

START HERE

NSW TENANCY ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

Complete Renter's Toolkit — 13 Bundles, Legally Verified
New South Wales, Australia

NSW TENANCY ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

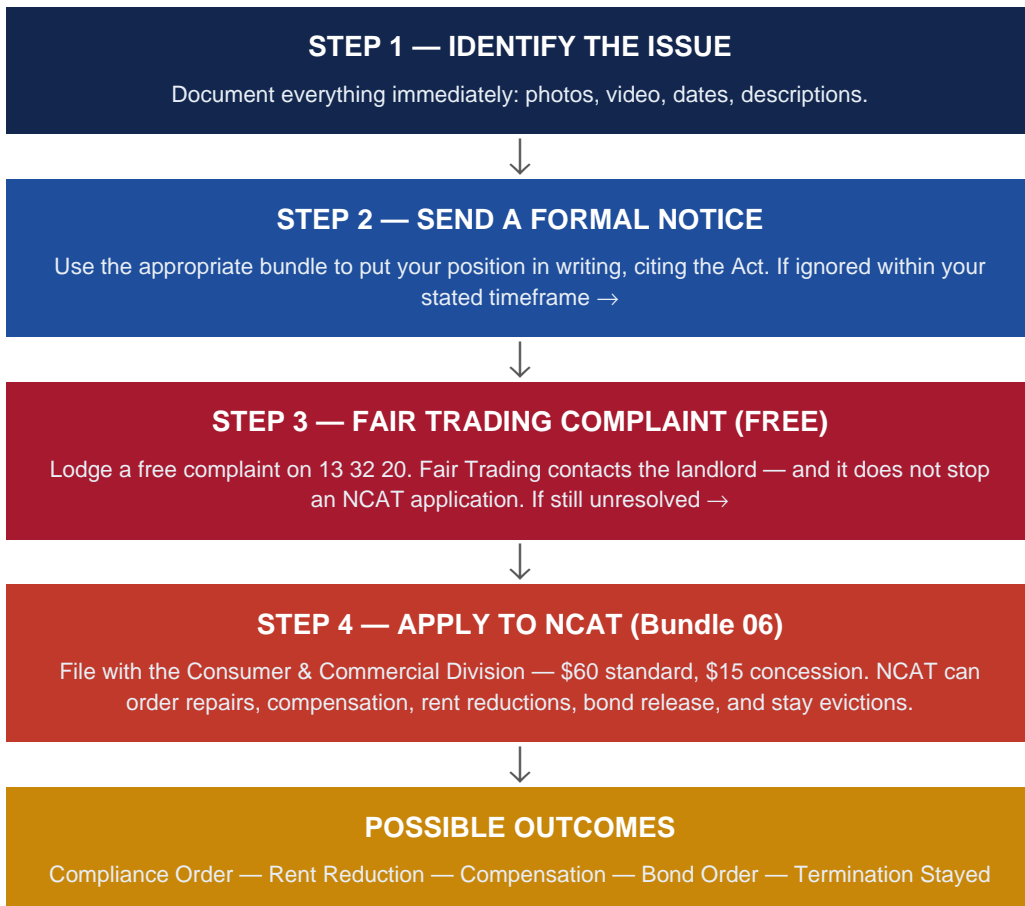
START HERE

Complete Renter's Toolkit — 13 Bundles, Legally Verified — New South Wales, Australia

You now hold a complete tenancy advocacy system built for NSW renters. Every template, tracker, and section reference in this toolkit has been verified against the Residential Tenancies Act 2010 as amended by the Residential Tenancies Amendment Act 2024 — including the major reforms in force from 19 May 2025. Use it systematically, document everything in real time, and you will have the strongest possible position — whether you are dealing with a negligent landlord, a stonewalling agent, or heading to NCAT.

HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS — THE ESCALATION LOGIC

Every tenancy dispute follows the same path. NSW has no mandatory breach-notice step — you can apply to NCAT directly, and a free Fair Trading complaint often resolves it first.



WHAT'S IN YOUR SYSTEM — 13 BUNDLES, IN TENANCY ORDER

#	BUNDLE	USE WHEN	KEY LAW
01	Condition Report Dispute	Move-in discrepancies — return your annotated report within 7 days	ss.29, 31
02	Minimum Standards Enforcement	Property fails fitness / minimum standards — mould, hot water, safety	s.52
03	Noise and Quiet Enjoyment	Persistent noise from landlord-controlled sources — diary evidence	s.50
04	General Repair Request	Non-urgent maintenance — appliance, plumbing, structural	ss.63, 65
05	Urgent Repair Notice	Emergency — self-arrange and be reimbursed up to \$1,000	s.64
06	NCAT Application Pack	Any unresolved dispute — applications, fees, evidence index	NCAT CCD
07	Rent Payment Protection	Real-time payment ledger — your defence against arrears allegations	RTA 2010
08	Rental Increase Contest	Excessive increase — NCAT challenge within 30 days of the notice	ss.42, 44
09	Entry, Privacy & Inspections	Deficient entry notice — wrong notice, hours, or over the 4/year cap	ss.55, 57
10	Pet Consent Request	Pet request — 21-day deemed-consent clock on the landlord	ss.70A–70D
11	Termination Notice Challenge	Notice received — no-grounds evictions are banned; test the notice	ss.86, 87E–87M
12	End of Tenancy & Cleaning	Moving out — 'reasonably clean' standard, not professional cleaning	RTA 2010
13	Bond Return Request	File your own RBO claim the day you vacate — 14-day clock on landlord	Pt 8, s.159

Each bundle contains a Bundle Guide PDF (instructions, the law, and a ready-to-send template) and an Evidence Tracker XLSX (How to Use tab + colour-coded logs). Bundles 01, 06, 07, 08 and 13 include additional specialist sheets.

THE FIVE GOLDEN RULES OF TENANCY ADVOCACY

01

If it isn't in writing, it didn't happen.

Every request, every response, every phone call — put it in writing and keep a copy. A verbal promise to fix something is worthless. An email confirming that promise is evidence.

02

Never, under any circumstances, withhold rent.

Withholding rent — even during an unresolved urgent repair — gives the landlord grounds for a termination notice and destroys your NCAT position. Pay rent in full, always.

03

Update your Evidence Tracker in real time.

Log every interaction the moment it happens — not from memory two weeks later. NCAT requires specifics: exact dates, exact times, exact words. Your tracker is your witness.

04

Always follow a phone call with an email.

After any verbal conversation with your agent, send an email: 'Further to our phone conversation today, you confirmed [X]. Please reply to confirm.' This converts a verbal agreement into written evidence.

05

Cite section numbers when you escalate.

Agents deal with tenants who don't know their rights every day. Quoting the correct section of the Act immediately signals you are informed and serious.

HOW TO RUN YOUR EVIDENCE TRACKERS

1

Open one tracker per issue

Open the relevant bundle's Evidence Tracker the moment you send your first notice. Log that send as entry 1.

2

Let the Status column drive your follow-up

Use the colour-coded status dropdown: Outstanding → In Progress → Escalated → Resolved. Anything Outstanding for more than 14 days needs escalation.

3

Name your Evidence References consistently

Name every photo, screenshot, and email consistently: e.g., Photo_Bathroom_01_15Mar26.jpg. Log the filename in the tracker.

4

Set a Follow-Up Required By date — every time

Set this the moment you send anything. If no response by that date, escalate.

5

Print your tracker before you file

Your Evidence Log becomes your Chronological Evidence Index — the first document you present at NCAT.

QUICK DECISION GUIDE — WHICH BUNDLE DO I NEED?

I NEED TO...	USE BUNDLE
Dispute discrepancies in my condition report	01 — Condition Report Dispute
Report a property failing minimum standards (mould, safety)	02 — Minimum Standards
Document noise affecting quiet enjoyment	03 — Noise and Quiet Enjoyment
Report a non-urgent repair (appliance, plumbing, damage)	04 — General Repair Request
Report an urgent/emergency repair (gas, hot water, electrical)	05 — Urgent Repair Notice
Take any unresolved dispute to the Tribunal	06 — NCAT Application Pack
Keep a payment ledger / dispute an arrears allegation	07 — Rent Payment Protection
Challenge an excessive or invalid rent increase	08 — Rental Increase Contest
Respond to a deficient entry or inspection notice	09 — Entry, Privacy & Inspections
Request consent to keep a pet (2025 reforms)	10 — Pet Consent Request
Challenge a termination notice (no-grounds banned)	11 — Termination Notice Challenge
Move out without being gouged on cleaning	12 — End of Tenancy & Cleaning
Get my bond back — file first via RBO	13 — Bond Return Request

APPLYING TO NCAT — WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

What is NCAT?

The NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal is a low-cost, accessible tribunal that resolves tenancy disputes without needing a lawyer. Apply online at ncat.nsw.gov.au — Consumer & Commercial Division. Standard fee \$60, concession \$15 (CPI-indexed each July).

What NCAT can order:

- Repair / compliance order (landlord must fix by a set date, s.65)
- Compensation (no fixed cap for tenancy matters)
- Rent reduction (applied retroactively)
- Bond order (full or partial release)
- Rent increase disallowed (s.44)
- Termination notice stayed or declared invalid (s.86)

Before you file, you must have:

- Try a free NSW Fair Trading complaint first (13 32 20) — it doesn't stop an NCAT application
- Your chronological evidence index (tracker printout)
- Copies of all formal notices sent
- Dated photos / video evidence
- For rent disputes: comparable property evidence

Check NCAT's website for current filing fees.

Low-income concessions may be available.

KEY SECTION NUMBERS — RTA 2010 (NSW) AT A GLANCE

When you apply to NCAT, citing the correct section number signals you are prepared and serious. These are the sections most commonly used in NSW residential tenancy disputes.

SECTION	WHAT IT COVERS	RELEVANT BUNDLE
s.29	Condition report — return annotated copy within 7 days	Bundle 01
s.31	NCAT resolution of condition report disputes	Bundle 01
s.50	Quiet enjoyment — no interference with peace or privacy	Bundles 03, 09
s.52	Fit for habitation + the minimum standards	Bundle 02
ss.42, 44	Rent increases — 60 days notice; NCAT within 30 days	Bundle 08
ss.55, 57	Entry — 7 days notice, max 4/year, 8am–8pm, no Sundays	Bundle 09
s.61	NCAT remedies for unlawful entry	Bundle 09
s.63	Premises in reasonable repair at all times	Bundle 04
s.64	Urgent repairs — self-help to \$1,000, paid in 14 days	Bundle 05
s.65	NCAT repair orders — compliance, rent reduction	Bundles 04, 05
ss.70A–70 D	Pets — 21-day response, prescribed grounds only	Bundle 10
s.86	NCAT termination challenge — eviction can be stayed	Bundle 11
ss.87E–87 M	Prescribed termination grounds — no-grounds ban	Bundle 11
s.159	Bond lodgement via Rental Bonds Online	Bundle 13
ss.157–182	Bond — Part 8: all rules, claims and disputes	Bundle 13

■ CRITICAL — THE MOST IMPORTANT HABIT

The single most important habit in any tenancy dispute: open your Evidence Tracker the moment an issue arises and log every interaction as it happens. Tenants who document in real time win at NCAT. Tenants who reconstruct from memory rarely do.

FREE RESOURCES FOR NSW RENTERS

ORGANISATION	ROLE	CONTACT
NSW Fair Trading	Free complaints, conciliation, bond lodgement (RBO)	13 32 20 — fairtrading.nsw.gov.au
NCAT	Tenancy dispute hearings, orders, bond disputes	1300 006 228 — ncat.nsw.gov.au
Rental Bonds Online (RBO)	Bond lodgement and tenant-initiated bond claims	fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/rbo
Tenants' Union NSW	Free factsheets and your local advice service (TAAS)	tenants.org.au
Legal Aid NSW	Free legal advice for eligible renters	1300 888 529 — legaid.nsw.gov.au
Community Legal Centres	Free legal help across NSW	clcnsw.org.au
Domestic Violence Line	24/7 emergency support and safety planning	1800 656 463
Housing NSW	Social housing, crisis and homelessness accommodation	housing.nsw.gov.au
National Debt Helpline	Free, independent financial counselling if rent arrears stem from financial hardship	1800 007 007 — ndh.org.au
Translating and Interpreting Service	Free phone interpreting for renters who need support in another language	131 450 — tisonational.gov.au