

COMPLETE GUIDE TO PASSING YOUR END OF LEASE INSPECTION

ABSTRACT

Moving out of a rental property can be stressful, especially when it comes to the final inspection. This guide provides essential tips to help tenants pass their end of lease inspection with ease. From detailed cleaning advice to repair recommendations, it ensures you meet your landlord's expectations and secure a full bond refund.

INTRODUCTION

The end of a lease marks a major milestone for every tenant. However, before you can move on, your property must pass a thorough final inspection. This process determines whether you'll receive your bond back in full or face deductions for damages and cleanliness issues. By understanding what property managers look for and preparing strategically, you can make your end of lease inspection smooth, stress-free, and successful.

I. Starting a tenancy

As a tenant you have rights under the Residential Tenancies Act 2010 and Residential Tenancies Regulation 2019. This factsheet outlines the law in NSW about starting a tenancy – including the form of the residential tenancies agreement, what information you can expect the landlord or agent to provide, what costs you can be asked to pay, and the rules about the condition report.



What is a residential tenancy agreement?

A residential tenancy agreement is a contract. It sets out the tenant's and landlord's rights and obligations. It is also commonly known as a **lease**.

Tenancy agreements are usually in written form. They can also be oral (e.g. a conversation with the landlord), or partly written – partly oral. All agreements must follow the *Residential Tenancies Act 2010* ('the Act').

A landlord should provide the tenancy agreement in writing. If not, then during the first 6 months of the tenancy, they cannot increase the rent and cannot end the tenancy without a legally specified reason.

There are two types of agreement:

- **fixed term** – for a specified period (e.g. 12 months)
- **periodic** – ongoing, no fixed term is specified

At the end of the fixed-term, a residential tenancy agreement automatically becomes periodic (ongoing), unless it is ended by one of the parties.

Additional terms

The landlord may include additional terms in the standard tenancy agreement but they are only valid if:

- both you and the landlord agree to them
- they do not conflict with the Act or any other laws
- they don't conflict with the terms of the standard residential tenancy agreement

If there is a conflict between additional terms and the Act, other laws or the terms of the standard agreement, the additional terms are invalid.

Tenancy agreements in share housing

If you rent part of the premises from another tenant, it is in your interest to have a written tenancy agreement with them. See Factsheet: Share Housing and Factsheet: Transfer and sub-letting.

What information does the landlord/agent have to provide?

Before signing a tenancy agreement

A landlord/agent **must state a fixed amount of rent in the advertisement or offer** for the rental property. Any attempt to solicit a higher amount than the advertised amount is prohibited.

If a landlord decides to enter into a tenancy agreement with you, they (or their agent) must not knowingly hide any of these **'material facts'** from you:



- the premises have been subject to serious flooding or bushfire in the last 5 years

- the premises have significant health/safety risks that are not apparent on inspection
- the premises have been the scene of a serious violent crime in the last 5 years
- council waste services will be different from others in the council area
- you cannot get a free residential parking permit (in an area where only paid parking is available)
- the premises have a driveway or walkway that others can legally use
- the premises was the scene of a drug offence under the *Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act 1985* in the last 2 years
- the premises is listed on the Loose-fill Asbestos Insulation (LFAI) Register maintained under the *Home Building Act 1989*
- if you are renting in a strata scheme – any scheduled repairs to common property during your fixed term

If your rented home is in a building where the building's external combustible cladding needs rectification, the landlord/agent must tell you if any of the following have been issued:

- fire safety order / notice of intention to issue a fire safety order
- a building rectification order or notice of intention to issue a building rectification order
- a development application or complying development certificate application for rectification of the building

The landlord (or their agent, if the agent is aware) must also tell you if either of the following apply:

- they propose to sell the premises (if they have prepared a contract for sale of the premises)
- a mortgagee has started court proceedings to enforce a mortgage over the premises

You may be able to terminate your tenancy if your landlord fails to disclose any of these material facts to you. See also Factsheet: How do I end my tenancy?, Resource: Mortgagee repossession, Factsheet: Mould, and Factsheet: Asbestos and lead.

Landlord's information statement

A landlord must sign an acknowledgment on the tenancy agreement that they have read and understood the contents of the NSW Fair Trading landlord information statement which sets out the landlord's rights and obligations under the law.

Real estate agents signing this acknowledgement must first obtain a written statement from the landlord that the landlord has read and understood their rights and obligations as set out in the information statement.

Social housing providers (including Homes NSW, community housing providers and the Aboriginal Housing Office) are exempt from signing this acknowledgment.



On signing a tenancy agreement

The landlord/agent must give you a NSW Fair Trading tenant information statement. If you are renting in a strata scheme, they must give you a copy of the strata by-laws within 7 days, and inform you if a strata renewal committee is currently established for the scheme.

Landlord's/agent's contact details

Before or when you sign the tenancy agreement, the landlord/agent must give you these contact details in writing (or include them in the tenancy agreement):

- the name, phone number and business address of the landlord's agent (if any) and the name and phone number or other contact details of the landlord, or
- (if there is no agent) the business or residential address and phone number of the landlord, or
- (if the landlord is a corporation) the name and business address of the corporation.

II. 10 Reasons You Shouldn't Skip a Home Inspection

Buying a home comes with many additional expenses beyond the price of the house and the mortgage. Among these is a home inspection, which is a thorough check of a house's condition and systems. This includes the structural condition of the house and the functionality of systems such as electrical, plumbing, heating and cooling, and more. A purchase agreement might even be contingent on specific outcomes of the home inspection. Even if you feel confident the home is in good condition, there are 10 good reasons why you should get a home inspection and why it is worth the $300 to $600 it likely will cost.

1. It Provides an "Out"

A quality home inspection can reveal critical information about the condition of a home and its systems. This makes the buyer aware of what costs, repairs and maintenance the home may require immediately, and over time. If a buyer isn't comfortable with the findings of the home inspection, it usually presents one last opportunity to back out of the offer to buy.

2. Safety

A home inspection can detect safety issues like radon, carbon monoxide, and mold, which all homes should be tested for.2 Make sure that your home-buying contract states that should such hazards be detected, you have the option to cancel the offer to buy.

3. Reveal Illegal Additions or Installations

A home inspection can reveal whether rooms, altered garages or basements were completed without a proper permit, or did not follow code, according to Chantay Bridges of Clear Choice Realty & Associates. "If a house has illegal room additions that are un-permitted, it affects the insurance, taxes, usability and most of all the overall value. In essence, a buyer is purchasing something that legally does not exist," she explains. Even new homes with systems that were not installed to code will become the new homeowners' financial "problem" to fix (and finance).



4. Protection

Home inspections are even more critical if you are buying an "as-is" foreclosed property or short sale. Dwellings that have been boarded often develop hazardous mold problems, which are costly to remedy and pose health concerns. Greg Haskett, Director of Operations at TrueBlue Total House Care says it's common for home inspectors to find that copper plumbing lines and outdoor compressors have been removed from foreclosed properties by people trying to sell copper to recyclers for money.

5. Negotiating Tool

Realtor Jennifer De Vivo, owner of Orlando-based Lotus Door Realty says the home inspection report presents an opportunity to ask for repairs and/or request a price reduction or credit from the seller. Work with your realtor to understand what requests can and should be made to negotiate a better deal.

6. Forecast Future Costs

A home inspector can approximate the installation age of major systems in the home like plumbing, heating and cooling, and critical equipment like water heaters. They can diagnose the current condition of the structure itself, and tell you how long finishes have been in the home. All components in the home have a "shelf-life."

TIP
Understanding what may require replacement can help you make important budgeting decisions, and it will determine what type of home insurance coverage or warranties you should consider.

7. Determine "Deal-Breakers"

De Vivo suggests that home inspections can help buyers identify how much additional money or effort they are willing and able to spend to take the home to a condition that is personally acceptable. If you are unwilling to repair issues like faulty gutters, cracked walls, or ceilings, perhaps you are not ready to end your home buying search.



8. Learn to Protect Your Investment

The home inspector is a valuable educational resource. They can suggest specific tips on how to maintain the home, and ultimately save you thousands of dollars in the long term, according to De Vivo.

9. Reveal the Big Picture

Haskett advises that people use home inspection to understand the nuances of what may be the biggest purchase they ever make. "People fall in love with a piece of property based on the color of the walls, the location of the home, or something else;

they are completely blind to the issues that can make that dream home a nightmare," he says.

10. Insurance

Some insurance companies will not insure a home if certain conditions are found, or without the presence of certifications like Wind Mitigation and four-point inspections, according to Haskett. "Qualified home inspectors can do these things at the same time as their other services and save the home buyer time and money in the long run."

How Much Does a Home Inspection Cost?

The cost will depend on location and the size of the house, among other factors. A home inspection service in Michigan lists prices starting at less than $300 for homes up to 1,500 square feet and more than $500 for homes up to 4,000 square feet. There are additional costs for things like detached buildings or testing water.1

Is a Home Inspection Required?

Home inspections usually are not required, unlike home appraisals, which assess a property's market value and impact how much can be borrowed from the lender.

What Is Included in a Home Inspection?

Standard elements of a home inspection usually include a check of the home's electrical systems, plumbing, heating and cooling, the roof and other structural elements, and more. The full details of the inspection will depend on the specifics of the building and the needs or requests of the person paying for the inspection.

It is your responsibility to understand as many details as you can about the property you may soon call home. Home inspections reveal the inner workings of the property, allowing you to be informed of all the perks and pitfalls the home has to offer.

III. 11 Essential Items You Need To Have On Your Home Inspection Checklist



When you're preparing to buy a house, it can feel like love at first sight. However, you shouldn't let that infatuation blind you to potential red flags that could be addressed before you seal the deal. As a common part of the contract period, a home inspection allows potential buyers to get a good picture of a property's condition—including any potential issues with the structure, electrical wiring, HVAC system and so on.

By working through a home inspection checklist for buyers, you can feel confident that you know what you are getting into with a home. In most cases, it is wise to hire a professional home inspector who is trained to identify issues with a home through a non-invasive examination that's detailed in a home inspection checklist. The full report should be very thorough, which then allows the prospective buyer to present any repair requests to the seller. The seller may agree to all, some or none of the requests, at which point the buyer has a chance to terminate the contract.

Like much related to home buying (and selling), that process may sound daunting. However, in many cases, home inspections serve to help the transaction continue smoothly.

Home Inspection Checklist for Buyers

Even with a professional home inspector on the job, it can help buyers to have a home inspection checklist to keep on hand. When possible, it is also recommended that buyers are present for the inspection. Some states require that a buyer's agent is present. Others do not allow the agent to be present. Your realtor should be able to give you insight on the regulations for your area.

As a buyer attending a home inspection, your job isn't to micromanage the professional inspector. Rather, being there allows you to ask follow-up questions so that you can have an understanding of issues before renegotiating with the seller.

Although home inspections are not nationally standardized, many professional home inspectors adhere to the American Society of Home Inspectors' Standard of Practice. This checklist offers clarity about what is reviewed during the inspection.

Structural System

The inspector should evaluate structural components, such as the foundation and framing. The purpose of these evaluations is to note the condition of structural elements (including ceilings, floors, walls and roofs) rather than to offer an opinion on the adequacy of the components. A structural engineer is better qualified to share a detailed opinion.

Exterior

During the exterior inspection, the inspector should note the condition of wall coverings, exterior doors, attached decks or balconies, adjacent walkways or driveways and surface draining that could affect the structure. This inspection may not extend to fences, out-buildings or other landscaping elements unlikely to impact the home.

Roof System

With the roof inspection, the inspector should examine the roof drainage system, flashing, skylights and chimney. In the report, the inspector should describe the roofing materials as well as the process they used to inspect the roof.

Plumbing System

While examining the plumping system, the inspector should take a look at faucets, water fixtures, drains, waste systems, vent systems, water heating equipment, sewage ejectors and piping and related systems. The report should include a description of the plumping system materials, energy sources and valves. Generally, the inspection will not include an analysis of laundry machines, wells, water conditioners, landscaping irrigation systems and water pressure.



Electrical System

As a significant component of the house—as well as a safety factor—the inspector's review of the electrical system should be extensive and include an inspection of service drop, service conductors, cables and raceways, service grounding, interior service panels, conductors, overcurrent protection devices and a "representative" number of installed light fixtures and outlets.

The report should include a review of where main panels are located, the main wiring method, whether there are smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms, and the amperage rating of service. This review may not extend to renewable energy systems, additional wiring systems and the efficacy of alarms.

Heating System

So that they may describe the energy sources and heating system, the inspector should inspect installed heating equipment, vent systems (including flues and chimneys) and heat distribution systems. This does not typically include an inspection of heating systems that are not "readily accessible," such as the interior of chimneys.

Air Conditioning System

By inspecting “readily openable access panels,” the inspector should detail the condition of permanently installed cooling systems and distribution systems. This may not involve an inspection of renewable energy cooling systems, cooling supply balance and impermanent cooling systems, such as window units.

Interior

While examining the interior, the inspector should review the condition of walls, ceilings, floors, steps, stairways, railings, countertops, garage doors and major appliances. The inspector should also look at a “representative” number of installed cabinets, windows and doors. The interior inspection does not include floor coverings, wall finishes, window treatments or the operational features of inspected appliances.

Insulation and Ventilation

To describe the insulation and vapor retarders in unfinished spaces, the inspector should examine attics, crawlspaces, the basement and exhaust systems. However, the inspector is not to disturb insulation.

Fireplace and Fuel-Burning Appliances

To describe systems and components of fireplaces and fuel-burning appliances, the inspector should inspect chimneys, vent systems, fireplaces, stoves and fireplace inserts. This does not include an inspection of seals, gaskets, fireplace doors and components that are not “readily accessible.” The inspector is also not expected to assess the adequacy of heating elements.

IV. A Tenant’s Guide: What Happens If You Fail A Bond Cleaning Inspection?

Vacating your rental property soon? It is one of the most stressful experiences for many tenants. In addition to preparing for a house move, you are also responsible for restoring the property to the same condition it was in at the start of the lease. Unfortunately, most renters fail their rental inspection due to cleaning issues. Neglecting a high standard of cleanliness can lead to unwanted bond deductions, awful disputes and penalties. This can be unsettling for many renters.



Worry not**! This guide will help you understand what happens if you fail a rental inspection due to half-baked cleaning.** With proper planning, a knack for dealing with potential consequences and an optimistic mindset, you can alleviate cleaning stress and unexpected costs. It can help you reclaim full bond money. It is good to hire professionals for a budget end of lease cleaning Sydney to ensure a hassle free experience. They offer a bond back guarantee and a free re clean if the landlord is unsatisfied with the job. Always remember that knowing what to expect can prevent a financial setback while ensuring a smooth move out.

1. What is Bond Cleaning Inspection?

It is an intensive inspection of a rental property conducted by the property manager and landlord at the end of a tenancy. The primary objective is to check whether the house has been cleaned and maintained to a standard condition, as outlined in the tenancy agreement and the property condition report.

It should be in the same condition (except for fair wear and tear) as it was at the start of the lease. It is important for tenants to meet the cleaning obligations, return the keys, give prior notice and stay vigilant to pass your final rental inspection. This can help you secure full bond money.

2. What are the Consequences of Failing the Final Rental Inspection?

Unfortunately, failing bond cleaning inspection can be the most annoying thing for renters! Here's what happens if you face such a scenario:

- Losing Partial or Full Bond Money

This is one of the most obvious consequences of a failed bond cleaning inspection. The landlord or property manager has the right to withhold partial or full bond money if the property is in unkempt condition, except for fair wear and tear. This includes complete removal of dust, dirt, debris, oil splatters, soap scum, mould, mildew, bad odours and germs from every nook and cranny. It should meet the set cleanliness standards or unless landlords can lodge a claim against your security deposit with the NSW Fair Trading. The bond amount is equal to four week's rent in Sydney.

- Unwanted Rental Disputes and Delays

Failing a property inspection at the end of a tenancy often leads to awful conflicts between landlords and tenants. This can be stressful as well as time-consuming for everyone. Legal proceedings may also include tribunal hearings, making it difficult to move out effortlessly. You may even find difficulties in getting new rental properties in the same location.

- Incurring Higher Cleaning Fees

If you fail to reclean the missed spots, the landlord may hire their own cleaners. They can deduct these expenses from your bond, leading to more financial setbacks. This may cost higher than what you would have paid initially.



- Unwanted Stress and Inconvenience

Dealing with such a situation and arranging for recleaning can increase your stress while taking up your precious time, causing inconvenience. Thus, it is always better to choose the best company for a professional end of lease cleaning Sydney service who offer a guarantee and quality cleaning assurance.

- Negative Impact on Your Rental History

Sometimes, a bond dispute over bond cleaning could create obstacles in getting references from your previous agents and landlords. This might impact the chances of securing future rental properties, especially in metropolitan cities like Sydney, NSW.

3. What are the Common Reasons for Failing Inspections?

Most tenants fail the final rental inspection because of missing important areas when cleaning the property. This may include ceiling fans, light fixtures and fittings, skirting boards, kitchen appliances, windows and venetian blinds, areas behind heavy appliances, showerheads, glass doors, toilets etc.

Landlords may also holdback a part of bond due to stained or dull carpets, neglected external areas like patio floors, garage walls and yards. Thus, it is important to pay attention to details and leave no traces of dust and grime behind when preparing your rental property for the final inspection.

That’s one of the reasons why renters hire professionals for a detailed end of lease cleaning Sydney. They come equipped with necessary supplies and follow a pre approved cleaning checklist, addressing all nooks and crannies to meet landlord’s expectations.

4. Tenant’s Rights: Things to Do If You Fail the Rental Inspection

Failing a final rental inspection can be overwhelming, but ensure you know your rights and take the necessary steps to resolve the situation. Here are a few things you can do:



- **Request a Detail Report To Understand the Reason:** The landlord must provide you with a complete condition report, outlining the key reasons for failure.
- **Refer to the Entry Condition Report:** Ensure you thoroughly compare the exit report with the initial one to identify pre-existing damages and other discrepancies.
- **Communicate with Your Landlord:** Don’t hesitate to discuss the failed inspection issues. Understand their perspective and explain your points, photos, and videos to avoid rental disputes.
- **Consider Recleaning:** If possible, reclean the missed spots pointed out by your landlord to reclaim your full bond money.
- **Contact NSW Fair Trading:** If you think that the landlord is unfair to you or breaching the tenancy laws, lodge a complaint with NSW Fair Trading to resolve the dispute.
- **Apply to NCAT:** If you can’t resolve the dispute via negotiation, apply to NCAT for a hearing. They can make legal decisions on rental disputes, including bond refunds. To claim your points, provide evidence, such as photos, videos, etc.

5. How to Pass the Final Rental Inspection?

If you want to avoid the stress of rental inspection failure, create a proper plan for a hassle-free move-out. It is good to re-check the cleaning obligations in your lease

agreement to know specific requirements. Ensure you follow a proper checklist to cover all nooks and crannies, including hard-to-reach spots, important areas and contaminated surfaces.

One of the best things to do is hiring professionals for an expert end of lease cleaning Sydney. They come equipped with advanced tools and chemical free products and understand local tenancy laws. Experienced cleaners can meet your landlord's cleaning expectations while giving you peace of mind while ensuring full bond refund at the end of your tenancy. Some even also offer free re clean service in case of missed spots.

Failing the final rental inspection is a nightmare for tenants. However, with careful planning, you can overcome this awful situation and get your bond back. The tips and tricks mentioned above in the blog will ensure a smooth transition while helping you find the right way in case you fail the rental inspection.

V. Dealing with bond disputes for tenants

How to deal with a dispute about rental bond refunds. Learn when a landlord or agent can make a claim, how to accept or dispute that claim and what to do if there is a disagreement.



When a landlord or agent can make a claim

A landlord or agent may make a claim on the bond if a tenant:

- owes money for unpaid rent
- has broken the lease early and there is a break fee
- has not **cleaned the property to the same standard as the start of the tenancy**
- has not returned the keys or other security devices and locks need replacement.
- has left the property with **damage beyond fair wear and tear**.
- has **unpaid water usage costs** (if landlord has requested payment within 3 months of getting the bill).

A landlord or agent may make a claim without tenant's agreement

If the landlord or agent wants to make a claim from the bond without a tenant's agreement, they must give the tenant:

- a copy of the **condition report** completed at the end of the tenancy
- copies of estimates, quotes, invoices or receipts for work they are claiming

Copies of these documents also need to go to Department of Communities and Justice - Housing (DCJ Housing) if they paid all or part of the bond. Not providing these documents within the time required can lead to penalties for the landlord or agent.

Homes NSW

Find out how we can help you find or keep your housing and how to apply for private rental assistance, including Rentstart bond loans.

How will a tenant know that their landlord has made a claim?

If an amount of the bond is being claimed by the landlord or agent, the tenant will get an email and SMS with the Notice of Claim, with a **14-day notice period** to respond. For a bond that was lodged on paper, a tenant will get the notice mailed to them.

What can the tenant do?

The tenant can **accept the claim in Rental Bonds Online** for an online bond. However, there are further steps to take (see below) if there is a dispute.

What if things go wrong?

Resolving a dispute

You should make sure that:

- the property is in its original condition and
- that you have paid all your rent.

You should talk to your landlord or agent about what could be done to solve any issues and try to come to an agreement. The Tenants' Union of NSW has **tips on negotiating with your landlord** that may help. If you have negotiated an agreement with your landlord or agent, they should then pay the claim within 14 days.

If you still do not agree

If the landlord or agent does dispute your claim, they must apply to the **NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT)** within 14 days of receiving the notice and tell Fair Trading in writing that they have done so. The Tribunal will decide how the bond will be paid out.



After you make an application to the Tribunal, the next step is to **log in to Rental Bonds Online** before the 'due for payment' date. By doing this, you can advise Fair Trading that you have lodged a dispute to make sure that the bond is frozen, pending the outcome of the hearing or agreement of all parties.

If the bond claim was lodged on paper, you should complete the slip on the bottom of the notice of claim form and follow the steps on the form to return it to Fair Trading before the due for payment date so the bond can be frozen.

Going to the Tribunal

The Tribunal is set up to hear both sides of the story about tenancy disputes. This includes disagreements about bond refunds.

Tenants can go to the Tribunal even if the bond has already been paid out, as long as it is within six months of the payout. The landlord can also go to the Tribunal, with the same time periods applying.

Tenants need to provide details with evidence about their claim, including:

- the reasons why they should be paid all or part of the rental bond
- whether the bond was not lodged with NSW Fair Trading
- if the bond was already paid out.

CONCLUSION

A successful end of lease inspection is all about preparation, attention to detail, and following proper cleaning standards. Taking the time to deep clean, repair minor damages, and meet the required checklist will help you avoid disputes and ensure a full bond return. Whether you choose to do it yourself or hire professional cleaners, a well-maintained property reflects responsibility and leaves a lasting positive impression.

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