

Strata schemes

Reform of the strata and community scheme laws

The New South Wales Government is reforming NSW strata laws. Visit the [Reform of strata laws](#) page to read more.

The key features of living in a strata scheme are:

- you own your unit or apartment as well as sharing ownership and responsibility for 'common property'
- if you own your unit, you are automatically a member of the 'owners corporation' which has responsibility for common property
- every 3 months you have to contribute to the cost of running the building through paying quarterly levies
- you also have to pay money into a sinking fund, for future long term expenses such as painting the building or replacement of guttering
- compared to living in a freestanding house, there will be lifestyle restrictions in a strata scheme. For example, there are rules (by-laws) that may affect you doing renovations to your unit, that state where you can and cannot park your car, where you can dry washing or whether or not you can keep pets.

Did you know? All strata buildings in NSW must be fitted with devices that enable windows to be locked at 12.5cm when the devices are engaged. Owners corporations must have devices installed on all common property windows above the ground floor by 13 March 2018. To find out more, visit the [Window safety device requirements](#) page.

Read more about strata schemes:

- [Buying into a strata scheme](#)
- [The owners corporation](#)
- [Window and balcony safety](#)
- [By-laws in a strata scheme](#)
- [Repairs and maintenance](#)
- [Frequently asked questions about strata scheme living](#)
- [Resolving issues in strata schemes](#)

All residential accommodation across NSW must have at least one working smoke alarm.

Apartment living guides

The Owners Corporation Network of Australia has produced three guides for people living in strata schemes. The guides have been funded by NSW Fair Trading and cover the following topics:

- Executive committees and how they should function
- Governance - working with your strata manager
- Noise in strata buildings

Go to the [Owners Corporation Network of Australia](#) website to view the guides.

Free training for executive committee members

Strata Community Australia provides a free online course on Executive Committee Governance providing participants with basic knowledge about Executive Committee membership in a strata plan.

The course covers:

- governance and ethics
- roles and responsibilities
- strata plan interpretation
- administrative matters
- communications.

Go to the [Strata Community Australia \(NSW\)](#) website for more information and to access the course.

The organisation also provides strata owners with a forum, seminars and access to service providers during its annual Strata Owners Day; part of the SCA (NSW) Convention. For details visit the [Strata Community Australia - Events](#) page.

Related information

- [Strata scheme forms](#)
- [Watch a video on strata community living](#)
- [Download Fair Trading's Strata living booklet \(PDF size: 505kb\)](#)
- [Window and balcony safety](#)