

FLATTING 101

He Pī Ka Rere
Mana Tipua
2026

MANA TIPUA



SO YOU'RE READY TO GO FLATTING!?

KIA RITE! LET'S PREP



- **WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?**
- **DECIDING WHO TO LIVE WITH**
- **THE SET UP: FLATTIES, TENANCY, PAPERWORK, BILLS, SHARING**
- **ESTABLISHING FLAT TIKANGA/KAWA**
- **COMMUNICATION OF NEEDS**
- **NAVIGATING CONFLICT**
- **WHAKAPAI TE WHARE**

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?



What does home mean to you? As takatāpui, as Māori, as queer folk, as people with disabilities - the home environment is often one which we return to to feel safe. Having shelter is one thing, but having safety and security is another - we know the home environment affects wellbeing and capacity.

When you're heading out flatting, it's important to make solid choices about your future living situation at the start, so you can have a safe, healthy home, which you can afford without stress.

This wānanga is a compilation of the knowledge of Mana Tipua Kaimahi, all of whom have experienced flatting / renting. It also draws on standardised government resources such as [tenancy.govt.nz](https://www.tenancy.govt.nz) and Citizens Advice Bureau

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?



There are so many options when you first go out flatting it can be hard to know what you're looking for. You may find it helpful to create a list of your priorities in finding somewhere to live. These could include:

- a room of a certain size
- proximity to mahi, town, or study
- community to live with - do you want to practice reo? live with other takatāpui? live with couples?
- well insulated
- furnished/unfurnished
- near public transport / space for parking
- appliances
- pets/no pets



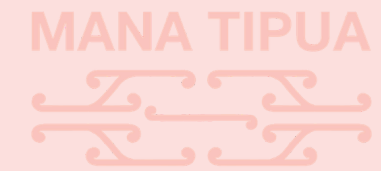
WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?

ACTIVITY: LIST FIVE THINGS THAT ARE TOP OF YOUR PRIORITY LIST FOR CHOOSING A FLAT

With your priority list in mind, you can start looking for flats. It's a good idea to determine if your priorities are non negotiable or if you can compromise on something. For example, you might want to have a big room as a priority. If a smaller room came up in a flat which ticked all your other boxes, would you be willing to be in a smaller space? This is not a trick question; there are no right answers. It really depends on you and your needs and preferences.

ACTIVITY: REVIEW YOUR PRIORITY LIST - COLOUR IN THE STAR NEXT TO THE ONES THAT ARE MUST HAVES.

YOUR BUDGETS & OTHER KEY CONSIDERATIONS



A full budget is another workshop (which we are planning).

However - knowing roughly how much you can spend weekly on accommodation is a key part of determining your flatting situation. For example, accommodation closer to town/study might be more expensive, but you'll spend less on transport.

Newer accommodation with modern appliances is likely to come with a larger price tag, but if it's well insulated and the appliances are efficient, your power bill might be significantly less. It's about weighing up options and being realistic with your standards.

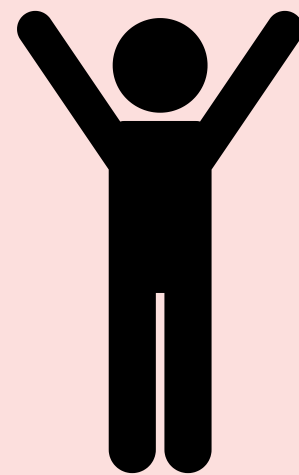
It's a good idea to check <http://tenancy.govt.nz> for the market rates in the areas you're looking at.

Anywhere you're looking at should meet the Healthy Homes Standard. We've provided you a print out of this - and you can find one [online here](#).

DECIDING WHO TO LIVE WITH!

When you're ready to go flatting, deciding who to live with is one of the first vital steps. It's important to think carefully about who you want to live with and make choices that serve you, existing relationships, and work well for future flatmates

You've got a few options:



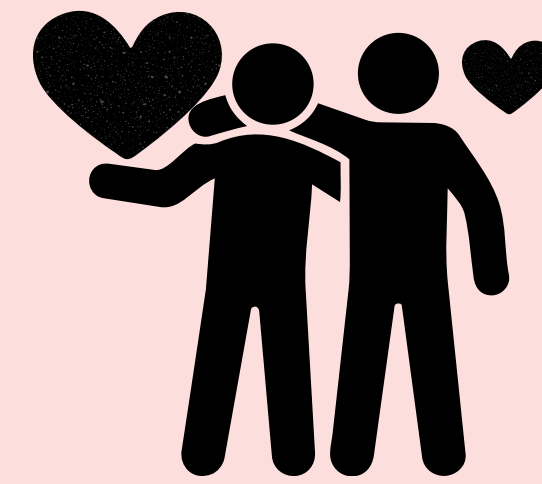
LIVING SOLO



LIVING WITH FRIENDS



LIVING WITH FLATMATES



**LIVING WITH A PARTNER
(IN ANY OF THESE CONFIGURATIONS)**

PĀTAI: WHAT MIGHT BE THE PROS/CONS OF EACH LIVING ARRANGEMENT?



LIVING SOLO

Pros: The introvert dream: Alone time! No negotiations! No noise! No one touches your stuff! Total control over what happens when!

Cons: Might be difficult to find a one bedroom place. Costs are higher as you have no one to split them with. Total control over what happens when (no one to share jobs or tasks with).

LIVING WITH FRIENDS

Pros: You already get along and know a bit about each other; you probably feel safe with friends. Costs are shared. Hang-outs on tap. Shared interests/political alignments. Negotiation of tikanga/kawa from a common starting point! They already know you're takatāpui.

Cons: It's risky business - the shift in relationship between being hoa who hang out regularly to hoa who live together can be stressful! You might have different living needs. Negotiations might be less honest initially because you both want to keep each other happy!





LIVING WITH FLATMATES

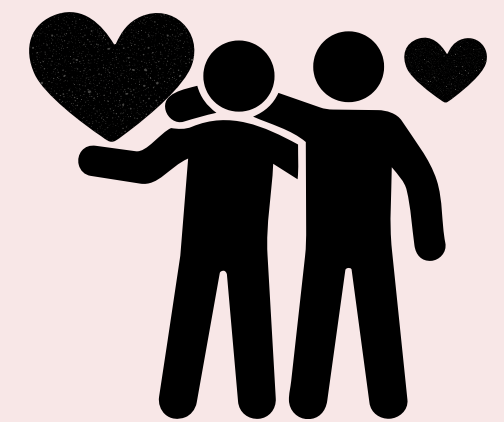
Pros: Shared housing keeps costs low; many people to split the power bill with. Shared resourcing; proximity to where you need to be (close to study/work). Possible to find like minded people of a similar age. Possibly easier to advocate for yourself if you're not worried about damaging existing relationships.

Cons: Potentially needing to come out! Navigation of negotiation with people you don't know well. Higher risk of not knowing the fit at the start. It can be difficult to find the right flat for you.

LIVING WITH A PARTNER (IN ANY OF THESE CONFIGURATIONS)

Pros: They're so cute and you get to see their sleepy face and bed hair every day. If you're aligned romantically living with your partner(s) can be a wonderful time, especially in the first few months. If you're moving into a shared space with others, moving with your partner probably gives you an ally in the house who shares some of your values...(we hope)

Cons: The mystery is gone from your relationship - morning breath and laundry folding! Money negotiations can be tricky! Your partner(s) may not be aligned with your values/cleaning needs and side with other flatmates. You may both fight other flatmates together causing tension.. dynamics, dynamics...!



**LIVING WITH A
PARTNER
(IN ANY OF THESE
CONFIGURATIONS)**

TYPES OF FLATTING

Citizens advice bureau has a [good article](#) on the difference between a tenant, flatmate and a boarder. Tenancy.govt.nz has a good outline of tenant and landlord responsibilities in their [Guide to good renting](#).

BOARDING

All expenses and white ware included, usually your own lockable room, no say in who you live with, sometimes includes cleaner. For WINZ and Studylink, board includes food as well

ESTABLISHING A NEW FLAT

You (& others) on tenancy agreement, full bond for flat, you will need to set up bills accounts/connections, total agency about who to live with and how you do so, need to supply your own furniture/whiteware

JOINING AN EXISTING FLAT

Others on tenancy - you may have a flatmate agreement - need to fit into established ways of living together and bills, usually lower bond, often all whiteware/ furniture set up

TYPES OF TENANCY

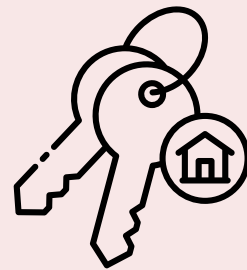
FIXED TERM TENANCY

A fixed-term tenancy agreement lasts for a set amount of time that is more than 90 days – for example, 1 year. There is no maximum length for a fixed-term tenancy. You must include the length on the tenancy agreement and the date the fixed-term ends.

You can only give notice to end a fixed-term tenancy early if the landlord and tenant both agree.

PERIODIC TENANCY

A periodic tenancy agreement has no end date. It continues until either the tenant or the landlord gives the correct written notice to end the periodic tenancy.



If a fixed-term tenancy is coming to an end and neither party gives the correct notice, the fixed-term tenancy automatically becomes a period tenancy.

LANDLORDS CAN..

- Make you pay for any damage caused by you or your guests.
- Increase your rent every 12 months with 60 days' written notice.
- Conduct inspections every 4 weeks, between 8am and 7pm, given 48 hours - 2 weeks' notice.
- Conduct or have contractors around for essential maintenance, given 24 hours notice.
- Prevent you from subletting or running a business from your rental property.
- Dictate where you can park your car on the property.
- Not allow you to smoke inside or have pets.
- Require you to keep the property in a reasonably clean and tidy state.
- Put limits on how many people can live on the property.
- Sell the property while you are still living there and negotiate reasonable access to the property to do so.
- Provide a written warning for a breach of agreement and take you to the tenancy tribunal if not remedied within 14 days (you can do this too but it can create tension between you and your landlord/property manager).

LANDLORDS CAN'T..

- Make you pay for damage from a break-in, natural disaster, or wear and tear repairs.
- Show up at the property unannounced.
- Make you pay for professional or carpet cleaning when you leave your tenancy.
- Do trial periods for rentals and charge unnecessary fees or fines
- Tell you where you can/can't eat food or dictate cleaning schedules.
- Affect your right to quiet enjoyment, e.g. no guests, no overnight stays, no parties, no noise
- Let rent arrears stack up and take your property as compensation or insurance.
- Give notice to tenants or raise rent in retaliation for anything they have done.
- Make tenants pay for fixed water charges and smoke alarms.
- Leave the country for more than 21 days without appointing an agent.
- Charge you for issues that were there when you moved in (take heaps of photos).
- Make you pay for pest removal (unless caused by uncleanliness)

PAPER WORK

- Read the Ts and Cs! If someone has snuck in a '*tenant is responsible for cleaning the gutters*' condition and you sign it, you're going to be responsible for cleaning the gutters! Don't be afraid to ask for clarification from property manager or head tenant or boarding house landlord about anything you're uncertain about. With property managers, it's often a set document with no space to shift, with flatmates or boarding situations, there is sometimes more flex to negotiate.
- If your agreement is a paper copy, make a digital copy and send it to yourself / the cloud.
- Make sure your bond is lodged with the tenancy services if you're establishing a flat. If you're joining an existing flat, this may be handled differently - make sure any agreements are in writing!
- If you can afford it - we strongly recommend getting contents insurance that includes liability insurance - this (usually) covers you if you cause significant accidental damage to a property.

KEEP RECORDS!

- Document your room/the house condition when you move in - take photos and/or videos, and make sure they're saved on the cloud - date them! Your property manager/head tenant/landlord will be doing the same.
- Make notes of any damage or the general condition of things on your tenancy agreement / boarding agreement / flatmate agreement **before you sign it** - make sure the person counter signing it is aware of any issues.
- As you move forward, all communication with Landlord/Head Tenant/Property manager should be documented in writing, even if they give you a phone call, follow up with an email that documents the interaction: thanks for your call on [date] about the [subject] at [property address]. We discussed [write what you discussed] and agreed that [write what you agreed, who is responsible for what was agreed, and when it needed to be done by].

FINANCIAL SET UP

If you're in a flatting situation, you'll need to think about how the rent and bills are paid. You will need to make decisions that work with your tenancy agreement and your flatmates about how this is handled. Do you:

- All pay your portion of rent directly to the landlord (this is often preferred) **OR** do you all pay your portion into a shared account and an automatic payment goes to the landlord each (week/fortnight/moth). If you are joining an established flat, ask how this is done.
- If you are setting up, or if there already is a **'flat account'** is this a shared account with multiple signatories that you can be one of (set up can be annoying) **OR** one individual's account, and that individual is in charge of paying all the bills out of this account. How does this individual have accountability - can you see the flat account print out monthly?

BILLS SET UP

- Choosing a provider to go with for wifi, power, and sometimes gas, impacts how much you'll pay for each service.
- For wifi - it's important to understand how you and your flatmates use the internet - if you are in a whare full of gamers, you're going to need a different package than if you're mostly all out working and maybe scroll instagram in the evening for an hour or so. Remember streaming services use the internet!
- For power - there are lots of different providers out there and it's worth using <https://www.powerswitch.org.nz/> or other online tools to work out which service is best for you. For the record, we're with Nau Mai Ra - who aren't accepting new customers at the mo, sadly, but our power is way cheaper than typical estimates. It pays to shop around. Check joining deals and what terms you might be locked into before signing up



BILLS SET UP CONT.

- If you need gas hot water - you'll likely need to order gas bottles as you use them up on the regular, and for this its easiest to have an account. Look at annual rental costs for bottles as well as refill costs and your likely use to make a call. If you are on a 2 bottle gas sytem, always have 1 bottle turned off, so you din't run out of gas. No gas means no cooking/hot water

EVEN SPLIT OR USE BASED?

Working out how bills are shared depends on your flatting situation. If you work from home and use power all day (heating during winter) but your flatmate works 9-5 at an office job, you're likely using more power than them (and if you're working from home can claim a percentage of your power back on tax, but that's another story). Perhaps you should pay a little more than them each week!

Conversely, if your flatmate games 20 hours per day streaming live, it is likely that they are the reason you need unlimited ultra max internet connection, perhaps they could pay the monthly cost difference between that and a standard plan? All of these things are things you want to discuss as you set yourself up.



COLLECTIVE CONSUMABLES

If a box of dishwashing tablets costs \$15 and everyone uses them for the dishwasher, but this expense is left to one person to buy them in their weekly shop, it quickly adds up to a big chunk of their personal budget. All flats decide how to share the regular cost of things like this differently, but by far my personal favourite way of doing this is everyone paying a little bit each week into either a cash jar for the flat, where you can take cash to buy flat supplies and leave a receipt, or an account with a flat card that everyone can access to buy flat supplies. This means that there is always toilet paper, even if the person who used it up is broke.

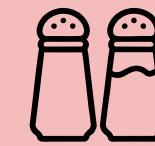
If you're living with friends and have a pretty easy going relationship, you can rely on costs evening out in the end. If you're with new people or you like more structure, you could try and app like <https://www.splitwise.com/> or work together to create a flat cost spreadsheet to determine costs and share amounts.



ACTIVITY:

Brainstorm what items you think might be collective consumables in a shared living situation.

CONSUMABLES FOR FLATS, A NON EXHAUSTIVE LIST



Kai: this depends on how you cook/share kai and people's preferences and health needs. It is usually helpful to share: cooking oil, salt, pepper

Optional: marg/spread/butter(bougie), milk (space saving), spices, sauces (also space saving), tea, coffee, bulk supplies (rice/flour etc)

Cleaning: dishwashing liquid, dishwashing brush, spray and wipe, cleaning cloths, specialist cleaning products (oven cleaner, jif etc), tea towels, paper towels, glass cleaner, vacuum cleaner bags (if old vacuum cleaner)

Bathroom: Toilet paper, toilet cleaner, spray and wipe, deoderising spray

SHARED FURNITURE / APPLIANCES

Moving into an existing shared flat, there may already be appliances & furniture in the collective areas, but if you're establishing your own, you may need to acquire these.

It's worth a kōrero if you're establishing a flat about how these shared use items will be purchased and how everyone will take care of them. Pātai you might ask include:

- If everyone puts in putea for couch, who gets it if the flat moves out?
- If one flatmate's blender goes kaput when everyone is using it for their morning smoothies, who replaces it?
- If the lawns are part of the tenancy agreement, are y'all buying a lawnmower and taking turns, or getting a gardener in once a month to keep the lawns under control?



ESTABLISH FLAT KAWA/TIKANGA

It is a good idea to have a yarn with all the people who live in the flat/ or to understand the rules if you're in a boarding situation, about expectations and responsibilities early on. Think of it as a process of establishing the tikanga and kawa in a space - this doesn't happen overnight, and is responsive to the people and their needs.

Living with people who are not whānau for the first time you will experience a wide variety of preferences, behaviours, and ways of being at home. Working out how to live together and what are your needs & preferences takes time - it is not unusual to have teething problems in a new whare! You are likely to need more than one kōrero



TIKA PONO AROHA

These values can help us frame and approach flatting conversations well.

Tika - being Tika means doing what is right (and sometimes that means admitting you were wrong). This is not always the easiest thing to do. It also relates to integrity which means strongly aligning yourself with your values, what you think is important, and being true to who you are when no one else is around. Part of this is fulfilling your responsibilities to your community environment: showing up for yourself, your friends, and your space.

Pono - refers to your contextual truth - meaning what's true for you and what's true for someone else may be different, but they are both pono - correct. It's important to share what's real for you, but also important to be honest most of all with yourself.

Aroha - means more than just love - it means unconditional love, and this sort of love is grounded in whanaungatanga - connection, and kaitiakitanga, the responsibility to care for something that you have a connection with. Showing up with aroha means putting kindness at the forefront, giving people the benefit of the doubt.

SHARING THE MENTAL LOAD

The “Mental load” is a term that typically refers to the behind-the-scenes, cognitive and emotional work needed to manage a household - this is often viewed through a cis-hetero lens and is something that often falls heavily on women under white supremacist hetero patriarchal capitalism.

Studies done by the University of Melbourne suggest that mental load tends to be:

- Invisible, taking place internally but resulting in added physical labor
- Without boundaries, existing at work, during leisure time and interrupting sleep time
- Never-ending because it's typically tied to the constant care of loved ones

Examples of things that might contribute to the mental load in a flat are:

- noticing and remembering to get shared consumables
- remembering to pay bills/setting up bills accounts etc
- noticing/remembering/organising who does what in terms of the household maintenance
- managing flat dynamics

We don't like the signs that say “your Mum doesn't live here” right - but for many of us going out flatting, realising how much additional tautoko you had as a child (we hope) in terms of all the background things needed to survive can be a shock. Don't let there be a “Mum” flatmate; they'll likely eventually burn out and it could cause significant conflict! Share the load.

FLAT RULES (AKA TIKANGA/KAWA)

Many flats have a set of rules - many of us dislike the idea of rules at home where it feels like it should be our space and we should be able to do what we like. However, it's helpful to think of them as **tikanga** - the ways everyone has agreed is the right way to do things so they can be safely in community. A shared understanding is a helpful tool in sharing expectations and shaping living standards for everyone involved.

If you're just starting out and setting flat rules with your group, great! you won't have to work in with any existing expectations. However, if you're moving in with an established flat or group, it's a good idea to find out what the flat tikanga/rules/shared understanding/agreements are. It would be wise to start these conversations before you decide to live with new people (even if you've been friends for ages).

Flat tikanga is usually practical, such as: *Noise level is kept low after 10:30 pm during the week so everyone can rest well for mahi/study.*

This sort of agreement is one that may be negotiable on occasion.

For example: if you were having a birthday dinner and checked in with your flatmates in advance to find out if you could have friends around til midnight on that one night, it might be alright; however, if you didn't tell your flatmates and had friends round late and kept them up, it might be a point of conflict later. If you did this regularly, you might find yourself being asked to find a flat more suited to you!

SOME EXAMPLES OF FLAT TIKANGA

- No shoes inside
- We check in with other flatmates before having people over
- Other people are welcome to drop in but we check in with flatmates before friends / partners stay over
- Guests can stay over for a maximum of two nights unless everyone agrees. If guests are staying for longer than two nights, we check in with each other and decide about sharing expenses
- We don't spend longer than 20 minutes in the bathroom in the mornings before work
- We don't smoke anywhere on the property / we are ok with smoking outside as long as butts are cleared away
- This is a drink/drug free house / (some) drinks/drugs are ok but if you're using let people know and your behaviour doesn't impact them or the flat cleanliness
- We split bills evenly and pay a portion of the bill cost [weekly/when the bills come in]
- Everyone participates in our cleaning rotation
- You cook; I clean - if sharing meals one person cooks, the other is responsible for dishes and kitchen
- We don't wash tea towels with body towels

ACTIVITY: WHAT TIKANGA WOULD YOU LIKE IN YOUR FLAT? WRITE DOWN THREE THAT ARE IMPORTANT TO YOU.

WRITE IT DOWN!

It doesn't have to be long, but it is so worth having a shared agreement that all the flatties have a copy of and can sign. At a minimum, having a shared understanding of how you will all...

- have friends or family visit and/or stay over
- share housework duties, such as cooking, cleaning and grocery shopping
- share the use of items that are not communally owned
- pay your expenses

This may help with any disputes in the future, and is part of your paper trail. Better safe than sorry. If you end up in a situation where something is not working, you can always refer back to this document.



NEEDS COMMUNICATION

Being able to kōrero with those you live with or are renting from is a key part of securing your sense of home in your whare, making sure it is somewhere that you feel tau and can replenish your hauora.

It is important to have foundational kōrero as you start living together, preferably before you get hōhā with each other.

Communicating your needs is important, and so is making space for other people's needs. Sometimes your needs might clash with other people's or the reality of living in a flat, and will require a compromise.

Example of need: Cleaning the oven gives me a headache from most oven cleaners, I need to avoid it.

Reality: the oven needs regular cleaning, particularly before house inspections. **Solution:** I have offered to swap oven cleaning for window cleaning ahead of flat inspections.

Example of need clashing with other flatmate: Flatmate 1 likes to leave dishes in the morning as they have an early mahi start and like to do dishes all at the same time at night; Flatmate 2 likes a clear bench/sink and is anxious about flies in the summer. **Solution:** dishes that are left are rinsed and stacked neatly at the back of the bench, leaving enough space for other food prep, and the sink is left clear.

WHAT DO YOU NEED?

Sometimes, flat tikanga and agreements are enough to get by. However, you might have specific needs for interaction or space that you need to communicate with your flatmates that are not covered by shared agreements. Remember, if you don't tell someone you need something, they won't know!

ACTIVITY: TAKE FIVE MINUTES TO MAKE A LIST YOUR NEEDS ABOUT SHARING SPACE.

- I need quiet time for sleep between (hours)
- I like to hang out in the lounge / I need alone time to recharge at home
- If I'm cooking I don't like to share the kitchen / I like to cook with friends
- I cant stand dishes left on the bench / I'm ok with dishes on the bench during the day as long as they're done at night
- I like having friends over spontaneously / I need advanced communication about people I don't know in the house (how much?)

Sharing: we will share some of these needs collectively

Review - underline your non negotiables: Add any extra things to your list from our group kōrero & decide what are your non negotiable needs - the things you need to feel well and grounded at home.

For example, a non negotiable need might be:

I need to know in advance if someone is coming over.

PRACTICING COMMUNICATING:

Communication and self advocacy is something that comes from practice, so we're going to do some!

In pairs:

- Choose a non-negotiable need from each of your list of needs
- Practice creating a sentence for each of your needs about how you would communicate this to someone else.
 - i.e: need: I need to have quiet time when I'm at home and don't want to be approached for small talk until I'm ready.
 - communication: Hey, I need to unwind a bit when I get home before I can kōrero, if I've got my headphones on, please don't chat to me.
 - Optional extra for anxious flatties: I might have a resting bitch face, but that's just my face.
- We will share one communication need each at the end so we can see what different styles of communication might look like!

NAVIGATING CONFLICT

It's not always possible to communicate everything in advance and avoid conflict. In fact, it's super unlikely. Sometimes you only find out something is a problem when you, or whoever you're living with, trips over a boundary by mistake.

If you do have a conflict, it's important to let it be and not try to fix it in the moment, but to come back together when you've both had a chance to chill and can communicate clearly. None of us are good at communicating when we're aggravated, and we all make mistakes.

When you're coming to a space where you're communicating, it is important to come with an openness and the knowledge that we often have good intentions, and that good intentioned behaviour can still upset other people on both ends. Manaakitanga is a good plan here - have a cuppa/snackie and yarn - food makes everything easier.

REAL LIFE EXAMPLE:

I tripped over the vacuum cleaner the other day at our whare and hurt my foot. I got grumpy and growled, "Why didn't you put the vacuum cleaner away?"

My growling upset my wife and I was feeling the adrenalin from tripping over, so we took a bit of a pause before coming back together to check in.

That's when I found out she'd left the vacuum out because she was going to do the rest of the house, and had just been taking a pause before she did so. My grumpy brain had gone straight to frustration about not putting things away.

I apologised for getting loud, which is something I'm working on, and asked if she could maybe put it to the side out of the doorway next time, which she agreed was probably a good plan.

We have been living together for 6 years, and we still didn't get this interaction perfect, but at the end of the interaction we both had our needs met with a future focus, not a current resentment.

WHEN CONFLICT CAN'T BE RESOLVED

If you can't work out your differences between yourself and your flatmate, it might be time to consider your living situation.

Things to consider if you need to move on might include:

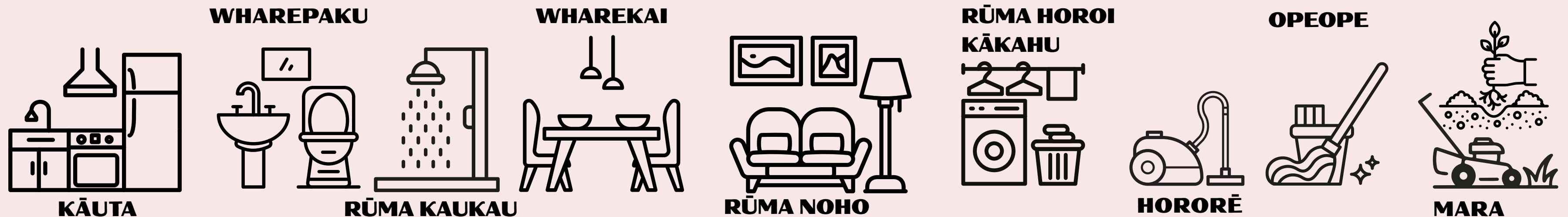
- Are there solutions available that don't require moving?
- If you need to move - does everyone in the flat move out, or is it just one person?
- Can you break your tenancy - if you're on a fixed term, you might need permission from your property manager to end your tenancy/you may need to fill the room you're leaving.
- If you are leaving a room and you're a listed tenant, make sure you get your name taken off the tenancy - Under the Residential Tenancies Act, all tenants (ie, those who have their names on the tenancy agreement) can be jointly liable if one of the occupants on the property - whether or not that person is a tenant - intentionally damages the rental property.
- Do you need to go to mediation or the tenancy tribunal. Both these options are heavy hitters and can take a lot of time and energy - but sometimes they're necessary. Check out advice on Citizens Advice Bureau & Tenancy.govt.nz for your rights.

WHAKAPAI TE WHARE - KEEPING IT CLEAN

Let's be real, no one loves cleaning the wharepaku. But if you're in a whare with other people, the porcelain throne needs a regular clean.

Everyone has different thresholds for ick and cleanliness, and sometimes these things can be wildly incompatible, particularly when neurodivergence is also in the picture. It's a real good idea to have a flat cleaning roster, and to discuss expectations of what 'cleaning' means for everyone involved. The cleaning roster should cover the shared areas of the flat. In your own room - hoea tō waka - you do as you like.

SHARED SPACES YOU MIGHT WANT TO ADD TO THE CLEANING ROTA:



Note: If you are **WILDLY** out of sync with cleaning expectations from those you live with - it may be worth trying pooling a little extra money for a monthly professional cleaner - an extra \$5 a week each from 4 people might save a lot of time in arguments/frustration. We know this may not be realistic for all budgets - but a monthly clean might be more affordable than you think.



FLAT INSPECTION CLEANS

Flat inspections are arranged at regular intervals. Your property manager/landlord will come through the house and check an agreed set of conditions - you do not need to make your whare look like you don't live there, but you do need to clean your oven. Property managers usually have a list of things they're checking for and should share this with you in advance. This is also a time to bring up non-urgent maintenance.

Whoever is doing the inspection has to give you notice of an inspection at least 48 hours before the inspection, and not more than 14 days in advance. Tenancy.govt.nz has good guides about what this can and can't look like.

Sometimes you might get a notice to fix something that didn't pass the inspection - this is usually given with a time frame in which you need to fix it and a date for re-inspection. If this happens constantly, and you're on a fixed term tenancy, it may not make the landlord inclined to renew your tenancy, or give you a good reference when you move on.

Flat inspection cleans can be a lot - so it's important to get everyone involved and split the labour. If you can't do a date the landlord has suggested, go back to them (in writing) with your reason, and ask for a different date.

GENERAL MAINTENANCE

When was the last time you put a dishwasher cleaner through a dishwasher? You're definitely emptying the lint draw if you're lucky enough to have a drier, right?! no house fires please!
When was the last time you cleaned a washing machine filter?

Lots of the things we use daily do need maintenance - the inside of the fridge needs a wipe down if it's dirty or even that cool environment will grow mold! Flat inspections can be hōhā - but they can be a good time to do those niggly routine maintenance chores. Make sure you've had a kōrero with your flatmates to determine who will do what when, and maybe take turns at some of the gnarlier jobs, like cleaning out the bins.

REQUESTING REPAIRS

If the flat washing machine is part of your tenancy, and it breaks down, that's on the landlord to fix it - but they can't fix it if you don't tell them it's bust! Same if there's a leak in the roof or a burst pipe. It's best to take a photo of the issue and raise it in writing (via email) with the property manager as soon as possible. As a tenant you must tell your landlord if something needs fixing straight away.
<https://www.tenancy.govt.nz/maintenance-and-inspections/damage-and-repairs/> has lots of information about who is responsible for what, and how to issue a 14 day notice to repair if you need to.

