



# SIMPLE GUIDE TO PASSING THE FINAL RENTAL INSPECTION

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## **ABSTRACT**

Passing the final rental inspection is one of the most important steps for tenants moving out of a property. It ensures that the home is in good condition for the next occupants and directly impacts whether you receive your bond back in full. Many tenants feel stressed about this stage, but with the right approach and preparation, the process can be smooth and hassle free. By understanding what landlords and property managers usually look for, you can plan ahead and avoid unexpected issues.



This guide provides easy steps to help tenants get ready for their final inspection with confidence. It covers key areas that often draw the most attention, highlights commonly missed spots, and shares practical tips to make the handover stress free. With simple planning, attention to detail, and a positive mindset, tenants can leave their rental property in great condition and secure their bond without difficulty.

## **LET'S GET STARTED**

The final rental inspection is the last check carried out by the landlord or property manager before a tenant moves out. Its purpose is to make sure the property is in the same condition as when the lease began, allowing for normal wear and tear.

For tenants, this step is important because it decides whether the bond will be returned in full. Many people worry about losing part of their bond, but with the right preparation, it is possible to pass the inspection with ease.

This guide explains the process in a clear and practical way, giving tenants the confidence to handle their move smoothly. It outlines the key areas landlords often focus on, the most commonly missed spots, and useful tips to make the inspection stress free. By following these steps, tenants can hand back the property in good shape, avoid disputes, and feel assured about getting their bond back.



## **INTRODUCTION TO RENTING IN NSW**

Renters have rights! This factsheet gives an overview of your legal rights when renting your home in New South Wales, plus links to find more information.

If you need advice on your legal rights as a renter, you can contact your local Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service (TAAS). TAASs are independent, non-



government organisations that provide free information, advice, and advocacy to renters.

It is a good idea to keep written records of what happens between you and the landlord/agent. Also keep copies of your tenancy agreement (lease), condition report, receipts, letters, emails, and photos of the property.

The real estate agent is paid by the landlord to manage the property. Remember that the agent works for the landlord.

### **WHICH LAWS COVER RENTING IN NSW?**

There are specific laws about renting in NSW. Most residential tenancies are covered by the *Residential Tenancies Act 2010* and the *Residential Tenancies Regulation 2019*. The Regulations provide detail about how the Act functions. Certain renters (such as boarders and lodgers) are not covered by the Residential Tenancies Act – see below.

The Residential Tenancies Act covers:

- private tenants who have a written or oral residential tenancy agreement
- social housing tenants – including public housing (Homes NSW), community housing, and the Aboriginal Housing Office. Social housing tenants have certain specific rights and obligations under the Act – see: Public and community housing resources.
- people who rent a home in a land lease community – see: Tenants in land lease communities.

The Residential Tenancies Act does *not* cover:

- boarders and lodgers – see Factsheets: Boarders and lodgers and Boarding Houses Act.
- sub-tenants without a written agreement – see Factsheet: Share housing
- home owners who rent a site in a land lease community – see: Home owners in land lease communities.

- ‘protected tenants’ – see: Protected tenants infosheet, and call your local Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service if you think you may be a protected tenant.
- aged-care, respite-care, nursing homes, retirement village residence contracts, and hospitals
- hotels, motels, serviced apartments, and backpackers hostels
- temporary accommodation, such as:
  - refuges and crisis accommodation
  - long-term holiday parks agreements – where you rent a site but it is not your principal place of residence
  - short-term rental accommodation (no more than 3 months), that is not your principal place of residence, such as holiday-letting through Stayz, Airbnb etc – see: Short-term rental accommodation (NSW Fair Trading)
- premises used mostly for business, trade, profession, or agriculture

The Residential Tenancies Act also does not apply:

- where a tenant made an agreement in ‘good faith’ for the purchase or mortgage of the residential premises
- where you are a shareholder living in company title premises
- where a tenancy agreement is part of an equity purchase agreement which gives the tenant an option to buy
- to most family arrangements.

### **WHY THE FINAL INSPECTION MATTERS IN RENTING?**

The final inspection is one of the most important parts of renting a property. It happens when your lease ends, and the landlord or property manager checks the home before you move out. The main purpose is to see if the property has been

looked after and whether it is in the same condition as when you first moved in, apart from normal wear and tear. This step matters because it directly affects your bond money, which is the security deposit you paid at the start of the tenancy.



If the landlord finds that the property has been kept clean and in good order, you are more likely to get your full bond back. On the other hand, if there is damage, dirt, or neglected areas, the landlord may claim part of the bond to cover repairs or extra work. This is why many tenants worry about the final inspection, as even small details can sometimes lead to deductions.

The inspection is also important because it protects both tenants and landlords. For tenants, it ensures you are not unfairly charged for issues you did not cause. For landlords, it makes sure the property is ready for the next tenant. Preparing well for the inspection shows respect for the property and can help avoid disputes.

Understanding why the final inspection matters allows tenants to plan ahead, pay attention to common problem areas, and leave the property in the best condition. It

is more than just a check—it is a step that decides how smoothly you move out and whether you can secure your bond with ease.

### **PREPARING BEFORE MOVING OUT AND ALSO AVOID THESE MISTAKES**

Moving out of a rental property can feel overwhelming, but with good preparation, the process becomes easier and less stressful. Planning ahead allows you to stay organized, focus on the right areas, and avoid last-minute issues that could cost part of your bond. The key is to start early and approach the move step by step.

The first step is to review your lease agreement and condition report. These documents show the state of the property when you moved in and highlight what is expected when you leave. Comparing the original condition with the current state will give you a clear idea of what needs extra attention. For example, if carpets were freshly cleaned at the start, you may be required to have them cleaned again before handing back the keys.



Next, create a checklist to guide your preparation. Break down the property into areas such as kitchen, bathrooms, bedrooms, living areas, and outdoor spaces. Having a list ensures you do not forget small but important spots like window tracks, light fittings, or skirting boards. It is also helpful to gather supplies in

advance—mild cleaners, cloths, a mop, and vacuum cleaner. If certain jobs seem too big, such as deep carpet care or oven cleaning, consider hiring professionals and keep the receipts as proof.

Another part of preparation is managing your belongings. Start decluttering early, pack in stages, and dispose of unwanted items responsibly. This reduces stress as moving day gets closer and gives you more time to focus on the property itself.

While preparing, it is equally important to avoid common mistakes that many tenants make. One of the biggest errors is leaving everything until the last day. Rushing often leads to missed areas and poor results. Another mistake is ignoring hidden spots such as behind appliances, inside cupboards, or ceiling fans. These areas are often checked closely during inspections, and overlooking them can lead to bond deductions. Tenants also sometimes use the wrong cleaning products, which may damage surfaces or paint. Always stick to gentle cleaners unless the lease requires professional services.

Forgetting outdoor areas is another common issue. Patios, balconies, gardens, and garages must also be left tidy and free from rubbish. Tenants sometimes assume the landlord will handle these spaces, but they are part of your responsibility. Similarly, failing to repair minor damages, like a loose handle or small hole in the wall, can cause disputes. Fixing these small problems before the inspection saves money and stress later.

Finally, a smart step in preparation is doing your own mock inspection. Walk through the property as if you were the landlord, checking every corner with a fresh perspective. Take photos of the property after cleaning to have proof of its condition. This not only builds your confidence but also protects you if disagreements arise.

In the end, preparing before moving out is about being organized, attentive, and proactive. By starting early, using a clear checklist, and avoiding common mistakes, you can hand back the property in great condition. This approach not only helps you pass the final inspection but also ensures you secure your bond smoothly, leaving the tenancy on a positive note.



## **THREE THINGS TO CHECK BEFORE HIRING A HOME INSPECTOR**

Every real estate investor understands the value of a good home inspector. Among other things, home inspectors identify invisible water damage, check the integrity of the foundation and identify other problems before they become serious.

But home inspections are expensive and time-consuming, and if you regularly invest in real estate you might suffer financially from phoning the home inspector too early in the process. That's why you should make a basic checklist of real estate red flags. If a property fails one or more tests, you know it's probably time to move on to another location.

### **No. 1: Check for running water.**

One of the easiest ways to see if a house has any outstanding issues is turning on each faucet and flushing each toilet. While a dry faucet might not spell doom, it is certainly something you'll want to look into.

In some houses (especially those with later additions) sinks, tubs and showers are added without a proper connection to plumbing. Plumbing is expensive, and often quite complicated, and sometimes an owner will furnish a bathroom or kitchenette before considering the full cost.

The last thing you want is to buy a three-bedroom/two-bath when you were expecting a three-bedroom/three-bath. By checking for running water you'll paint an accurate picture of the house.

### **No. 2: Test outlets and appliances.**

Test each section of each outlet. Though not always a deal-breaker, dead outlets are a huge hassle and can indicate large electrical issues. At the very least, this test will help you identify problem areas that the home inspector can evaluate more critically.

You'll also want to check the appliances while you're at it. Turn on the stove. Feel to see if the fridge is cold. Run the dishwasher and dryer. Appliances are relatively easy to replace but costly, and you'll need to figure the expense into the final cost of your investment.

### **No. 3: Look for leaks and water damage.**

You should also check for leaks and water damage. Look under each sink, and at the bottom of the walls in the basement. Pay close attention to smells — specifically damp, musty or mildew scents. You should also keep an eye open for a dehumidifier. If you find too many red flags in this category, you may need to furnish a number of replacements: from rotten wood to cracked pipes to moldy sheetrock.



Obviously, this is just a start. Add your own items to the red flag list! Gaudy shag carpet? Red flag. A draft next to old chipping windows? Red flag. A neighbor whose backyard looks like a recycling bin? Red flag. Personalize the requirements to your own standards. Only you can accurately judge what you can and cannot replace.

Just remember that there is nothing negative or defeatist about moving on from one potential property to another. Don't get emotionally invested in a building. Real estate investors are business professionals who value good returns on their

investments, the excitement of buying and selling property and the long-term appreciation of their wealth. Be critical. Assume that entropy will do its work, that what “can go wrong will go wrong,” and if a particular property doesn’t make the cut, quit it and move on to the next one.

### **KEY AREAS INSPECTORS FOCUS ON**

The final rental inspection is a detailed process, and landlords or property managers look closely at every part of the property before approving the return of your bond. While general cleanliness is important, certain areas always receive extra attention because they are most commonly used, more likely to get dirty, or often overlooked by tenants. Knowing these key areas in advance allows you to prepare better and avoid unpleasant surprises.

#### **1. Kitchen**

The kitchen is one of the most important areas inspectors focus on. Since it is used daily, it collects grease, stains, and food residue quickly. Inspectors will check the oven, stovetop, rangehood, and splashback carefully, as these are the places tenants most often miss. Cupboards, drawers, and pantries must be wiped clean inside and out, with no crumbs or marks left behind. Sinks, taps, and benchtops should also be spotless and free from water stains or food particles. Even small details, such as the inside of the dishwasher or the fridge space, may be inspected.



## **2. Bathroom**

Bathrooms are another high-priority area because they can easily build up grime, mould, and soap scum. Inspectors usually check tiles, grout, and shower screens to make sure they are free from residue. Toilets must be thoroughly cleaned both inside and outside, including the base and surrounding areas. Mirrors, sinks, and taps are also checked for streaks or water spots. Any signs of mould, especially around the shower or in corners, will be flagged quickly. A fresh-smelling and well-scrubbed bathroom creates a strong impression during inspection.

## **3. Floors and Carpets**

Floors are checked throughout the property. Inspectors expect carpets to be vacuumed and free of stains, and in many leases, carpets need professional cleaning at the end of tenancy. Timber or laminate floors should not show water damage, scratches, or stains. Even tiled areas, such as kitchens or laundries, need to be mopped well. Missing dirt or leaving pet hair behind on floors is one of the most common reasons for bond deductions.

## **4. Walls, Doors, and Windows**

Inspectors often pay close attention to walls, checking for marks, scratches, or holes caused by picture hooks or furniture. While normal wear and tear is allowed, large stains or damage may require repair. Windows should be cleaned inside and, if accessible, outside. Window tracks, sills, and frames often collect dust and insects, so they are inspected carefully. Doors, door handles, and light switches should also be wiped clean.

## **5. Bedrooms and Living Areas**

In these spaces, inspectors look for cleanliness, especially in built-in wardrobes and storage cupboards. Skirting boards, shelves, and corners should be dust-free. Ceiling fans and light fittings are another commonly checked detail, as they easily gather dust but are often forgotten. Curtains or blinds should also be clean and in good condition.

## **6. Outdoor Areas**

If your rental includes a yard, balcony, or garage, inspectors will not overlook them. They expect lawns to be mowed, gardens tidy, and patios free of rubbish. Balconies and outdoor furniture should be clean, and garages should be emptied



and swept. Tenants sometimes forget outdoor spaces, but they are an important part of the inspection.

In summary, inspectors focus on kitchens, bathrooms, floors, walls, windows, bedrooms, and outdoor areas because these reflect the overall condition of the property. By paying extra attention to these spots, tenants can ensure a smoother final inspection and improve their chances of getting the full bond returned.

### **KEY AREAS RENTERS OFTEN FORGET DURING BOND CLEANING**

Disputes over bond refunds are common in Sydney, as renters often lose their security deposit due to poor cleaning standards. The residential tenancy laws in NSW clearly articulate the cleaning clauses and responsibilities to foster a healthy and transparent landlord relationship. Under this, renters are legally obligated to return in the same condition as it was at the start of the tenancy. Overlooking minor details can lead to disappointing bond deductions.



As landlords meticulously examine every nook and cranny, it becomes essential to maintain strict standards according to the pre-approved cleaning checklist. From kitchen appliances to bathroom fixtures and fittings, windows and walls, ensure you focus on every single detail for a hassle-free final rental inspection.

Here is a list of key areas renters/tenants often forget during bond cleaning, leading to unwanted disagreements and bond deductions. It includes all the little details that can make a big difference when moving out of your lease.

Let's Get Started!

### **1. Ceiling Fans and Blades**

Ceiling fans are the most overlooked spot in any leased apartment or house due to their height. However, the blades tend to accumulate a thick layer of dust bunnies, debris and grime, contributing the indoor air pollution. That's one of the reasons why professionals start from the top (ceiling) for a professional end of lease cleaning Sydney. You'll need a microfiber cloth or telescopic duster to clean your ceiling fan. You can also use a pillowcase to fetch loose dust from fan blades. This will prevent the particles from spreading onto the floor.

### **2. Light Fixtures and Fittings**

Dust can build up inside light fixtures and fittings, affecting the indoor lighting during the rental inspection. When moving out, make sure you deep clean the fixtures and fittings thoroughly. First, turn off the power and use a step ladder or stool to access the spot.

Take a microfiber cloth to remove accumulated dust and debris. For stains and gunk, wipe down the surface using a cloth dampened in a mild dishwashing liquid solution. Buff-dry the fixtures to prevent unwanted streaks.

**Tip:** Allow the bulbs to cool completely before you begin cleaning.

### **3. Inside the Cabinets and Drawers**

Cleaning kitchen cabinets and drawers from the outside won't impress your landlord. It is important to clean them from the inside. Over time, dust, spills, splatters and crumbs can collect in these spaces. Leaving them dirty can breed harmful germs or mould growth, leading to permanent structural damage.

Start the process by removing all items from cabinets and drawers. Next, remove loose debris with a microfiber cloth. You can also use white vinegar and warm water spray to dislodge gunk and grease from the surface.

**Tip:** Use an old toothbrush to access nooks and crannies for spotless results.

#### **4. Window Sills and Tracks**

Windows are one of the key areas in a move-out cleaning session. However, people often forget about the sills and tracks. These rigid areas often collect dirt, grime, gunk and dead bugs, making your room look dirty. Mouldy window sills and tracks can lead to penalties in your bond amount.

End of lease cleaning Sydney professionals recommend using a handheld vacuum cleaner with a crevice brush attachment to clean window sills and tracks. It can effectively fetch dirt and grime in no time. For stubborn stains, mix equal parts of vinegar and warm water and spray on the sills.



#### **5. Behind Large Appliances**

There is no denying that kitchen cleaning is one of the most challenging parts of a routine clean-up session. Many renters pay attention only to the kitchen appliances- inside and outside but forget about them. Over time, these spots can

accumulate grease, grime, and crumb, making them a breeding ground for pests and lethal germs.

So, moving your oven, fridge, microwave and dishwasher to clean grime and gunk is good. You can use castile soap solution or soda crystals to tackle stubborn stains without causing any damage.

**Tip:** Avoid using excess water. Instead, use a dry duster or a dampened cloth when cleaning behind your appliances.



## 6. Baseboards and Trim

Impress your landlord or property manager during the rental inspection by leaving your baseboards and trim spotless. The accumulated dust and grime can ruin your home's overall look and feel, leading to bond deductions. To clean the baseboard, use a vacuum machine with a HEPA filter to catch allergens and gunk. You can also clean the area with a damp cloth or spot clean using a vinegar solution.

## 7. Garbage Disposals



These are the most neglected areas during bond cleaning. If you witness foul smells or blockages, clean them immediately. All you need to do is run cold water and grind ice cubes and lemon peels inside the disposal. This will banish unpleasant odours and debris. You can also unclog the drain using baking soda and white vinegar.

## **8. Bathroom Tiles and Grout Lines**

Did you know landlords strictly inspect the bathroom fixtures and fittings? When cleaning a spa bath, showerhead, toilet and counters, make sure you pay special attention to the bathroom tiles and grout lines. Here is a quick cleaning guide:

- Apply baking soda paste to the surface and gently scrub the area with a brush
- Use 3 per cent hydrogen peroxide to remove mould and mildew from grout lines.
- Leave it for a few minutes before scrubbing.
- Gently scrub with a soft-bristled brush
- Rinse and dry to prevent further growth.

## **9. Other Key Areas**

It is always good to hire professionals for a budget end of lease cleaning Sydney. They follow a pre-approved checklist to cover every nook and cranny. This includes the walls, window blinds, switchboards, patio area, floors behind heavy furniture and much more. With their assistance, you can relax and prepare for your move-out journey.

## **Wrapping up**

Cleaning a rental property at the end of the tenancy requires strategic planning and an optimistic mindset. Hopefully! This guide has helped you consider the most overlooked areas when preparing your rental property for the final inspection. It will help you pass the final inspection while securing your bond money.

## **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. 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.





### **TIPS FOR A SMOOTH INSPECTION**

- **Start Early**  
Begin preparations at least a week before moving out. This avoids rushing and ensures you cover every corner of the property.
- **Follow Your Lease Agreement**  
Review the condition report and your lease requirements. Some agreements may require professional carpet or pest treatment.
- **Use a Checklist**  
Break tasks down room by room—kitchen, bathroom, bedrooms, living areas, and outdoor spaces. This helps avoid missing important details.
- **Pay Attention to Commonly Missed Areas**  
Window tracks, skirting boards, behind appliances, ceiling fans, and light fittings are often overlooked but closely checked by inspectors.

- **Clean Appliances Thoroughly**

The oven, stovetop, and rangehood are top inspection points. Make sure all food stains and grease are removed.

- **Check Walls and Floors**

Wipe away scuff marks on walls and ensure floors are vacuumed, mopped, or professionally cleaned if required.

- **Don't Forget Outdoor Spaces**

Sweep balconies, tidy gardens, and empty garages. These areas are part of the property and must be presented well.

- **Do Minor Repairs Early**

Fix small issues like loose handles, blown light bulbs, or tiny wall holes before inspection. It saves time and prevents deductions.

- **Document Your Work**

Take photos of each room after cleaning to keep as evidence. This protects you in case of disputes about the property's condition.

- **Do a Mock Inspection**

Walk through the property as if you were the landlord. Spotting issues in advance gives you time to correct them.

- **Stay Calm and Positive**

A well-prepared approach makes the inspection smoother and gives you confidence to secure your bond back.

## **CONCLUSION**

Passing the final rental inspection does not have to be stressful when you prepare in advance and understand what landlords and property managers expect. The key is to start early, stay organized, and give attention to both the obvious and hidden areas of the property. Kitchens, bathrooms, floors, walls, and outdoor spaces are always inspected closely, so focusing on these areas can make a big difference. Creating a checklist, doing minor repairs, and documenting your efforts with photos are simple yet effective ways to stay in control.



It is also important to avoid common mistakes such as leaving cleaning or repairs until the last minute, ignoring outdoor areas, or overlooking small details like window tracks and light fittings. These oversights can cost part of your bond and create unnecessary disputes.

By approaching the process with a positive mindset and careful planning, tenants can leave the property in excellent condition, demonstrate respect for the agreement, and secure their bond money with confidence. A smooth final inspection not only brings peace of mind but also closes the tenancy on good terms, making the move to your next home far more enjoyable.

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