



# HOUSING GUIDE

Instructions for  
good living

V A A S A .



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NEW  
home!



# Welcome to your new home!

Moving is always exciting. It often means a new neighbourhood and being able to furnish your home to suit your own taste. Still, independent living also brings responsibility. There are many things you need to remember when moving, taking care of an apartment, and when moving out.

This guide contains important topics and instructions related to housing. The guide is helpful when you are looking for an apartment. In the guide, you will find information on who to contact in various housing-related matters and situations. Save the guide for future use, as it contains a lot of useful information to help make your daily life run smoothly.

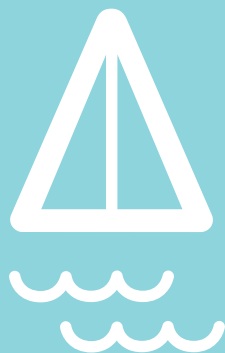
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## **This guide contains information on different matters related to housing:**

- Finding an apartment
- Making a tenancy agreement
- Planning a move and moving in
- Living in and taking care of an apartment
- Moving out of an apartment

## **In addition, you will find information on the following:**

- Local landlords
- Security in the home
- Who to contact in various problem situations
- Accommodation advice



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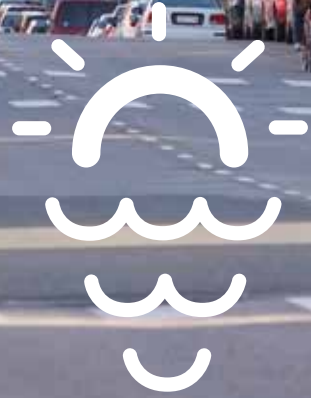


## Quick accommodation tips

- **Pay the rent** on time every month.
- **Take good care** of your apartment.
- **Keep the apartment keys safe.** Don't leave keys in the door lock.
- **Remember** that you have the right to domestic privacy.
- **Do not pour water** on the apartment floor when cleaning.
- You must ask the landlord for **permission before renovating** or making changes to the apartment.
- **You must reserve a time** before using the housing cooperative's laundry room or sauna.
- Follow the housing cooperative's **rules and instructions.**
- **Respect** quiet times.
- **Clean the apartment** and take household waste to the wastebin storage area regularly.
- **Make sure** that your apartment has a smoke alarm.

# Finding an apartment ?

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# Finding an apartment

When you start looking for place to live, it's a good idea to think about the kind of apartment you need and what would be the most suitable location for your living circumstances. Carefully consider the kind of needs you have in terms of housing.

- Is a one-room apartment enough for you or do you need more space? And what kind of location would be suitable so that your daily commute to school, work or hobbies, for example, remains reasonable? Are there bus connections near the apartment that would make your daily life run smoothly?
- Pay attention to the surrounding environment as well - Do you want to be close to nature or do you prefer to be in the city centre, and what kind of services do you need in your daily life?

When looking for a suitable apartment, it's good to also think about costs, such as what rental level is a suitable rent for you. The location and appliances of the rental apartment can significantly affect the level of rent. If you need income support for housing, consider in advance your possibility of receiving, for example, Kela's housing allowance or basic income support. Remember that family relationships can affect the granting of support. You can get more information and advice about support from the social insurance institution of Finland, Kela, or Social Welfare services.

## How to apply for an apartment

When you think you have found a suitable apartment, fill out a rental application or contact the landlord. You can find the contact information of the landlord or other contact person in the rental announcement. Contact the one renting the apartment and tell them that you are interested in it. You can usually see the apartment in advance and sometimes a public viewing is arranged.



# Rental apartments?





# Where to find rental apartments



Rental apartments are offered by rental housing companies and private landlords. You can find rental apartments, for example, on the websites of these operators:

## VOAS

The Student Housing Foundation in Vaasa - VOAS is a cooperative that offers rental apartments for students in the Vaasa region. VOAS offers shared apartments, one-room apartments and family apartments all over Vaasa.

[www.voas.fi](http://www.voas.fi)

## Pikipruukki

Kiinteistö Oy Pikipruukki is one of the largest providers of rental accommodation in Vaasa. Pikipruukki offers apartments for different life circumstances in various neighbourhoods around Vaasa. There are one-room, two-room, three-room and larger family homes in terraced houses, small buildings and multi-storey buildings.

[www.pikipruukki.com](http://www.pikipruukki.com)

## Vähänkyrön vuokratalot

Vähänkyrön Vuokratalot offers apartments in the peaceful countryside, next to good basic services while still close to city services. The apartments are located in three urban areas, in Vähäkyrö Church Village, Tervajoki and Merikaarto.

[www.vuokratalot.net](http://www.vuokratalot.net)

## Lakea

Lakea Oy offers both rental and owner-occupied housing. They offer a wide range of housing options and also have new properties available.

[www.lakea.fi](http://www.lakea.fi)

## Vaasan Asumisoikeus Oy

Right of occupancy is an alternative to renting and owning an apartment. Vaasan Asumisoikeus Oy offers homes for all needs: one-room, two-room, three-room apartments and larger family apartments in terraced, small houses and apartment buildings close to services in various residential areas in Vaasa.

<https://www.vaasanasumisoikeus.com/>

## Kivat Kodit Oy

Kivat Kodit Oy offers apartments of different sizes in central locations, close to the campus area and city centre. Furnished apartments are also available for temporary needs.

[www.kivatkodit.fi](http://www.kivatkodit.fi)

## Verkkopalvelut

You can also search for apartments through various online services, based on, e.g., location, size or price. Such online services include:

- vuokraovi.com [www.vuokraovi.com](http://www.vuokraovi.com)
- Oikotie [www.asunnot.oikotie.fi](http://www.asunnot.oikotie.fi)



# Making a tenancy agreement

# Making a tenancy agreement

A tenancy agreement must be made with the landlord before you can move into an apartment. The tenancy agreement covers the key issues of the rental relationship, such as the amount of rent, the rent payment date, the water and electricity payment, and the notice period. Read the tenancy agreement carefully before signing it.

The tenancy agreement is entered into for a fixed period or until further notice. Note that sometimes you have to commit to living in the apartment for at least one year. The contract may include a condition according to which the tenant must pay the landlord a so-called contractual penalty if the lease is terminated before a fixed period of one year has expired.

The tenancy agreement also stipulates, for example, whether you can keep pets in the apartment, whether the landlord requires you to have home insurance, and whether you can smoke there.

## Rental guarantee

Landlords often require payment of a rental deposit before you can move into an apartment. This is usually an amount equal to 1-3 months' rent. The rental deposit will be returned when you move out of the apartment, if you have no outstanding costs, have taken proper care of the apartment and the landlord has nothing to complain about the condition of the apartment. The landlord can keep the rental deposit if the apartment has not been properly taken care of or if damage has been caused. If you need financial support to pay the rental deposit, contact Kela regarding Basic Social Assistance before signing a tenancy agreement.

- A landlord will be interested in whether you can afford to pay the rent every month. You may be asked about your credit information.
- A tenancy agreement should always be made in writing.
- Read a contract carefully before signing it.
- Sometimes landlords require a tenant to have valid home insurance.



# Moving



# Moving into an apartment

Plan the moving day in advance so that everything goes as smoothly as possible. Think about how you will transport your furniture and belongings to the new apartment and find out who could help you with the move. You can ask your family or friends for help, or hire a removal firm if necessary. Get all the necessary things required for the move, e.g. cardboard boxes. If you need to rent a trailer or van for the move, arrange the rental in time.

## Moving checklist

- **Agree on the moving date** with both your old and new landlord.
- **Agree with your landlord** about handing over the key.
- **Make the necessary changes to your electricity contract** by contacting the electricity company. Make sure that the electricity is turned on in time when moving into your new apartment.
- **Make a move notification.** You can notify the change online or with a paper form that you can get from the Post Office or Kela. Notify the change to the old and new housing cooperatives, the Post Office and the Digital and Population Data Services Agency. The move notification must be made no later than one week after the move, and it can be made no earlier than one month before the date of the move.
- **If you need a separate internet connection,** make sure the connection is transferred to your new address or terminate the contract if no longer needed.
- **Get home insurance** if your landlord requires it. If you already have home insurance, make the necessary changes to the valid contract.
- **Do a thorough move-out cleaning.**
- **If you need financial support** for your accommodation, **submit the application to Kela well in advance.**

# Tenants





# Rights and obligations of tenants



## Tenants' rights

- The right to move into the apartment on the agreed moving day. If the move is delayed for reasons attributable to the landlord, the rent does not have to be paid for the days of the delay.
- The right to have access to the keys to the apartment.
- The right to domestic privacy.
- The right to take a subtenant in the apartment or temporarily give the apartment to someone else to use. Remember to sign a sublease agreement and inform the landlord of this.
- The right to terminate the rental agreement within the notice period.

## Tenants' obligations

- Pay the rent on time every month. You can find the payment date in the tenancy agreement.
- Take good care of the apartment.
- Comply with the rules of procedure of the housing cooperative. The rules of procedure usually state, for example, the time it must be quiet in the housing cooperative. Your guests must also follow these rules.
- Follow the housing cooperative's instructions regarding the use of common facilities, such as the laundry room and sauna.
- Notify the landlord if you discover a fault in the apartment.
- If you want to make changes in the apartment, such as painting the walls, you must first ask permission from your landlord.
- Comply with the conditions agreed separately in the tenancy agreement regarding, for example, pets, smoking or home insurance.
- Be responsible for damage caused to the apartment. You are also responsible for any damage to the apartment caused by your guests or friends.



# Taking care of your apartment

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# Taking care of your apartment

As a tenant, you must take proper care of your apartment. In this way you also ensure your own living comfort.

## WEEKLY

- Vacuum clean the floors
- Wipe dust away from surfaces
- Clean the toilet
- Take the rubbish out to the wastebin storage area
- Always clean the stove and other cooking surfaces after cooking
- Immediately wipe off dirt splashes so they won't stick to surfaces

## EVERY NOW AND THEN

- Clean the windows
- Clean the oven
- Clean the fridge and freezer
- Organise the kitchen cupboards
- Wipe down the shelves
- Wash bedding, carpets and curtains
- Ventilate the apartment
- Clean the balcony and balcony windows

**Remember to notify the landlord if,** for example, there is water damage in the apartment or if any of the apartment's fixtures and fittings (stove, oven, etc.) are broken.

**Do not pour water on the apartment floor when cleaning.** This can ruin the floor. When mopping the floors, use a damp cloth or mop.

**Air the apartment only briefly in winter.** Do not leave a window or balcony door open when you leave the apartment.

## Economical living

- You can control your living expenses by keeping track of your electricity consumption.
- Keep lights on only when necessary.
- Please note that some apartments have underfloor heating in the bathroom. If necessary, you can adjust the heating to a lower temperature.
- Do not let the water tap run unnecessarily.
- Do not leave windows or the balcony door open unnecessarily. In this way you keep the apartment warm and save energy.
- You can adjust the temperature of the radiators by a few degrees.





# Waste and recycling

# Waste and recycling

Sorting waste helps the nature and saves money. By sorting your waste, different materials can be recycled. Waste handling instructions for your own area can often be found by the housing cooperative's waste bin storage area, at the local recycling station, and on the website of the local waste company or municipality.

Household waste and other waste must be taken to the waste containers outside. **There are different coloured bins for different types of waste.**

## Biowaste

- leftovers
- fruit and vegetable peelings
- teabags, coffee grinds and filter bags

## Paper

- advertising, newspapers and envelopes
- other papers delivered by the Post Office

## Cardboard

- milk and juice cartons
- cardboard packaging (cereal and biscuit packages, pizza boxes)
- paper bags (sugar and flour bags)
- cardboard boxes

## Glass

- coloured and clear glass
- empty glass bottles, jars and glass containers

## Metal

- metal cans and lids
- aluminium moulds and foil
- old pots and pans

## Plastic

- plastic boxes, packaging, bags etc. from goods that are sold

## Combustible waste

- hygiene items (sanitary products, cotton swabs)
- unusable clothes and shoes
- unusable towels and sheets
- vacuum cleaner bags
- light bulbs and halogen lamps (Note: energy-saving lamps and LED lamps must be taken to the collection point for electrical and electronic waste.)



# Smoke alarm

# Fire blanket



# Taking care of home security

## The common emergency number is 112

- **Call 112 if your life or health (or someone else's) is in danger.**
- **Call the emergency number** also if your property or environment (or someone else's) is in danger, for example due to a fire.
- Calling the emergency number is free of charge.

## Every home must have a smoke alarm

- **By law, every home must have a working smoke alarm.** If your apartment does not already have a smoke alarm installed, you'll need to get one.
- **A smoke alarm detects a fire that is starting.**
- **Maintaining a smoke alarm is one of the resident's responsibilities. You must change the batteries in a smoke alarm** when the previous battery runs out of power and ensure that the smoke alarm works.
- **There must be one smoke alarm for every 60 square metres.**
- **Remember** that an insurance company can refuse to pay compensation if damage occurs in the apartment due to a fire, but the apartment did not have a working smoke alarm.
- **A smoke alarm does not call for help,** so you must make the call to the emergency number yourself to inform about the fire.
- **In addition, it is a good idea to get a fire blanket for the apartment.** You can use the blanket to put out small fires. **Hang the fire blanket in a visible place where you can easily reach it.**



# Problem situations



# Who to contact in different problem situations

## LANDLORD

- A fixture or fitting (stove, oven etc.) in the apartment is broken.
- You want to make a repair or do renovation work in the apartment.
- You notice pests in the apartment.
- There are indoor air problems in the apartment.

## HOUSE MANAGER

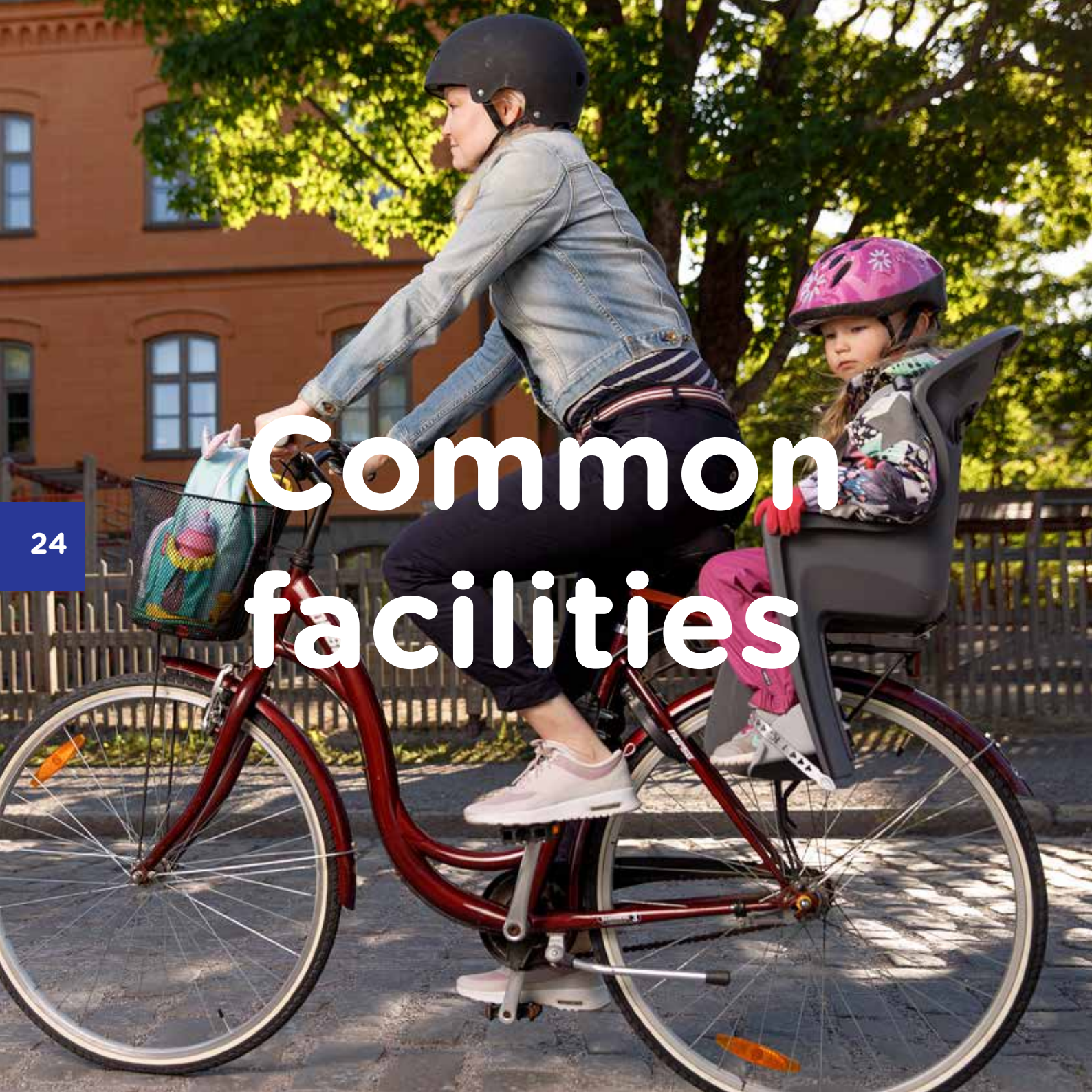
- There is water damage in the apartment. Remember to inform the landlord about this as well.
- There are problems with neighbours that cannot be resolved amicably.

## MAINTENANCE COMPANY

- You left your key at home and can't get into your apartment. Generally, there is a fee to pay when someone comes and opens the door for you, so it is worth making sure you always have a key with you when leaving your apartment.
- The heating radiators do not work.
- The water tap or toilet bowl is leaking.
- You notice damage in the common areas.

**Please contact the City of Vaasa's housing counsellors if you are worried about something regarding your accommodation.** Housing counsellors are there to help with many issues related to housing and can be contacted easily. More information about housing counsellors can be found on their website. [www.vaasa.fi/asumisneuvonta](http://www.vaasa.fi/asumisneuvonta)

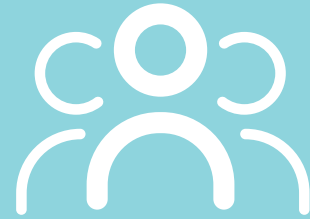




# Common facilities



# Housing cooperative and common facilities



## Storage spaces and bicycle storage

Housing cooperatives sometimes have separate storage spaces where residents can keep their belongings. The landlord will tell you if there is a personal storage space that you can use.

Often the housing cooperative has a separate storage room where residents can keep their bicycles. It pays to have the bike locked, even if it is in a storage room.

## Sauna

Sometimes housing cooperatives have a common sauna that residents can reserve. You can only use the sauna if you have made a reservation. Remember to make sure you leave the sauna before the next person arrives who has reserved a time in the sauna.

## Laundry room and drying room

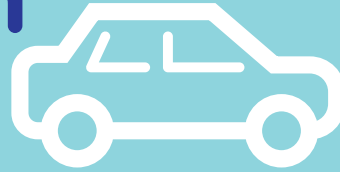
In the laundry room there is a washing machine for shared use and sometimes also a tumble dryer. You have to reserve a time if you want to use the washing machine in the laundry room. Laundry must be picked up at the end of your reserved time. Sometimes housing cooperatives also have a drying room, where you can hang curtains or large sheet to dry.

**The house manager** is in charge of the day-to-day running of the housing cooperative. Among other things, he maintains the resident register, manages the financial affairs of the housing cooperative and prepares proposals for possible renovations within the housing cooperative.

**The maintenance company** repairs any faults that may occur in the housing cooperative or apartments. It also keeps the common areas tidy.

**The rules of procedure** are instructions and rules for the building's residents to follow. The rules of procedure state, for example, when it is time to be quiet in the housing cooperative. The guests of residents must also follow these rules.

# Moving out of an apartment



**Is it time to move to a new home? Remember the following things when heading for a change of scenery:**

- **Check the notice period in your rental agreement.** Usually, the notice period is one month. The notice period in the tenancy agreement is counted from the last day of the calendar month in which the notice was given.
- **Notify** your landlord in writing that you are terminating the tenancy agreement.
- **Wait** for the landlord to acknowledge receipt of the notice of termination.
- **Do a thorough move-out cleaning.** You will receive cleaning instructions from your landlord.
- Remember that the landlord can charge you for cleaning done by a cleaning company if you neglect the final cleaning.
- **If you have had access to your own** storage space, empty it.
- **Please note** that you must dispose of furniture that you do not want in an appropriate manner. You may not leave the furniture at the housing cooperative's wastebin storage area.
- Agree with the landlord about the return of the keys and return them.
- Agree with the landlord about the repayment of the rental guarantee if you have paid one.

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- **Please notify the landlord of your intention to move out in good time.**
- **Remember to do the final cleaning properly.** A landlord has the right to charge you for the final cleaning if it must be done by a cleaning company due to negligence on your part.

# Useful links



## City of Vaasa Housing Consultation

Housing counsellors can help you with many things related to housing.

<https://www.vaasa.fi/en/living/housing-and-construction/housing/housing-consultation/>

## City of Vaasa Integration services

Integration Services provides guidance and counselling for individuals and families granted international protection and those who have got a positive decision to their asylum applications.

<https://www.vaasa.fi/en/living/welfare-services/everyday-support-new-in-finland/integration-services/>

## Welcome Office

The Welcome Office provides advice and information on matters related to immigration, Finnish society, public services, language courses and recruitment.

<https://www.vaasa.fi/en/about-vaasa-and-the-vaasa-region/contact-us-city-of-vaasa/information-and-advisory-services/welcome-office/>

## InfoFinland

InfoFinland gives you all the necessary information you need about jobs, studies, residence permits, housing and everyday life in Finland and Vaasa.

<https://www.infofinland.fi/vaasa>

## Social services of the Wellbeing Services County of Ostrobothnia

On the website you can find information about the social welfare services of the Wellbeing Services County of Ostrobothnia.

<https://en.osterbottensvalfard.fi/our-services/social-services//>

## Kela

You can get support from Kela for many different life situations.

<https://www.kela.fi/>

## Stormossen

Stormossen handles waste management in the Vaasa area. You can find instructions for sorting and recycling waste on their website.

<https://www.stormossen.fi/en/frontpage/>



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