

A Guide to Rental and Property for Foreigners



Eligibility Criteria for Tenants

In Singapore, both renting and purchasing of properties are available options to foreigners looking to relocate here. When it comes to renting, there are no restrictions – regardless of whether the property is private or public.

However, there are certain eligibility criteria that foreign tenants must meet. They must possess at least one of the following passes:

- A valid employment pass or work permit
- A student pass
- A dependent pass
- A long-term social visit pass

Check Your Landlord's Eligibility

All owners must possess a property tax statement from the Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore (IRAS) that is proof of ownership of the property.

For HDB flats, only Singapore Citizens are eligible to rent out their entire flat. They must have also completed the five-year Minimum Occupation Period (MOP).



However, both Singapore Citizens and Singapore Permanent Residents are eligible for subletting bedrooms as opposed to the whole flat, but this is only allowed for flats with at least three rooms. They must also register any subletting with the Housing Development Board (HDB) within seven days of the subletting commencement date.

For private property, owners can rent out their homes whenever they wish.

Letter of Intent

A Letter of Intent (LOI) is a document put together by the Tenant that contains the Tenant's offer to the landlord. This document is subject to contract. It is important to draft this document carefully as conflict often arises when there is lack of clarity. Important details to clarify:

- Particulars of the landlord and tenant
- Address of the rental property
- Agreed monthly rental
- Duration of lease
- Start and end date of the rental period
- Amount for good faith deposit and security deposit
- Tenancy Agreement date of issue
- Last day for both parties to sign the Tenancy Agreement
- Conditions in which the good faith deposit is to be returned to the tenant/forfeited
- Diplomatic Clause
- Booking Deposit
- Security Deposit
- Tenant's specific requests
- Other requests



Tenancy Matters

Tenancy Agreement

A Tenancy Agreement is a legal contract between a property owner and tenant who wants to have temporary possession of the property at a certain rate, during which the tenant has exclusive possession of the premises. This contract typically lists the duties of both the landlord and tenant that were agreed upon.

Rental and deposit payments

- Rent paid monthly from lease start date.
- Deposit due upon signing (one month for 1-year lease, two months for 2-year lease) with first month's rent.
- Payment by cheque recommended.
- Move in immediately after getting keys for payment proof.
- Avoid paying more than a month's rent.

Disputes between tenants and flat owners

- Rental disagreements are private matters between tenants and flat owners.
- Recommended to resolve disputes amicably.
- Before signing, carefully read and understand all terms in the tenancy agreement.

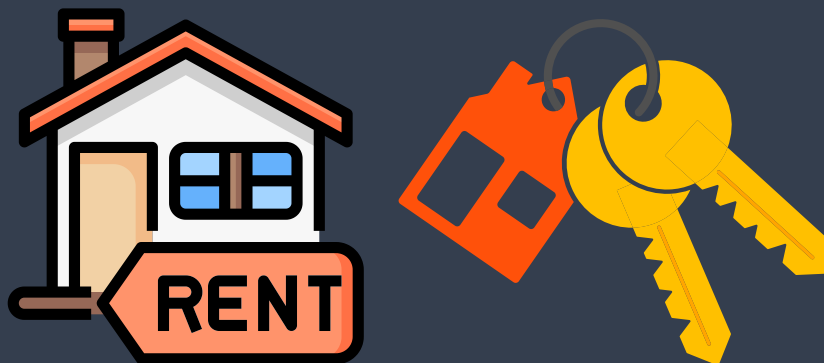


Engaging property agents

- Verify property agent identity by checking phone number on CEA's Public Register.
- Beware of scammers posting fake property listings, impersonating agents to scam payments for viewing or renting.
- Learn how to avoid falling for rental scams.

Approval by Mortgage

- Landlord can lease property if mortgaged, with written consent from the bank.
- Tenant may face eviction if landlord defaults on mortgage or if the bank closes.
- Important to request a copy of the bank's consent from the landlord before leasing.



Covenants

Covenants are the rights and obligations of both the Tenant and the Landlord written in the tenancy agreement. Here are some of the Landlord's covenants:

Implied Covenants

- The premises must be suitable for living
- Responsible for external and internal structural maintenance and repair
- Payment of property tax, insurance, and statutory charges
- Grant the Tenant the Right of Control (freedom to act as long as it is law-abiding)
- Allow the Tenant to enjoy and live comfortably on the premise

Popular Areas for Expats to Live

Orchard Road

- Heart of retail shopping
- Wide variety of restaurants, cafes, and eateries
- Recreational facilities and services
- Very close to the CBD area

Tanglin

- Wide range of housing options available
- Near to Orchard Road
- Near to Botanic Gardens

Holland Village

- Many cafes, ice cream, and dessert parlours
- Myriad of health and beauty services
- Filled with bars and pubs
- Local and Western restaurants where many expatriates like to gather and hang out at
- Wide range of housing options available
- Is an MRT station

Changi Business Park

- A mixture of tech, data and software enterprises
- Research and Development-intensive facilities
- Easy access to the CBD via Expo MRT

East Area

Bedok, Tampines, Flora Drive, Siglap

- Has a community village spirit
- Wide range of local and western restaurants
- Recreational facilities and services
- Wide range of housing options available

Central Business District

Anson Road, Chinatown, Neil Road, Raffles Place, Shenton Way, Tanjong Pagar

- The business district, filled with office buildings
- High-end restaurants, bars and cafes catering to the corporate crowd

South West Area

Buona Vista, Pasir Panjang, Clementi, Dover, Bukit Timah

- Houses many top schools from primary, secondary, and tertiary-level institutes
- Neighbourhood malls
- Key amenities and recreational facilities
- Wide range of restaurants and 24-hour eateries
- Wide range of housing option available

Sentosa

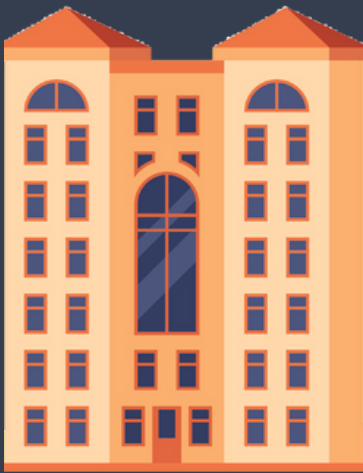
- Best neighbourhood feel
- Great access to recreational activities such as golfing and playing at the beach
- Near to attractions like Resort World Sentosa and Universal Studios Singapore
- Right next to VivoCity, Singapore's largest mall
- Convenient for those who work in CBD



Rental Options for Foreigners

Private Property

- All private property can only house a maximum of 6 unrelated people per property
 - Unrelated people refer to anyone who are outside the same family unit. However, domestic helpers are considered as part of the same family unit
- The minimum lease period is 3 months
- The property must not be rented out on a daily or weekly basis



1. Private Condominium – “Condos”

Condos, located in high-rise buildings, offer shared facilities like gyms and pools. In the central business district, a 3-bedroom condo ranges from \$4,000 to \$12,000 monthly, while outside central areas, it ranges from \$3,000 to \$6,000 monthly.

2. Landed Property

Landed properties such as bungalows, terrace houses, and semi-detached houses are generally more expensive to maintain and rent due to their size and location. A typical 4-bedroom bungalow in the central area may cost \$35,000 monthly, while semi-detached and terrace houses range from \$8,000 to \$13,000 monthly.





3. Serviced Apartments

Serviced apartments in Singapore, favoured by expatriates, offer fully furnished spaces with amenities such as laundry, room services, gyms, recreational rooms, and swimming pools. Ideal for foreigners staying less than a year, a standard 1 BHK in the central area can cost between \$7,000 and \$14,000 per month.

Public Housing

HDB flats are typically built near heartland areas where there are schools, malls, medical facilities, public transport, and other amenities like parks and gyms.

This is the cheapest option of all rental properties available and the recommended option if you are on a tight budget.

A typical HDB flat with 3 bedrooms, a hall and kitchen (3 BHK) starts from \$2,000 monthly in neighbourhood areas and starts from an upwards of \$3,000 monthly in the central business district.



Non-Citizen Quota

- The minimum lease period is 6 months
- The maximum lease period is 2 years for foreigners
- The maximum number of tenants for any flat is 6 people

Housing & Development Board

Singapore's public housing authority and a statutory board that develops public housing to provide Singaporeans with a better living environment.

<http://www.hdb.gov.sg/>

Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA)

The URA focuses on developing Singapore's physical land through long-term comprehensive plans and strategies to achieve a high quality of living.

<https://www.ura.gov.sg/>

For more information, visit:
<https://www.99.co/>
<https://www.propertyguru.com.sg/>

