor or agent to undertake repairs by withholding rent, this may be considered a breach of the tenancy agreement. In such cases, a Notice of Termination may be issued.

Emergency Repairs

In the event of an emergency repair, please follow these steps:

1. Notify your Property Manager immediately.
2. If your Property Manager is unavailable, contact our office on 1300 208 888.
3. If the office is unavailable, call the emergency maintenance line on 1300 537 773.

Note: If the issue is not classified as an emergency repair or is found to be the result of tenant negligence, the tenant may be responsible for the cost of the service.

Routine maintenance.

What is routine maintenance?

Routine maintenance refers to issues that *do not pose an immediate risk* to the health, safety, or security of the occupants or the property. These are typically minor repairs or upkeep tasks that can be scheduled without urgency.

Requesting routine maintenance

To request routine maintenance, please complete the [maintenance request form](#) on our website with a clear description of the issue. Including photos can help us assess and address the problem more efficiently.

Expected Timeframe

Routine maintenance is generally completed within 28 days of the request being received.

Some items may be prioritised for earlier attention—particularly if the issue, while minor, has the potential to worsen if not addressed promptly.

Emergency maintenance.

What is emergency maintenance?

Emergency maintenance refers to any issue that poses an immediate risk to the health, safety, or security of the occupants or the property.

Requesting emergency maintenance

If you experience an emergency maintenance issue, please contact your Property Manager immediately.

Expected timeframe

A contractor will contact you within four hours of reporting the issue and attend the property within 24 hours.

Emergency maintenance can include:

- Gas leaks
- Burst water pipes, serious water service leaks, or no water supply
- Serious flooding or flood damage
- Serious roof leaks
- Sewer blockages
- Dangerous electrical faults or total power outage
- Serious storm, fire, or impact damage
- Failure or breakdown of the hot water system
- Faults or damage that make the premises unsafe or insecure (including smoke alarms)
- Loss of all toilet facilities
- Loss of all heating

Please note some situations may not qualify as emergency maintenance, such as:

- Heater issues when it is not unseasonably cold
- When multiple climate control units are present and only one is not working — this should be treated as routine maintenance

Garden maintenance.

As a tenant, you are responsible for maintaining the lawns, hedges, garden beds (if applicable), and keeping weeds under control, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the owner.

Trouble Shooting: Hot water systems.

In the case of the hot water system failing, please check the below troubleshooting.

No Hot Water

- Check the Power Supply: Ensure the circuit breaker hasn't tripped or for gas hot water, instructions for relighting are usually found on the access panel at the bottom of the tank.
- Reset the Water Heater: Press the reset button, usually located on the thermostat.
- Inspect Heating Elements: For electric heaters, check if the heating elements are functioning.

Inadequate Hot Water

- Adjust Thermostat: Ensure it's set to the desired temperature (typically around 49°C).

Trouble Shooting: Lights and Power.

- Has the power box tripped the safety switch or blown a fuse?
- If the safety switch has been tripped, reset. If it trips again you will need to unplug all appliances from the power points. Reset the switch and re-plug each of the items one at a time to identify what is causing the problem.

Changing the light bulb is the responsibility of the tenant, if the electrician is called out for changing the light bulb tenant will be responsible for the call out fee and any additional charges.

NOTE: If an electrician comes out and finds that a faulty appliance is the issue, you'll be responsible for the call-out fee.

Trouble Shooting: Air Conditioning.

- Has the power box tripped the safety switch or blown a fuse?
- When was the filter last cleaned? As a general rule, this should be cleaned every three months. If you are using the unit daily, it may require more frequent cleans.

Congratulations—you've made it through the booklet!

Just a reminder: if you have any questions or concerns throughout your tenancy, please don't hesitate to contact our office. One of our team members will be happy to assist you.

For now, we hope you can sit back, enjoy a cuppa, and start settling into your new home.





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