



What are by-laws and can they really tell you what to do?

Every strata scheme has by-laws. They're the rules that govern how everyone in the building lives together, and yes, they really can tell you what to do.

By-laws typically cover things like:

- Noise and behaviour in common areas
- Parking arrangements
- Pets
- Renovations and alterations
- Short-term rental of your property
- Use of shared facilities

As a lot owner, you're required to comply with your building's by-laws. You're also responsible for making sure your tenants, guests and occupants do the same.

But here's something many owners don't know: by-laws aren't set in stone. They can be changed, and you have the right to propose changes.

A by-law can be created, amended or repealed by a special resolution at a general meeting. So, if you think a by-law in your building is outdated, unfair or simply no longer fit for purpose, you can raise it. If enough owners agree, it can be changed.

Good by-laws aren't about restriction. They're about helping a community of different people live well together. They set shared expectations, protect common spaces, and give everyone a framework for working through disagreements respectfully.

The first step is knowing what your by-laws actually say. Ask your strata manager for a copy, read them, and if something doesn't seem right, raise it with your committee.

By-laws vary between states and territories. For information specific to where you live, visit the website of your state or territory's relevant consumer or fair-trading authority.