



Advice for students on locating appropriate accommodation in the private rental housing market



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# Barriers to getting a rental property

- Availability – the rental vacancy rate in Adelaide has been below 1% for over 3 years
- More prospective renters than properties – in the inner southern suburbs, there are 45 renters for each property advertised
- Cost – the median rental price has risen by between 13 (houses) and 18 (units) per cent over the last 12 months
- Not having a (good) rental history
- Prejudice against students / sharers





# Be prepared

- Know what and where you want
- Know what you can afford
- Know the market

# Avoid scams



- Beware of false rental advertisements on the internet
- Be very suspicious of offers that seem too good to be true
- Insist on personally inspecting the interior of the property
- Do not pay any money until you have inspected the property, met the landlord/property manager and are satisfied that the offer is genuine. If paying in cash, insist on a receipt at the time of payment
- Do not send money e.g. via money transfer, which is untraceable
- Use recommended lease agreements and forms in English
- If unsure, contact us at [flinders.living@flinders.edu.au](mailto:flinders.living@flinders.edu.au) or call us on 7221 8900 for advice



## Budgeting

- Work out a **realistic** budget – try [www.moneysmart.gov.au](http://www.moneysmart.gov.au)
- Utilities (electricity, gas, water) are not usually included in rent – sharing a 3 bed house, the average cost is at least \$100 per person pcm
- Centrelink – check you're getting everything you can
- Bond and rent in advance
- Internet and streaming services
- Insurance
- Expect the unexpected – car repairs, lost / damaged phone / laptop



A person is sitting on a grey couch, reading a book. A hand is visible holding a brown ceramic cup of coffee on a matching saucer, which is placed on top of the book. The person is wearing a blue and white plaid shirt. A grey blanket is draped over the couch. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

# Living alone


- Fewer available properties
- More expensive rent
- 100% of utilities and other bills
- Loneliness
  
- Independence
- Freedom
- Control



# Shared houses – practical considerations

- Do you all attend open inspections? If not, be clear on everyone's priorities
- What if you can't find a property for the whole group?
- Are you signing one lease or individual leases? Know the differences in your rights / responsibilities
- How do you split the rent / bills? E.g. if one room has an en-suite, who gets it and do they pay more?
- If there are more cars than parks, who gets the parks (and do they pay more)? Be aware that you'll have to be open to moving cars so that your housemates can get in/out.
- Agree in advance how you will manage cooking / cleaning / visitors etc
- Agree in advance how you will manage conflict in the group





# How well do you know your housemates?

Have you lived with them before?

What do you know about living with them?

Do they always run out of money?

Are they messy?

Are they a clean freak?

Does this work with how you like to live?





## Presentation - make a good first impression

- Written
- Spoken
- In person



# Preparation



- Draft a personal statement to introduce yourself to the Property Manager. Think about what makes a good tenant, and portray yourself as one
- Have your documents ready (ID, rent ledger, bank statement, payslips)
- Check with referees before giving out their contact info
- Review any social media profiles – property managers may check you out



A group of white paper cutouts of human figures holding hands, arranged in a line. The figures are simple, stylized shapes with circular heads and rectangular bodies. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green gradient.

# Open Inspection

- Arrive slightly early, well presented
- Introduce yourself to the property manager
- Ask if you should remove your shoes
- Make yourself memorable in a good way
- Ask relevant questions
- Take measurements
- Eavesdrop on other applicants if you can
- Don't make yourself too much at home – other people probably still live there



# After you've applied



**Don't** ring or email the Property Manager frequently!



**Do** be patient



**Do** feel free to ask your referees if they have been asked for a reference



**Do** keep looking for other properties



If you are unsuccessful, take the news well and ask if the Property Manager has any suggestions about how to improve your application





Congratulations! Your application was successful





# Starting the tenancy

- Pay bond and rent in advance
- Check and sign lease documents
- Set up accounts for utilities, internet, streaming services
- Insure your belongings
- Change your mailing address (and redirect mail)
- Change your Licence address



# Property inspections

- Ingoing inspection
- Routine inspection
- Outgoing inspection





# Ingoing inspection

- Property Manager will give you two copies of their inspection report
- Before you move in, thoroughly inspect the property and take photos
- Note on the report any damage, marks/stains, items listed but not present, not clean – no matter how minor
- Check taps, electrical outlets, doors and windows / screens work
- When you leave, the outgoing inspection will refer back to this document, and you will be charged for any damage / cleaning not listed as pre-existing
- Sign both copies and return one to the agent



# The legal bits

- Your lease is a legally binding contract
- Governed by the Residential Tenancies Act (1995) and the Residential Tenancies Regulations (2010)
- General rights and obligations of landlords and tenants are explained in the CBS Information Brochure you receive when you sign the lease
- Check the lease carefully for additional terms
- Breach of lease (by tenant or landlord) can result in legal action being taken to enforce the breached term or end the lease
- Breaking a lease before the end of the fixed term can be very expensive





# Your rights

- You have the right to quiet and peaceful enjoyment of your home
- You have the right to a secure property
- You have the right to have repairs and maintenance carried out in a timely manner
- You have the right to adequate notice that the landlord requires entry to your home



# Your responsibilities

- You must pay the rent **on time**
- You must report and repairs or maintenance issues in writing as soon as you are aware of them
- You must keep the property in good condition and in a reasonable state of cleanliness
- You must not cause, or allow anyone else to cause, damage to the property
- You must not make any alterations to the property without the landlord's written permission
- You must not cause, or allow anyone else to cause, nuisance or interference with your neighbours





# Cleaning!

- It's nicer to live in a clean property
- Not cleaning can cause damage to the property, which you will be charged for
- If you keep the property clean, you won't have to spend hours cleaning before a routine inspection (or before you have visitors)
- In shared houses, always agree who will clean what and when

# Where to get advice and help



- Flinders University's Student Housing Service Officer
- Consumer and Business Services SA
- Rent Right SA
- SACAT



# Useful websites

- [www.moneySMART.gov.au](http://www.moneySMART.gov.au)
- [www.energymadeeasy.gov.au](http://www.energymadeeasy.gov.au)
- [www.centrelink.gov.au](http://www.centrelink.gov.au)
- [www.cbs.sa.gov.au](http://www.cbs.sa.gov.au)
- [www.sa.gov.au](http://www.sa.gov.au)
- <https://www.syc.net.au/rentrightsau>
- <https://www.originenergy.com.au/for-home/campaign/origin-value/sa-concession/>
- [www.realestate.com.au](http://www.realestate.com.au)
- [www.domain.com.au](http://www.domain.com.au)
- [www.nbnco.com.au](http://www.nbnco.com.au)
- [www.canstarblue.com.au](http://www.canstarblue.com.au)
- [www.finder.com.au](http://www.finder.com.au)