

A dark, moody photograph of a room interior. A window is the central focus, framed by light-colored curtains. Through the window, a bright, hazy view of a city and distant mountains is visible. The room is mostly in shadow, with the light from the window illuminating the curtains and the view outside.

HOW TO AVOID HOUSING SCAMS

AUSTRALIA

Unfortunately scams are common

You're coming to study in Australia!

You're now ready to find a place to live. This is one of the most important decisions you will make in order to have a great experience in your new city.

This is why we created this guide. To help you identify scams and make the transition to Australia painless. You just need to be vigilant!

You already committed tens of thousands of dollars in order to come live and study in Australia.

Many students, by trying to save a few dollars (very small percentage of the total cost) end up either living in an illegal room OR **being victims of scams**.

Victims of scams normally end up losing thousands of dollars because they end up paying twice the amount once they find a suitable place.

A common scenario looks like this:

1. Student finds a great looking room for a bargain price.
2. Student communicates with the landlord asking lots of questions.
3. The "landlord" sends (what seems to be) their Photo ID to demonstrate they are real.
4. The "landlord" convinces the student to commit to a longer stay (at an even lower price) and to pay several weeks in advance to a non-australian bank account (or using other methods).
5. Once the student pays, the "landlord":
 - Stops writing or disappears.
 - Sends address and room details that are fake.
6. The student arrives in Australia only to find that the address is
 - not the real one (the room doesn't exist), or
 - the address belongs to a shop OR is not a residential building.

The conclusion is that the student lost money, is now very stressed and had a terrible start to their Australian experience.



Be Vigilant



Please note: Despite the warning signs, and in order to appear legal, the landlord will send you a copy of (what is supposed to be) their passport and photo ID.

SCAM WARNING SIGNS

Your state's Fair Trading website ([read more here](#)) is a useful resource in protecting yourself against scammers. It usually contains information on how to avoid and report scams.

Some warning signs are:

- The place has very nice Images (the place looks great) yet, **the price is lower than any other place in the surrounding areas.** This is basically a bargain that you need to get quickly.
- **Offers which seem too good to be true** (e.g. promises of cheap rent)
- The landlord gives you ongoing excuses as to why **the property cannot be inspected** (Please note this only applies when you are already in Australia) For example: The landlord claims that they are currently not living in Australia.
- The landlord asks you to make
 - a direct **deposit into their overseas bank account** (bank account that is not in Australia), or
 - to mail a cheque, money order, international funds, pre-loaded card, or
 - electronic currency.
- The landlord tells you **they will mail you the keys.**
- They ask you to pay a very **high amount of money in advance** in order for you to get a further discounted price.
For example: If you pay 3 months or the entire semester in advance you save A\$10 per week.
(A\$10 x 52 weeks per year = A\$520)



As a student, you have a large range of accommodation options from which to choose from. However Australian universities provide very few university housing options (different to unis in other countries) and it is almost non-existent with colleges. This is why it is likely that you will live off-campus – like a local – as this is how 90% of students in Australia live!

We suggest you arrive in Australia at least two weeks before your classes start in order to get settled. Please note: There is high demand for housing, particularly student housing situated close to campus. **We suggest you start looking for accommodation as soon as you receive your Letter of Offer.** In this way you will avoid a lot of stress when arriving in Australia.

Room types

Homestay	You will live with a family in their home. Homestays are popular with younger students (e.g. high school students) or English Language students. Single or shared rooms are generally available, and costs vary by type of room, but are usually between AU\$250 and AU\$300 per week depending on the city and type of room (there is also a placement fee involved). Some meals are generally included (breakfast & dinner).
Purpose-Built Student Accommodation (PBSA)	There are a variety of companies that specialise in student accommodation. They vary from purpose built buildings with 40+ rooms to 2-3 bedroom apartments fully furnished where you will share the social areas. These options tend to be more expensive as they include all utilities are fully furnished and have lots of facilities, and can include services such as gym, pool, etc.
Rental Property (houses and apartments)	Many students in Australia choose to share the cost of a rental property with several housemates. Students who choose this type of housing may either move into a pre-established household, or they may rent the place with friends. With empty rental properties you will have to connect and pay all services, buy the furniture and all appliances. Prices for rental accommodations vary depending on the city and suburb.
On-Campus Housing (university run student halls)	Some universities provide on-campus housing options through residential colleges, halls of residence, or apartments. Prices and availability of accommodations vary according to the university and the services offered. Some of them also provide students with meals, cleaning, and a range of services for social and academic needs. Students should apply early, as these accommodation options are limited.
Serviced Apartments	This is a popular choice for students who come with their families and dependents (e.g. PhD student). This option tends to be a bit more expensive given that it is serviced on a regular basis BUT the whole family won't have to worry about a thing. These apartments tend to be centrally located as well, thus it will provide students with independence of fully self-catered living.
Hostel, Backpackers	Some international students may choose to stay in hostel or Backpackers. Kitchen and bathroom facilities are shared, and students cook for themselves in this type of accommodation. This option is mostly used for very short stays (a few days only) as hostels tend to charge per night thus they are more expensive than renting a room for a few weeks/months.
Hotels	Some International students like to arrive to a hotel for 1-2 weeks whilst they get to know the city, explore the suburbs and decide which one would be the best option for them. This option tends to be the most expensive of them all.

Visit [Bedssi.com](https://www.bedssi.com) for all your accommodation needs.

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