



Minimum levels of security

The lessor is responsible for the rental property having a minimum level of security in place. Minimum security standards apply to door locks, window locks and exterior lights. The locks and devices required are specified in the Residential Tenancies Regulations 1989. It is illegal for a lessor to remove or change any locks without getting the consent of the tenant first.

Additional security and family violence prevention

In most circumstances, tenants must get the lessor's permission to change any locks or fit additional security. Sometimes tenants and lessors agree to share the cost of upgrading security above minimum standards. If this happens it's important to put it in writing and make sure both parties sign the agreement.

Tenants affected by [family violence](#), however, can change locks at their own expense without prior permission. They must provide the lessor a copy of the new key(s) within seven days unless the lessor is the alleged perpetrator. The lessor is prohibited from giving a copy of the key(s) to anyone the tenant has specifically instructed them in writing not to.

Tenants affected by family violence can also make prescribed security upgrades without prior permission as long as the tenant tells the landlord beforehand that they intend to make the security upgrades, they're done by a qualified tradesperson, the tenant (or a funding assistance scheme) pays for the upgrades, and the landlord receives a copy of any invoice. All upgrades should comply with strata by-laws and take into consideration the age and character of the property.

At the end of the tenancy, the landlord can ask the tenant to restore the rental property to its original condition.

Frequently asked questions

These frequently asked questions are designed to assist you in understanding how the laws may apply to your rental premises.

What security must be installed on all rental properties?

Main entry door
The minimum required security is a:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• deadlock; or• a key lockable security screen door that complies with AS 5039-2008.
Additional information
<p>The deadlock can either be a single cylinder or double cylinder deadlock. A single cylinder deadlock can be opened from the inside simply by turning the handle or a knob, reducing the risk of a person being unable to exit the house quickly in case of an emergency.</p> <p>The deadlock can be separate to the door handle or it can be incorporated into the handset.</p> <p>These are either/or requirements. If there is a key lockable security screen compliant with Australian standards already fitted to the front entry door, there is no requirement to retrofit a deadlock. Likewise, if there is a deadlock fitted, you are not required to fit a security screen door.</p>



All other external doors
The minimum required security is a:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• deadlock; or• if a deadlock cannot be installed, a patio bolt lock; or• a key lockable security screen door that complies with AS 5039-2008.
Additional information
The same requirements as above apply. If there is a need to install a patio bolt, it does not need to be lockable by key.



Windows
Minimum required security
Windows need to be fitted with a lock, whether or not there is a key lock that prevents the window from being opened from outside the premises.
Additional information
This does not mean having to install keyed window locks, but that window latches, closers or locks are fitted and are in working order to reduce the risk of a window being forced open from the outside. If the window is fitted with a security screen compliant with Australian standards (AS 5039-2008), there is no requirement to retrofit a window lock.



External lighting
Minimum required security
An electrical light at, or near, the main entry that is capable of illuminating the main entry to the premises and is operable from the inside.
Additional information
This won't apply if the property is a flat or apartment and the lighting is the responsibility of the strata body.



How were the minimum standards of security decided?

The former Department of Commerce consulted with industry representatives, property owners and tenants. The Department also sought advice from the Office of Crime Prevention.

The minimum levels of security reflect a position of agreement reached with the majority of stakeholders.

I own an apartment that is not on the ground floor. Do I still need to comply with these requirements?

You will need to meet the minimum security requirements in relation to the main entry door. If there is a door onto a balcony, you do not need to install the required security if the balcony can only be accessed from inside the premises.

You do not need to install window locks if the windows are not easily accessible from outside of the premises.

You do not need to meet the requirement for an entry light if the external lighting is the responsibility of the strata body of owners rather than the individual owner.

Do the minimum standards of security apply to my two storey house?

Yes, but only to some of the doors and windows. The required locks will need to be applied to all entry doors and windows on the ground floor. If there is a door onto a balcony, you do not need to install the required security if the balcony can only be accessed from inside the premises. The requirements also do not apply to any window that is situated on the second storey or above in a multi-storey home and is not easily accessible from the outside.

My property has louver windows. Do I need to install window locks on these?

Louver windows rely on an internal lever to move them into the open and closed position. This lever, when pushed into the fully closed position, locks the louver window. If this locking mechanism is not functioning, you will need to install another mechanism that will allow this lever to be locked in the fully closed position.

Do the minimum standards of security apply to rural properties?

If the property is on land zoned for agricultural or rural use, you will not be required to meet the minimum security standards. You will still be required to provide and maintain locks or other devices to ensure the rental premises are 'reasonably secure'.

The property I own is heritage listed and I am not allowed to install deadlocks. What can I do?

Properties listed on the State Heritage Register are exempt from these requirements. You will still be required to provide and maintain locks or other devices to ensure the rental premises are 'reasonably secure'.

Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety

Consumer Protection:

1300 304 054

Consumer Protection
Gordon Stephenson House
Level 2, 140 William Street
Western Australia 6000
Website: www.dmirs.wa.gov.au
Email: consumer@dmirs.wa.gov.au

Regional Offices

Goldfields/Esperance	(08) 9021 9494
Great Southern	(08) 9842 8366
Kimberley	(08) 9191 8400
Mid-West	(08) 9920 9800
North-West	(08) 9185 0900
South-West	(08) 9722 2888

National Relay Service: 13 36 77

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Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) 13 14 50

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