
Moving out of home - tips for young people

Summary

- If you are thinking of moving out of home, think about whether you feel ready (or whether you are reacting to peer pressure) and whether you have enough money to support yourself.
 - Draw up a realistic budget that includes 'hidden' expenses, such as bond, connection fees for utilities, and home and contents insurance.
 - Remember that you can get help from a range of community and government organisations.
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Most people move out of the family home and set up their own place during their late teens to late 20s. Whether or not leaving goes smoothly depends on the reasons you are moving out and the nature of the relationship you have with your family.

Reasons to move out of home

You may decide to leave home for many different reasons, including:

- wishing to live independently
- needing to live closer to your place of work or study
- choosing to live with your partner
- conflict with your parents
- being asked to leave by your parents.

Issues to consider when moving out of home

It's common to be a little unsure when you make a decision like leaving home. Think about:

- whether this is your choice, and if you feel ready, or if you are feeling pressured to move out by other people
- whether you have somewhere safe to live – if you are under 18 you might find it difficult to rent a house or sign a lease.
- whether you have enough money to support yourself – ask someone to help you draw up a budget to be sure that you can afford to cover the essentials like rent, bills and groceries. You could also use the [Centrelink How to budget page](#), or [MoneySmart's budget planner](#).

You may choose to move, but find that you face problems you didn't anticipate, such as:

- not being ready – you may find you are not ready to handle all the responsibilities
- money worries – the cost of living independently may surprise you, especially if you are used to your parents providing for everything. Debt may become an issue
- flatmate problems – issues such as paying bills on time, sharing housework equally, friends who never pay board, but stay anyway, and lifestyle incompatibilities (such as a non-drug-user flatting with a drug user) may result in hostilities and arguments.

Moving out of home – worried parents

Think about how your parents may be feeling and talk with them if they are worried about you. Most parents want their children to be happy and independent, but they might be concerned about a lot of different things. For example, they may:

- worry that you are not ready
- be sad because they will miss you

- think you shouldn't leave home until you are married or have bought a house
- be concerned about the people you have chosen to live with.

Reassure your parents that you will keep in touch and visit regularly. Try to leave on a positive note.

If your family home does not provide support

Not everyone who leaves home can return home or ask their parents for help in times of trouble. If you have been thrown out of home or left home to escape abuse or conflict, you may be too young or unprepared to cope.

If you are living in a foster family, you will have to leave the state care system when you turn 18, but you may not be ready to make the sudden transition to independence.

If you need support, help is available from a range of community and government organisations. Assistance includes emergency accommodation and food vouchers. If you can't call your parents or foster parents, call one of the associations below for information, advice and assistance.

Tips for a successful move

Tips include:

- don't make a rash decision – consider the situation carefully. Are you ready to live independently? Do you make enough money to support yourself? Are you moving out for the right reasons?
- draw up a realistic budget – don't forget to include 'hidden' expenses such as the property's security deposit or bond (usually four weeks' rent), connection fees for utilities, and home and contents insurance
- communicate – avoid misunderstandings, hostilities and arguments by talking openly and respectfully about your concerns with flatmates and parents. Make sure you're open to their point of view too – getting along is a two-way street
- keep in touch – talk to your parents about regular home visits: for example, having Sunday night dinner together every week
- work out acceptable behaviour – if your parents don't like your flatmate(s), find out why. It is usually the behaviour rather than the person that causes offence (for example, swearing or smoking). Out of respect for your parents, ask your flatmate(s) to be on their best behaviour when your parents visit and do the same for them
- ask for help – if things are becoming difficult, don't be too proud to ask your parents for help, if you can.

Where to get help

- **Kids Helpline** Tel. **1800 55 1800**
- **Lifeline** Tel. **13 11 14**
- **Launch Housing** Tel. **1800 825 955**
- **Relationships Australia** Tel. **1300 364 277**
- **Centrelink** for crisis and special Help Tel. **13 28 50**
- **Tenants Victoria** Tel. **(03) 9416 2577**

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