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# Buying an apartment?

## Know your rights!

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## What is a unit title property?

Unit title properties are a type of property which has a shared ownership structure, and is made up of privately-owned units and jointly-owned common areas.

Apartments and townhouses are the most common types of unit properties. Examples of shared common areas are lifts, lobbies, roof gardens or driveways.

All unit title properties, no matter what size they are, are governed by the Unit Titles Act.

## What is the body corporate?

When you buy a unit, you automatically become a member of the body corporate. All unit owners in a unit title property make up the body corporate.

The body corporate sets the rules on what unit title owners can and can't do with their units and in the common areas.

A chairperson is elected by a full meeting of body corporate members.

An annual general meeting (AGM) must be held once a year to discuss body corporate matters.

The body corporate must have a long-term maintenance plan for at least 10 years, which includes estimated cost of future maintenance.

# What you need to know

You will need to contribute levies so that the body corporate can pay for maintenance or repairs of common property.

You may also need to contribute to other funds set up by the body corporate for capital improvement or contingency for emergencies and unforeseen expenses, such as weathertightness or earthquake resilience issues.

You have the right to:

- › access to and a share of the common areas
- › attend body corporate general meetings
- › quiet enjoyment of your unit without interruption by other owners or occupiers.



## 6 tips when buying an apartment

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1. Know what you are committing to when you buy a unit title property. Request information like:
    - › the long term maintenance plan
    - › any regular fees you need to pay
    - › the unit plan showing legal boundaries (you can get this from [www.linz.govt.nz](http://www.linz.govt.nz))
    - › the body corporate operational rules
  2. Attend the AGMs – it's your chance to have a say.
  3. Find information at [www.tenancy.govt.nz/uta](http://www.tenancy.govt.nz/uta).
  4. If you have a dispute with another owner, or the body corporate, talk to them first – it may be an easy fix.
  5. If you can't resolve an issue yourself, you can ask MBIE for information and advice on 0800 864 884.
  6. You can also appeal to the Tenancy Tribunal for mediation or a hearing.
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 Visit our website:

[www.tenancy.govt.nz/uta](http://www.tenancy.govt.nz/uta)

[New Zealand Government](http://www.govt.nz)