



Make your courtyard feel like a backyard ■ How your broker can boost your business ■ Read. Watch. Listen. ■ Save on cooling bills

## HOW TO HOST A SUMMER HOUSE PARTY



The party season is hotting up, but can your home handle the heat?

Summer can be a tricky month for entertaining at home. With the sun blazing down, it can get too hot to host. On the other hand, long days and good friends make wonderful memories. Here are some tips to help you make sure your home can handle the heat.

### Prepare the venue

Are you hosting people inside, outside or both? Set up your entertainment zone for immediate comfort. If your place will be heating up before the party's even started, turn on the fans or air conditioning beforehand.

### Hydrate

There's nothing like a nice cold drink to keep cool. Arrange to have chilled water freely available. Consider having drink stations in a couple of locations, with bottles of water in buckets of ice and plenty of cups or glasses. Make sure to keep replenishing the water supply throughout your event.

### Choose your moment

Identify the best time of day for your party. If your home becomes unbearably hot in the afternoon, for example, consider hosting breakfast or brunch instead of lunch or dinner. Also, it may be

that it gets stuffy indoors but the patio remains cool, which might dictate where to host your event.

### Create comfort

Pre-empt possible sources of guest discomfort. Outdoors in the day? Provide sunscreen and shade – perhaps a large umbrella or a bunch of cheap paper parasols. In the evening, remember mozzie repellent. Regulate the temperature using shade, fans and – if you've got it – air conditioning.

Match guest numbers to the size of your property. Unless you're hosting a sweaty rave, a crowded house is not recommended for summer. If you want to keep everyone around the barbecue in the courtyard, for example, make sure they all fit comfortably.

### House rules

Don't forget that the venue is your home. When the guests leave, you don't want a house full of insects or stuffy rooms when you head off to bed. Write some polite signs to ensure guests heed rules like closing the screen doors to keep flies out and shutting windows if the air conditioning is on (or opening them for airflow if it isn't).

Summertime means a few extra considerations for party hosts, but the warmer weather shouldn't stop you from having a season of socialising at home.



**KEEP YOUR GUESTS  
HYDRATED WITH A  
SELECTION OF FUN  
NON-ALCOHOLIC  
DRINKS**

## Welcome

If you love entertaining at home, you'll enjoy our features on keeping cool while you socialise, and clever ways to make compact outdoor spaces feel bigger.

With the weather heating up, it's important to stay cool, but how can you stop your house or apartment from heating up like an oven without racking up huge bills? We look at easy, cost-effective ways to chill out at home.

If you're one of Australia's two-million-plus small business owners, you might be interested in how you can tap your trusty mortgage broker for commercial and asset loans that suit your circumstances and help your business reach its potential. We deliver our quarterly market wrap, and finally, we've compiled a bunch of the best things to watch, read and listen to as the summer breezes gently blow.

Enjoy!

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## Five ways to make your courtyard feel like a backyard

Having a tiny courtyard or balcony doesn't mean missing out on the enjoyment of a garden. Here are five tips to help make your outdoor area feel bigger.

### 1. Plan

Start by deciding what the area is for, whether it's entertaining, having a quiet space, a kids' play zone, or maybe your own little garden. Once you know what you want, it's easier to make the most out of the space.

### 2. Choose furniture wisely

Don't fill the courtyard with furniture if you're creating a fun play area. Alternatively, if you're hosting dinners for friends you'll need more than just a small table for two. Measure out how much space you have so that when you're shopping for furniture you buy something that actually fits.

### 3. Add greenery

Make a garden out of your courtyard with some garden boxes to keep everything contained – then you can enjoy lush greenery without the courtyard looking like an abandoned forest. Lining walls with potted plants can also bring some life to the area while keeping it tidy.

### 4. Keep it simple

Small spaces and clutter don't mix. Try having just one focus of attention: a small water feature mixed in-between some plants can help balance out the space, while a mirror can reflect light to maximise the natural sunlight.

### 5. Get creative

Your courtyard or balcony might offer limited ground space, but when you consider what you can put on walls or hang from above your options grow. Pot plants, lights and small decorations all work well.

Designing an outdoor space doesn't have to be overwhelming. Focus on what you enjoy, and you'll be enjoying your new, improved courtyard in no time.



ADD COLOUR AND PERSONALITY WITH A VERTICAL GARDEN



## HOW YOUR BROKER CAN BOOST YOUR BUSINESS

Are you a property owner with a business? Your mortgage broker can help you with commercial and asset finance too.

One of the basic tenets of work/life balance is: 'Don't bring your work home with you.' But what if you could bring your home to work? It's a scenario that home owners with a business should consider when seeking commercial or asset finance.

Three common types of business finance are:

**Business loan:** the lender loans money to the business for its operations and the business repays the lender with interest.

**Commercial investment:** the lender loans money to the business to invest in an asset, including real estate. The asset is often used as security and the repayments attract interest.

**Chattel mortgage or equipment loan:** the lender loans money to the business to purchase equipment or vehicles, which are used as security. Repayments attract interest.

When it comes to purchasing an asset, lenders will often use the asset as security against the business' debt. In some cases, however, such as with the

purchase of equipment or vehicles where the assets may depreciate over time, the asset itself may not be sufficient security. In other cases, for instance when a business seeks a loan for operational needs, there may be no security.

Sometimes the more security you can offer a lender, the lower the interest rate it will charge and vice versa. Unsecured loans often attract the highest interest rates. If you're a home owner with equity in your property, you may be able to use this equity as security to leverage a better rate on your business loan.

As with mortgage rates, commercial and asset finance rates will vary from business to business. Lenders will look at things such as industry volatility, how long you've been in business and your financial records to determine the risk factors that will contribute to their loan terms. Your mortgage broker can offer an unbiased view on whether your property is suitable to be used as security, how much equity you can use and how this might affect different loans from different lenders.

Brokers aren't just for home mortgages. Don't leave business growth until the future – explore how commercial and asset finance can work for you today.



# SAVE ON YOUR SUMMER COOLING BILLS

It's not just cold winters that cause our energy bills to skyrocket. Australia is known for its scorching summers, so on hot days it's important to stay cool – but having the air conditioning blasting 24/7 can send your home's running costs soaring.

According to the Department of Environment and Energy, 40% of the energy used by the average Australian home is for heating and cooling\*. As the days grow warmer, here are some easy things you can do to stay comfortable while keeping your power bill down.

## Do a spring clean

Make sure your cooling system is in good shape by cleaning out the filters, keeping the outdoor equipment free of dirt and leaves, and getting the unit serviced if needed. This will help ensure your cooling system works well, reduces energy consumption and improves air quality.

## Get smart about cooling

Experts recommend setting your air conditioner at 24 degrees or warmer so it runs most efficiently: every degree cooler uses more energy. It also helps to run

air conditioning only in the parts of your house that are being used.

Before you turn on the air conditioning, cool yourself by taking off any extra layers of clothing and try using a fan, as these consume a fraction of the energy. Sitting a bowl of water in front of the fan increases its cooling effect.

## Keep the heat out

When you know it's going to be a hot one, close your windows and curtains or blinds early in the day. You can shade the outside of your home with awnings, a shade sail or trees.

Throughout the day, don't add any unnecessary heat. Turn off lights and appliances you're not using, and enjoy a barbecue outside rather than using the oven.

## Be window-wise

When the day starts to cool down, turn off your cooling system and open up windows or doors on both sides of your house. This will allow the hot air to escape and a cool breeze to flow through. If you can, keep some windows open overnight. You could also install window coverings, glazing or tinting.

The best way to use less energy? Head outside and make the most of those bright summer days!



**OPEN CURTAINS AND WINDOWS AS TEMPERATURES OUTSIDE BEGIN TO COOL DOWN**

## Read. Watch. Listen.

Summer means gatherings, holiday reading and time to catch up on movies and TV. Take a look at these top picks to keep you entertained through the warmer months.



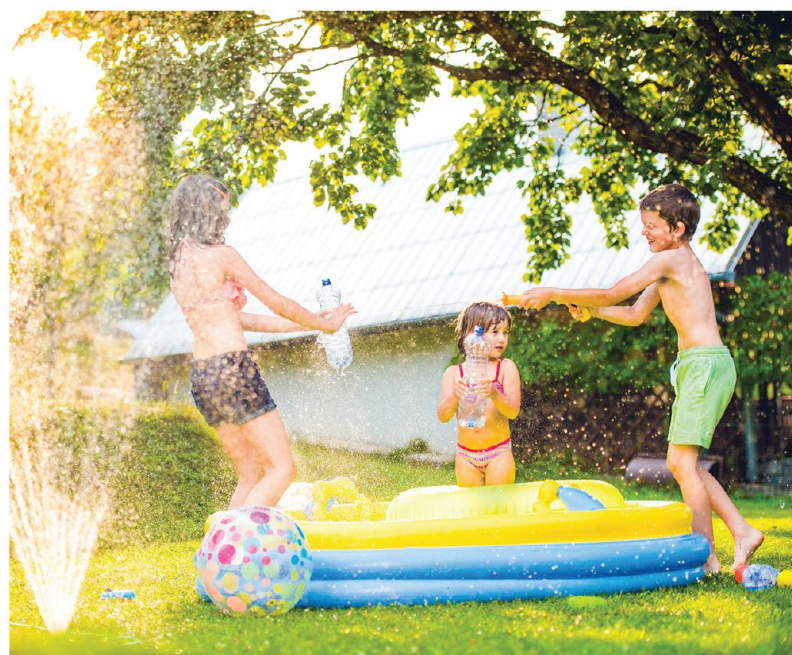
If you dream of a tree change, the recently released *Living in the landscape: Extraordinary rural homes in Australia and New Zealand* will give you plenty to drool over. The photographic book explores 30 homes overlooking remote island cliffs, tucked into escarpments and hiding away in rainforests. And although winter isn't coming, for a gripping summer read, it's hard to go past George R. R. Martin's newly released 20th anniversary edition of *A Game of Thrones*. Featuring full-page illustrations, it's a perfect gift for new and avid fans alike.



If you want a laugh, Netflix series *Grace and Frankie* delivers with a stellar cast featuring Jane Fonda, Lily Tomlin, Martin Sheen and Sam Waterston. From the co-creator of *Friends*, the show centres on two unlikely friends brought together when their husbands leave them – for each other. On the silver screen, *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* (released 17 November) is the hotly anticipated film by author J. K. Rowling and director David Yates. It's a return to the magical world of Harry Potter, but set 70 years before Harry arrives at Hogwarts.



The music world lost some of its most iconic names this year, including David Bowie and Leonard Cohen. However, it's reassuring to know that their musical legacies will live on. If you're still feeling a little purple, Prince's estate is about to open his infamous 'vault' and release two new albums featuring unreleased tracks. It's summer; let's go crazy!



Source:

1 <http://yourenergysavings.gov.au/energy/heating-cooling/understand-heating-cooling>



# LATEST PROPERTY MARKET TRENDS

Coming out of the Spring selling season, demand is still surging with low rates and house prices continuing to rise in most areas.

According to NAB's *August Housing Market Report*<sup>1</sup>, 2016 property prices have proved more resilient than expected, supported by higher than predicted population growth and two Reserve Bank cuts to interest rates.

The latest monthly figures from CoreLogic<sup>2</sup>, released 31 October, show that the average value of houses and units rose across all capital cities except Adelaide and Hobart. Sydney continues to soar, where the median dwelling price is now a jaw-dropping \$800,000; this is \$200,000 more than Melbourne and more than double Hobart's median price of \$343,500.

In regional areas, mining regions continue to experience weak housing market conditions, but areas associated with tourism and lifestyle have strengthened in recent years.

However, in coming months, NAB economists expect to see mixed conditions in the housing market due to a range of factors, including turnover, time on market and vendor discounts. They predict prices will weaken in 2017, with forecast housing growth fairly subdued at 0.5%, and unit prices dropping by 1.9%.

## Demand at fever pitch

Overall demand for houses and units is strong, according to the October *REA Group Property Demand Index* report – it's at an all-time high in NSW, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria, Tasmania and the ACT<sup>3</sup>.

The number of people looking to buy on realestate.com.au increased nationally by 8.2% in October, although overall listings on the site were lower than the same time last year, according to the report.

With property demand so strong, supply may well increase as more owners look to take advantage and sell.

## TOP 5 IN-DEMAND SUBURBS<sup>3</sup>



### Houses

1. Warrandyte VIC
2. Richmond VIC
3. Brunswick VIC
4. Northcote VIC
5. Norwood SA



### Units

1. Manly NSW
2. Elizabeth Bay NSW
3. Drummoyne NSW
4. Bellevue Hill NSW
5. Parkdale VIC

But affordability will continue to be a challenge for hopeful buyers, particularly in NSW and Victoria.

## The suburbs most in demand

According to the *REA Group Property Demand Index*, lifestyle factors and good infrastructure, rather than prestige, are now driving demand. Victoria's leafy outer suburb of Warrandyte took top spot on the demand index for houses in September, replacing the pricier and trendy inner-city suburb of Prahran.

Overall it's been another strong year for the Australian property market, but experts are expecting to see mixed conditions as we move into a new year.

### Sources:

- 1 [www.partner.nabroker.com.au/propertyinsights/assets/pdfs/Winter\\_National\\_Report.pdf](http://www.partner.nabroker.com.au/propertyinsights/assets/pdfs/Winter_National_Report.pdf)
- 2 [www.corelogic.com.au/research/monthly-indices.html](http://www.corelogic.com.au/research/monthly-indices.html)
- 3 [www.rea-group.com/irm/PDF/1961/REAGroupPropertyDemandIndexOctober2016](http://www.rea-group.com/irm/PDF/1961/REAGroupPropertyDemandIndexOctober2016)

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