

Rent.com.au renter survey

October 2017 - Changes to Victorian tenancy law

In October 2017, Rent.com.au's 'Have your say on Victorian renting reforms' survey was released and invited responses from Rent.com.au's user base.

The survey ran for a little over 24 hours on the 10th Oct 2017 and drew responses from 474 Victorian-based renters. The survey focused on what importance renters placed on proposed changes to tenancy law such as reducing the size of bonds and introducing long-term leases, and how renters felt about their position and role within the rental market.

In a bid to give tenants a 'fairer deal,' VIC Premier Daniel Andrews' government revealed changes to improve tenant rights, including reducing the size of bonds and introducing long-term leases in an announcement on Sunday, October 8.

Key findings

- Strong Support for the proposed reforms, over 81% indicating the changes were positive and long overdue
- Transparency on Lease terms was the most favoured change, but all initiatives ranked strongly
- The majority of renters still feel inequity in terms of their relationship with the Landlord
- Over half of the respondents felt uncomfortable approaching their landlord for fear of being seen as troublesome

For more information about the rental fairness package, visit rentfair.vic.gov.au

Case studies, interviews with Victorian tenants and CEO comments are available upon request.

For further information, or to organise an interview, please contact:

Daniel Paproth

Media & Capital Partners

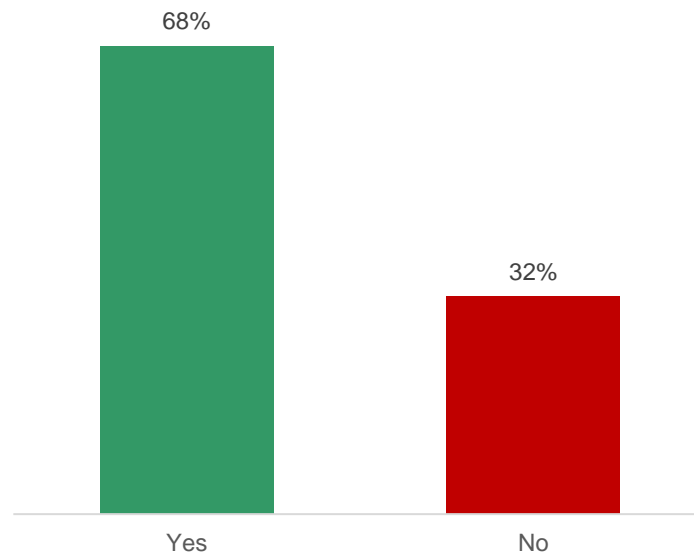
p: [+61 421 858 982](tel:+61421858982)

a: Level 6, 470 Collins St, Melbourne, VIC

e: daniel.paproth@mcpartners.com.au

Results - General

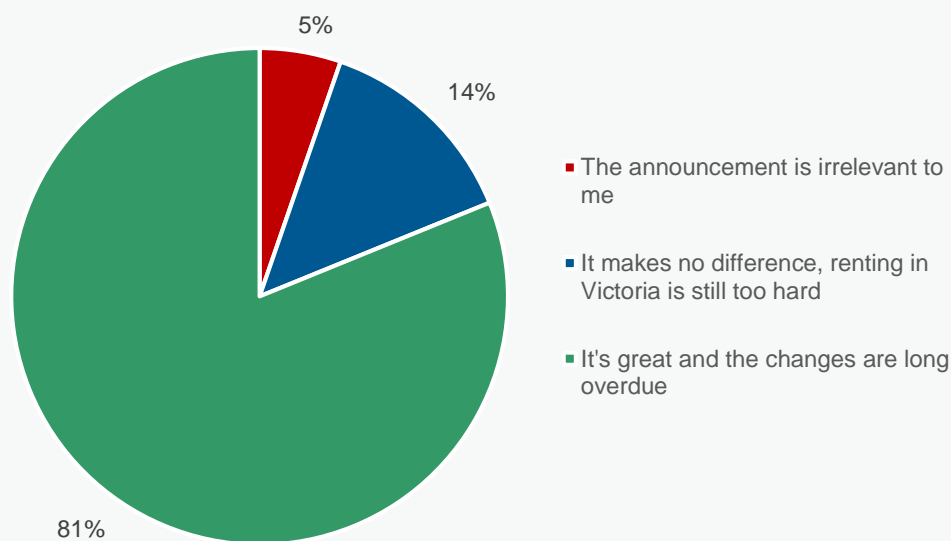
QUESTION 1: Are you aware that the Victorian Government announced a rental fairness package to give tenants more rights over the weekend?



Rent.com.au CEO comment: "Our renter community is larger and much more engaged than people realise, this is a great result given the reforms were only recently announced."

QUESTION 2: The Labor Government's rental fairness package gives tenants more rights, helps them stay on longer leases, makes bonds smaller and fairer, and cracks down on dodgy landlords.

What are your thoughts on the announced changes for Victorian tenants?

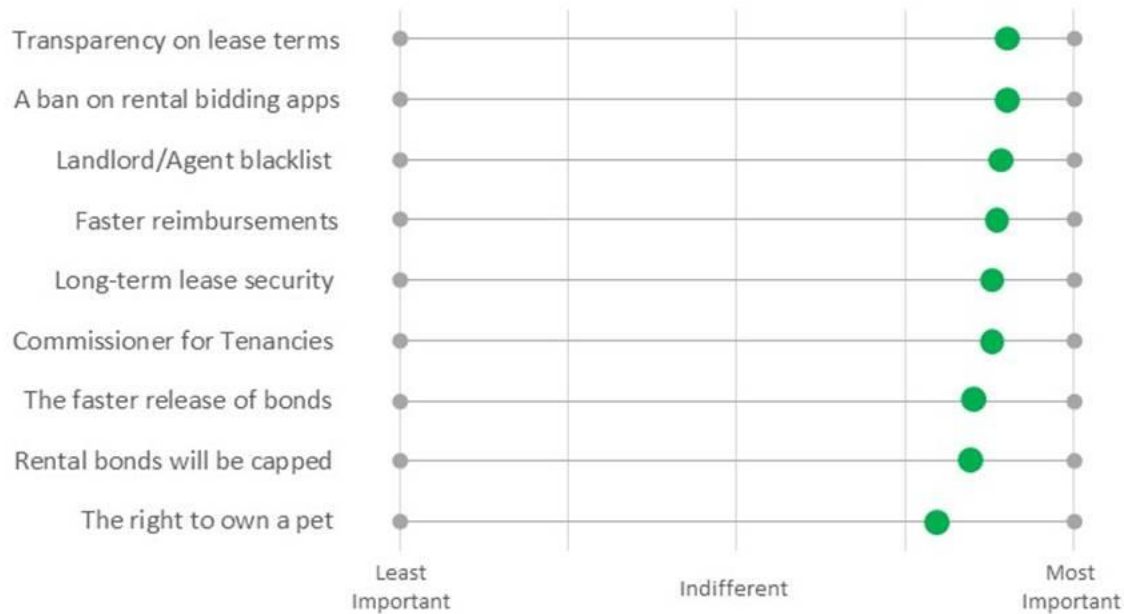


Rent.com.au CEO comment: "Strong support from our customers, most renters understand that renting is a commercial relationship, but they want equity in the arrangement."

Results – Part A (Renting Initiatives)

In this section of the survey, respondents were asked the level of importance they felt each of the announced changes were on a scale from **Most Important (1)** to **Indifferent (3)** and then **Least Important (5)**.

Responses were tallied, and average results calculated. It is clear that all the major items on the reform package struck a chord with the Renting Community.



Respondents in the October survey rated the following announcement points in order of importance from Most Important to Least Important:

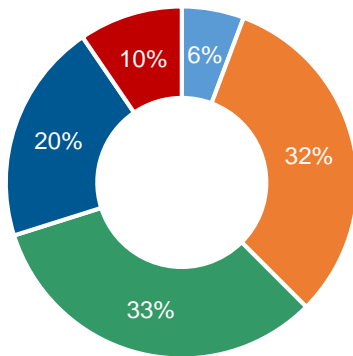
- Transparency on lease terms (average rating 1.38);
- A ban on rental bidding apps (average rating 1.38);
- The introduction of a landlord and estate agent blacklist available to renters (average rating 1.39);
- Faster reimbursements for tenants who pay for urgent repairs (average rating 1.44);
- Long-term lease security (the abolishment of 'no specific reason' notices to vacate) (average rating 1.46);
- A new Commissioner for Residential Tenancies set up to help champion the rights of Victorian renters (average rating 1.48);
- The faster release of bonds at the end of a tenancy (average rating 1.57);
- Rental bonds will be capped at one month's rent where the rent is twice the current median weekly rent (average rating 1.58); and
- The right to own a pet in your rental property (average rating 1.80).

Rent.com.au CEO comment: "Strong response across the board, we as a community need to get our heads around the fact that nearly a third of us rent and that number is growing – we need to lose the stigma around renting, for many it is a logical choice that suits their current circumstances, the process needs to be easier, less intimidating and more equitable

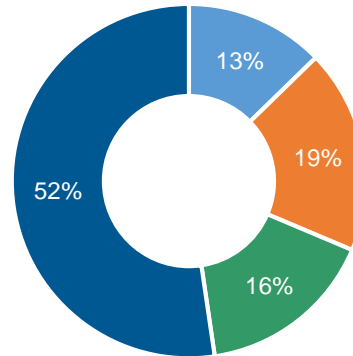
Results Part B (Demographics)

In this section of the survey, respondents were asked to enter details about the age bracket they fell into and the length of time they have rented.

Age Group



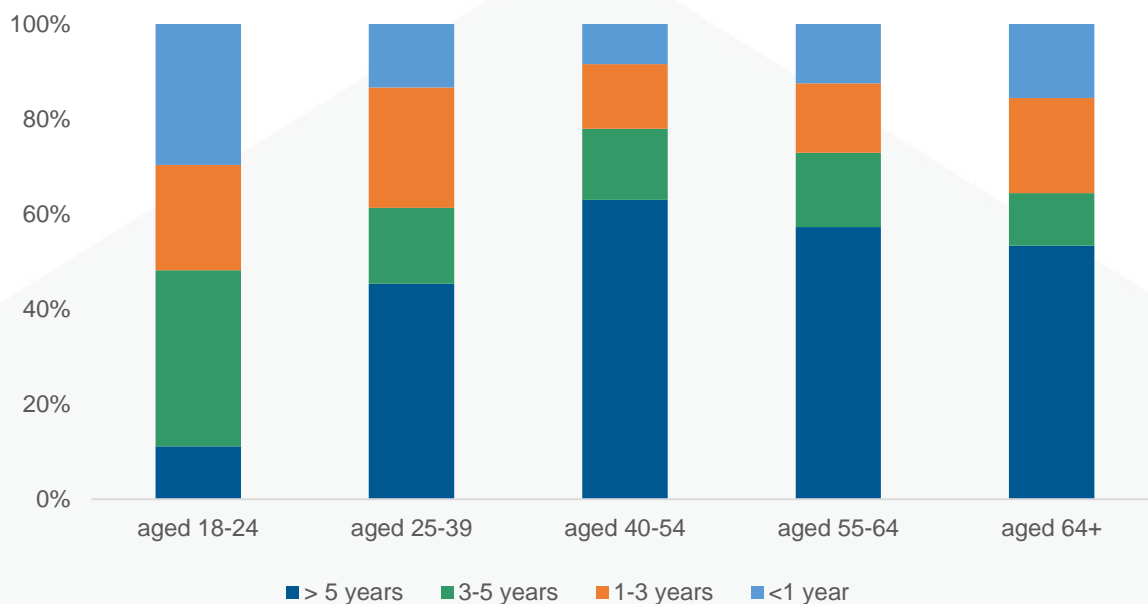
How Long Renting



■ 18-24 ■ 25-39 ■ 40-54 ■ 55-64 ■ 64+

■ < 1 year ■ 1-3 Years ■ 3-5 Years ■ > 5 years

Renting Duration by Age Group

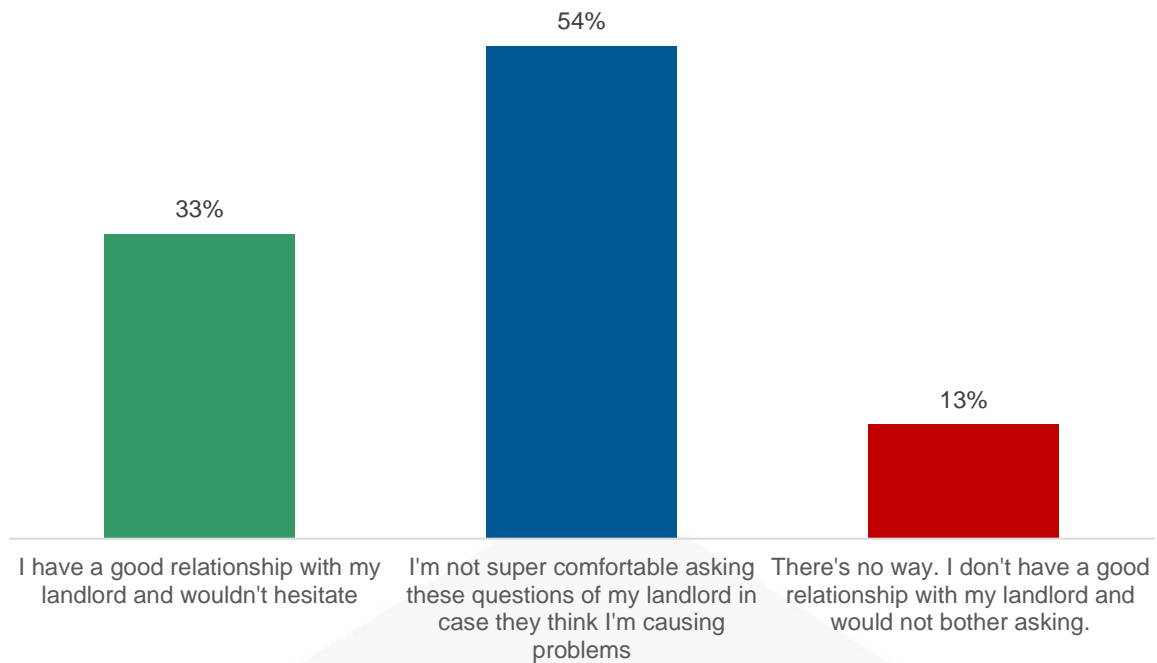


Rent.com.au CEO comment: "I think most people will be surprised at the percentage of people that are long terms renters. I suspect we are seeing some bias in the results (long term renters possibly more informed/engaged) but with over 50% of our respondents being in the rental market for over 5 years, it is not a surprise they are passionate about more flexibility and certainty."

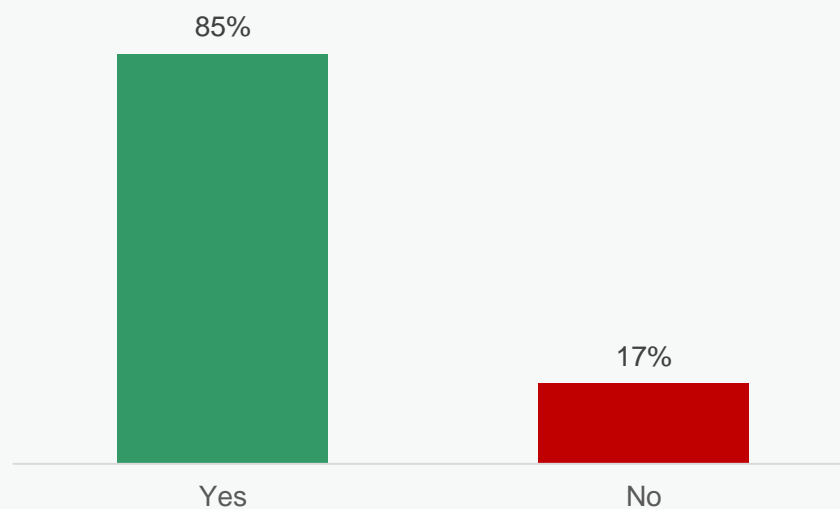
Results Part C (Tenant Sentiment)

In this section of the survey, renters were asked to indicate how they felt about a number of issues that pertained to renting in Victoria, including their relationship with their landlord and the power balance in the renter / landlord relationship.

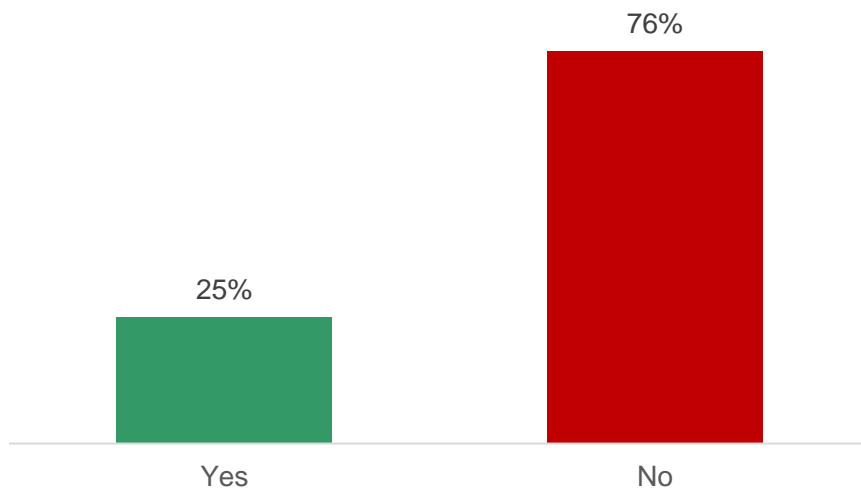
QUESTION 7: If you had a request for a longer lease, pets or a minor modification on your rental, how would you feel approaching your current landlord?



QUESTION 8: Do landlords in Victoria have too much power?

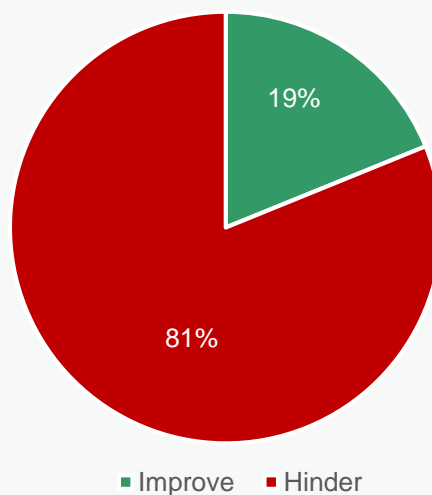


QUESTION 9: Do you feel that renters have any power to make their voice heard?



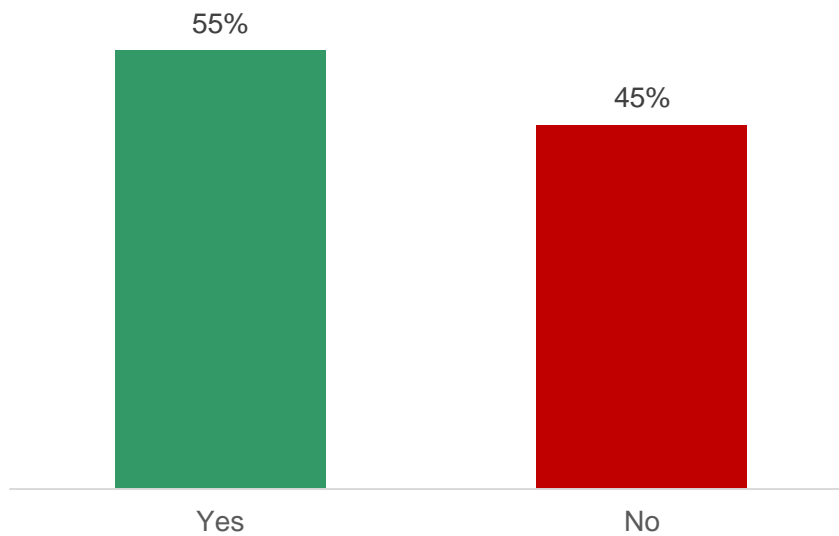
Rent.com.au CEO comment: "To me this is the crux of the issue, a renter should feel comfortable being able to discuss issues with their agent/landlord. The vast majority of renters and agents/landlords are doing the right thing, the relationship needs to be fair for all parties."

QUESTION 10: Do you think rental bidding would improve or hinder your chances of finding a rental in Victoria?

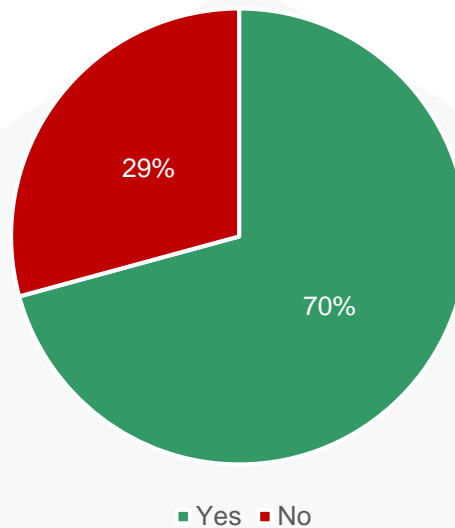


Rent.com.au CEO comment: "Breaking from the norm, I actually see a role for "Rent Bidding" apps in the future. Not in their current form as a price driven auction model, but as an online/instant transaction tool that provides weighting/priority of preferred wants of both parties (e.g. – lease duration preferences), a Tinder for Landlords and Renters."

QUESTION 11: Does this announcement go far enough to secure long-term leases for Victorian tenants?



QUESTION 11: As a renter in Victoria, do you feel like your concerns have been addressed in this latest announcement?

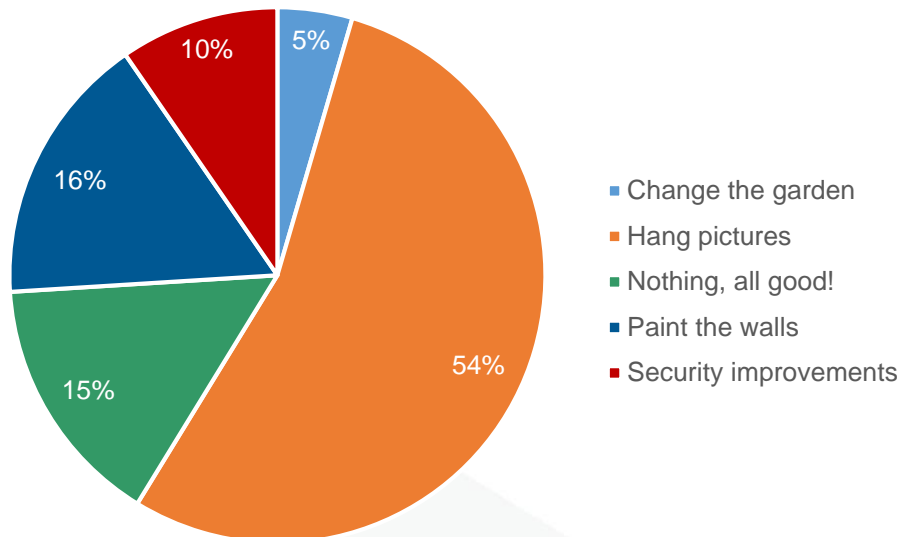


Rent.com.au CEO comment: “Lease security is a real challenge for renters, for people that are doing the right thing there does need to be protection and certainty. But we also understand that circumstances can change for landlords as well, as we move to a world of long term lease options we need to be mindful that the probability of things changing (over a long term) is higher, the model will need exit abilities for both parties. The long-term solution is purpose built rental stock to augment traditional “Mum and Dad” investment properties.”

Results Part D (Extended Results)

QUESTION 11: *Given the option, what minor modifications would you like to make on your rental property?*

As you can imagine, the responses to this question were quite wide-ranging. Were we to filter the responses only practical improvements that the renter would like to be able to do to the property, and not just physical instructions to their Agents and Landlords, we can show the following:



QUESTION 12: *Do you have suggestions that might work better? Or do you feel you were left out? Share your thoughts! We'd like to know where you sit.*

"The right to rental tenure will not be easy to obtain - it's a long-term goal and will need effort."
VIC renter aged 64+, renting for 3-5 years.

"I am happier than I was two weeks ago. Well done the to the Andrews' Government. But let's see how the landlords and real estate agents get around it."
VIC renter aged 40-54, renting for 1-3 years.

"There is still a lot of power in the hands of the landlord and the agent. I think both think of tenants as numbers, rather than people. Further steps should be taken in case the renters have identified an issue at the property – no renter should be afraid to ask their agent or landlord for help."
VIC renter aged 25-39, renting for 1-3 years

"I'm really happy with all of the announced changes. Being allowed to have a pet without question is a huge thing for pet owners."
VIC renter aged 25-39, renting for 5+ years.

"I'd love for good tenants to be rewarded for being good tenants. A stained dirty feature wall in our house, for example, we would love to repaint, but the inconvenience of dealing with agents checking with the landlord is too much trouble. We would love flexibility with things like that, as long as it's sensible of course."
VIC renter aged 25-39, renting for 5+ years.

About rent.com.au

rent.com.au (ASX:RNT) is Australia's #1 website dedicated to rental property. Our rental only positioning allows RNT to legitimately advocate for renting and renters.

Our Rules

	Renters in Suits	Our renters will always be presented in such a fashion as to maximise their chances of getting the home they want
	Properties on Pedestals	We present our properties with additional and relevant information
	Flick the Forms	Let's automate where we can. We can't remove the need for you to eyeball the property before signing (yet!), but we can remove most of the paperwork

Our Products

	Check to see if you are shown as a good tenant and add it to your resume to stand out from the crowd.
	Great convenience product helping renters bridge the gap from one rental to another by financing their bond online.
	Hassle free moving – get someone else to ensure the lights are on and the water is hot when you move in – for free!

Renter (and Pet) Resume

