



Most people are genuine, but unfortunately, not everyone is

House sitting can be a wonderful way to explore new places, meet fabulous animals, and save on accommodation. But whether you're browsing a dedicated house sitting platform or scrolling through Facebook groups, a little caution goes a long way.

Use this checklist to help protect yourself, your money, and your personal information before agreeing to a sit.

Sits advertised through paid membership platforms

- ☐ **Check the listing carefully.** Does it provide clear information about the home, location, dates, pets, and responsibilities? Vague descriptions or details that don't add up deserve further investigation.
- ☐ **Review the homeowner's profile.** Look for verification indicators, reviews from previous sitters, and any history on the platform. A new profile isn't automatically suspicious, but it does mean you have less information to work with.
- ☐ **Keep communication on the platform initially.** Use its messaging system while you establish who you're dealing with. Be cautious if someone immediately pressures you to move to private messaging or email – but do get those details before heading to a confirmed sit!
- ☐ **Never pay to secure a sit.** Be wary of requests for deposits, booking fees, transfers, gift cards, or payments to release keys. House sitting through an exchange-based platform should not require you to pay the homeowner for the privilege of sitting.
- ☐ **Be wary of unusual arrangements.** Requests to receive or forward money, purchase equipment, pay a third party, or share banking details are major red flags.
- ☐ **Arrange a video call.** Have a proper conversation with the homeowner, discuss expectations, and ask to see the home and pets. Make sure the person and property match the listing.
- ☐ **Ask plenty of questions.** Confirm dates, duties, pet care, access arrangements, emergency contacts, and any household rules before accepting.
- ☐ **Understand the platform's protections.** Read its terms, verification procedures, cancellation policies, and support options. Don't assume membership automatically means you're protected against every scam or dispute.
- ☐ **Keep personal information private.** Don't share passport copies, identity documents, banking details, or sensitive personal information unless there's a legitimate reason and you're satisfied the request is safe. Check what identity verification the platform already provides.
- ☐ **Trust your instincts.** Pressure, inconsistent stories, evasive answers, or an offer that seems too good to be true are reasons to pause. You can always walk away.

AUNTY KAZ'S FINAL WORD

If something doesn't feel right, don't ignore that feeling. You don't owe anyone a sit, an explanation, or your personal information. Take your time and walk away if anything is suspect.

And remember: a genuine homeowner will understand that a responsible house sitter does their homework. If someone gets angry because you're checking the details, that's a red flag.

Happy sitting! 🐾

Sits posted in social media groups

Social media can be a great way to find house sits, but a Facebook post isn't the same as a vetted platform listing. You're responsible for doing more of the checking yourself.

- ☐ **Check who posted the listing.** Look at the person's profile history, account age where visible, genuine interactions, and consistency. A nice profile picture or many friends doesn't prove they are genuine.
- ☐ **Check the group itself.** Is it an established house sitting group with active moderators and clear rules? Look for scam warnings and check whether the admins have a process for reporting suspicious posts.
- ☐ **Verify the homeowner independently.** Ask for a video call and enough information to establish that they have legitimate access to the property and authority to arrange the sit. Don't rely solely on information supplied in the post.
- ☐ **Watch for copied or recycled listings.** If the photos or wording seem familiar, search for distinctive phrases or use reverse image search. Stolen photos can make a fictitious listing look convincing.
- ☐ **Be suspicious of urgency.** "You must decide today", "I've got dozens of applicants", or pressure to send money or documents quickly should make you stop and think.
- ☐ **Never send money to secure a sit.** Don't pay deposits, application fees, key delivery charges, or supposed insurance fees. Be very wary of requests to transfer money to someone you've never met.
- ☐ **Don't click suspicious links.** Be cautious of links to unfamiliar websites, forms requesting login details, background checks, or documents that require you to sign in with your social media account.
- ☐ **Protect your personal details.** Avoid posting your phone number, home address, travel itinerary, or identity documents publicly. Share necessary information privately and only when appropriate.
- ☐ **Arrange a video call and, where practical, meet in person.** Confirm the homeowner's identity, discuss the property and pets, and make sure the arrangements match the original post.
- ☐ **Get the agreement in writing.** Confirm dates, responsibilities, access, emergency arrangements, and cancellation expectations in messages or a written agreement. Keep copies of communications.
- ☐ **Tell someone where you're going.** Share the address, homeowner's contact details, dates, and expected check-in arrangements with a trusted person, especially if you're travelling alone.

Anything else?
