

10 Steps to Help You in the Private Rental Market

You may need to secure a private or shared rental property if:

- There is no student accommodation available.
- You are not considering or unable to pursue a [Homestay](#) option.
- You require housing for you and your family.

It can be difficult to secure a property or room in the private rental market. We have put together the below step-by-step guide to help you through this process. We also recommend you speak to friends, family, and other students to gain their insights as this advice is by no means exhaustive.

1. Research

Explore the links and information provided online and on the [ECU Accommodation Resources](#) page.

- Start with the Study Stays video - [Renting Successfully in Perth](#).
- Research location – look at the map and work out public transport and travel times. Keep in mind that you may have to expand your search criteria to include housing up to an hour away from campus to increase your chance of success, so factor in this travel time to your weekly planning.

2. Review affordability and plan your weekly budget

- Ensure you have enough funds to cover 6 weeks rent (2 weeks upfront and 4 weeks bond).
- You may be eligible for the [Department of Communities \(Housing\) Bond Assistance](#) loans (for eligible permanent residents) or other financial assistance at [ECU](#) or [ECU Guild](#).
- Use the [Study Perth Cost of Living Calculator](#).

Median Rents: House and Units Across Perth Metro	
Room only	\$180-\$350pw
1 bedroom unit	\$450pw*
2-bedroom house	\$495pw**
3-bedroom house	\$530pw**
4-bedroom house	\$600pw**

**Median price data 13 June 2023 – REIWA

*<https://www.realestate.com.au/wa/perth-6000/>

Most affordable suburbs around 1 hour or less from ECU by public transport:

JOONDALUP

Ashby \$316pw**	Osborne Park \$380pw**
Clarkson \$385pw**	Tuart Hill \$417pw**
Butler \$300pw**	Girrawheen \$351pw*

MT LAWLEY

Bayswater \$371pw*	Osborne Park \$380pw**
Maylands \$375pw*	Midvale \$371pw*
Mirrabooka \$380pw**	Girrawheen \$351pw*
Noranda \$372pw*	Gosnells \$336pw*
Kelmscott \$337pw*	

NOTE – Travel times have been calculated using Google Maps from the centre of the suburb.

*Figures for [median rent of houses and units combined](#).

**Figures for median rent of units from [REA suburb profiles](#).

3. Register and create profiles

Not all real estate agents and property owners use the same application process. Some use online apps via the rental listing sites, others use purpose-built rental application websites and others still use paper or PDF applications. You need to be prepared for all options, so register and create renter profiles/resumes on all of the below:

- [ECU Accommodation Listings](#) – register as a student and create a “Housemates” profile
- [Realestate.com.au](#) - create a “Renter Profile”.
- [Rent.com.au](#) create a “Renter Resume”.
- [2Apply](#) – create a “Profile”.
- [Tenant Options](#) – create a “Renter Profile”.
- [Flatmates.com.au](#) – create a “Listing”.
- [Share Abode](#) – create a “Profile Listing”.
- [The Room Xchange](#) – create a “Housemate profile”.

4. Prepare your application documents and information

- 100 points ID
- Rental history (preferably in Australia, but if you don’t have this, provide overseas history).
- Employment history (including overseas).
- Income statements (any proof that you have sufficient finances to pay the rent).
- References for previous housing, employers and personal.
- Add everything to your online profiles (from Step 3).
- Create a “Property Search” file on your computer/device and save all your documents here too.
- Ensure you have ALL information. Leaving off information or documents, may mean your application does not get reviewed by the real estate agent.
- Everyone over 18 in your household will need to prepare and submit an application.

Check out these resources to help you:

- [Circle Green – Making an application for a rental property](#)
- [REIWA – How to apply for a rental](#)

5. Create a cover letter

- Prepare an introduction of yourself to be included in your online profiles or saved as a cover letter.
- Like a job application cover letter, this is your chance to tell the agent why you would be the best tenant for the property.
- Find something that makes you stand out from the crowd – for example, you may be a keen gardener or have professional cleaning experience.

- Make it clear that you understand what it means to be a good tenant and you know your obligations.

Check out these resources to help you:

- [How to write a cover letter for a rental application](#)
- [Cubbi – 6 cover letter tips for a winning rental application](#)

6. Start a property shortlist

- Start browsing the listings based on location and affordability. Or just look at all the properties across “Perth – Greater Region”.
- When you see something that is suitable, register your interest or contact the agent.
- Create a calendar/planner of all the property inspections you will be attending.
- In some cases, they will ask you to apply BEFORE attending the home opens to get pre-approval.

7. Inspect and apply

- Attend home opens, try speaking with the agent to build rapport, present well and be on time.
- Ensure you understand what’s included/not included (e.g., there may be a storeroom that is not to be accessed by tenants).
- Aim to apply for as many properties as possible. You can apply for more than one property at once but be careful not to accept more than one offer.
- Because you have already prepared your application on all the websites and apps, this process will be more efficient. It may still take a long time and many applications before you are approved for a rental. Don’t give up. The more prepared you are, the easier it will be.

Check out these resources to help you:

- [Circle Green – Inspecting a property checklist](#)

8. Be available to agents and seek feedback

- After you have applied, keep your phone handy and if you miss a call from a real estate agent, get back to them ASAP.
- Most of the time you won’t be told why you weren’t approved for the property; however, you can ask for feedback from the agent and then (where possible) adjust your application for the next one. They won’t always be able to provide the feedback, but it never hurts to ask.

9. When approved, review the agreement carefully, sign and pay upfront costs

- When you are approved for a rental property, read the agreement carefully before signing and ask the agent if something is not clear. If you’re still having trouble understanding the agreement, you can seek support from [Consumer Protection](#).
- If you are signing an agreement as a “tenant” you are covered under the *Residential Tenancy Act (1987)*. If you are signing an agreement as a “boarder or lodger” you are not covered under this Act, but still have rights under Australian Consumer Law.
- Make the required payment to the agent promptly.
- If you are a tenant, the real estate agent or owner should pay your bond to the Bonds Administrator, where it is kept for the duration of the lease, until you vacate. **Ensure you receive notification that it has been lodged there.**
- You should not be asked to pay more than 4 weeks rent for the bond or 2 weeks rent upfront.

- Ensure all tenants over 18 sign the lease agreement and ensure you receive a signed copy from the agent.

Check out these resources to help you:

- [Your legal rights as a tenant](#)
- [Your rights and responsibilities as a boarder and lodger](#)
- [Renting a home in Western Australia](#)
- [Guide to shared accommodation](#)
- [Consumer Protection – Shared tenancies](#)

10. Prepare for your move and start your tenancy

- After the start of the lease agreement, the real estate agent should provide you a Property Condition Report. This needs to be completed and returned within 7 days. Be sure to report any pre-existing cleaning or maintenance issues in this report, otherwise you may be held liable for them.
- Depending on the type of property, you may need to arrange connection of utilities such as electricity and gas. The real estate agent will manage the water connection and send you the water usage invoices.
- Set-up ongoing rent as per the agreement and ensure each payment is on time. Check with your bank how long each transfer/payment will take.
- Arrange transport, source required furniture and move in.
- Comply with routine inspections (they can be conducted every 3 months in WA) and any other obligations under your lease agreement.
- Promptly report any maintenance or repair issues to the real estate agent during your tenancy.

Check out these resources to help you:

- [Circle Green – Starting a tenancy checklist](#)

For further advice of information during your tenancy, you can access the below services:

- [Circle Green](#) – Tenancy Information and Legal Services
- [Consumer Protection](#) – Tenancy advice and manages residential bonds and disputes.
- [Northern Suburbs Community Legal Centre](#) – Located at ECU Joondalup Campus
- [Legal Aid WA](#) – Free and low-cost legal services

For further assistance with housing, you can make an appointment with the ECU Housing Advice Officer [here](#) or you can email studentsuccess@ecu.edu.au.

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