

How to renovate your home



We hope that you will enjoy your home and will be able to decorate it to your liking.

In addition to furniture and interior textiles, surface materials also affect the atmosphere of your home. Following these instructions, you can make changes in your right-of-occupancy dwelling.

For some of the alterations, a notification to the property manager is sufficient, while others require a permit. In case of doubt, please contact the property manager. Please check the alteration table in the "During housing" section for any changes for which you need the building manager's permission.

We have divided these repair and alteration guidelines into two parts.

1. Work you can do on your own
2. Work where you need professional help

Rules for renovations

Remember that renovations are always carried out at your own expense and that you must notify the property manager in writing. Please note that for some alterations, a permit is required before work can commence. You can print out the alteration permit application from the Avain website. You can also contact your property manager who will provide the application. Before starting any alterations, you must agree to comply with the work instructions and permit terms of the material suppliers and Avain.

During the renovation, the house rules must be followed. If you have not followed the work instructions and cause damage to the apartment, you are liable to compensate for the damage.

Any renovations you have carried out will be left in the apartment when you move out, and you will not be reimbursed for this. In some cases of alteration work, you may need to restore the apartment to its original condition. For more information, see the alteration permit or contact your property manager.

Properly recycle or dispose of any excess supplies and waste generated in the work. Paints and chemicals are hazardous waste.

Asbestos

Asbestos may be present in houses built before 1994. Demolition of structures containing asbestos is subject to a permit and can only be carried out by professionals who have been granted an asbestos demolition permit.

Avain has commissioned an asbestos survey for sites where asbestos may have been used based on their age.

General repair and alteration instructions

Electrical installations may only be carried out by a professional electrician, pipe installations only by a HVAC professional and waterproofing work only by a professional with a waterproofing certificate.

Hot work requires a hot work card and a separate hot work permit. The hot work permit must be applied for separately for each hot work task.

When using chemicals, please read the safety data sheet of the marketer or importer carefully. Use the chemicals according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Any alterations and repairs must be planned and carried out in such a way that they do not cause damage or danger to the property or its users.

You are responsible for informing other residents if the alteration work causes noise, dust, obstructions or other inconvenience.

Dust must be prevented from entering the ventilation ducts with adequate protection and, if necessary, with compartmentation/depressurisation.

If a property still in its warranty period is about to undergo renovation or is undergoing repairs, it should be taken into account that some resident alterations may need to be removed at the expense of the resident to accommodate the renovation or repairs. The resident is responsible for reinstalling the structures.

Sometimes, you may have to restore your alterations to the original condition when moving out. We always agree on this separately when applying for an alteration permit.

If you make changes to your apartment yard, remember to also ask for the written consent of your next door neighbours for the alterations and attach the consent to your alteration permit application. Such alterations include, for example, a masonry barbecue, plants that produce significant shade or a strong odour, a dog fence that exceeds Avain's reference size, a greenhouse, pergola roofing, fences, large window awnings, a playhouse, and a gazebo/canopy.

Properly recycle or dispose of any excess supplies and waste generated in the work.

Work you can do on your own

Painting walls and ceilings

- Select the paint according to the intended use. To achieve a sufficiently even finish, you may need to paint more than one coat.
- Do not paint the end walls of fixed furniture, tiled surfaces or tile joints.
- Paint the window frames and radiators in the original colour.
- If you are painting skirting boards, choose white or the colour of the floor.
- Protect any surrounding surfaces, the entire floor of the room, the furniture and sockets appropriately.
- Remove skirting boards, cover plates of electrical appliances and other installations from the surface to be painted. Disconnect the room fuse or turn off the power to the room from the electrical cabinet before removing the covers of electrical appliances.
- If necessary, patch any holes and cracks with filler, with multiple coats if necessary, and smooth the patched areas until they are even.
- Clean the surfaces to be painted (we recommend using paint detergent).
- Outline the surface to be painted with masking tape.
- Only use the original shade to paint the ceiling. Colour code: basic white latex paint product group 32 (MTR 32) gloss level 6 (KA6). A gunned concrete roof should only be painted by a professional.
- You can paint one accent wall per room. Recommended shades (MTR32 KA4), semi-matte latex: V481 Shantung, G467 Herkkusieni, Y487 Piazza, K491 Mistraali, N485 Alppimaja, H417 Näsiä, X487 Laasti, V403 Savanni
- Handle chemicals according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Install the cover plates of electrical appliances and other installations back in their place after the paint has dried, replace any accessories that were damaged when removing them.
- When the cover plates of the electrical appliances have been reinstalled, connect the electricity to the room.

Avain Asunnot reserves the right to demand the restoration of painted surfaces in connection with the final inspection of the apartment.

Wallpapering a painted wall

- Remove skirting boards, cover plates of electrical appliances and lead-throughs and other installations from the surface to be wallpapered.
- Disconnect the room fuse or turn off the power to the room from the electrical cabinet before removing the covers of electrical appliances.
- Protect any surrounding surfaces, the entire floor of the room, the furniture and sockets.
- If necessary, patch any holes and cracks with filler, with multiple coats if necessary, and smooth the patched areas until they are even.
- Thoroughly clean the surface to be wallpapered.
- Select the appropriate wallpaper for your application.
- Wallpaper the surfaces according to the instructions of the wallpaper manufacturer.
- Make sure the edges of the wallpapered surface are tidy (possibly adding acrylic mass to the inner corners and skirting on the outer corners).
- Install the cover plates of electrical appliances and other installations back in their place after the drying time of the wallpaper.
- Replace any accessories that were damaged when removing them.
- When the cover plates of the electrical appliances have been reinstalled, connect the electricity to the room.

Avain Asunnot reserves the right to demand the restoration of wallpapered surfaces in connection with the final inspection of the apartment.

Painting a wallpapered wall

- Protect the surrounding surfaces.
- Remove skirting boards and covers of electrical appliances from the surface to be painted.
- Disconnect the room fuse or turn off the power to the room from the electrical cabinet before removing the covers of electrical appliances.
- Remove the wallpaper from the surface to be painted. The use of wallpaper remover or steam-powered wallpaper remover makes this easier.
- If necessary, patch any holes and cracks with filler, with multiple coats if necessary, and smooth the patched areas until they are even.
- Thoroughly clean the wall.
- Paint the walls – see separate instructions.

Painting your side of the fences in the apartment yard

- Always paint the yard fences in the original colour. Contact the property manager for colour information.
- Wash the fence with mildew remover.
- Remove any loose paint, moss, lichen and loose sticks from the fence structures using a scraper.
- Protect the surrounding structures so that they are not damaged during the work.
- Brush the fence to clean it.
- Allow the fence to dry before painting.
- Make sure that the weather conditions allow painting work – see the manufacturer's instructions.
- Please note that, to achieve a sufficiently even finish, you may need to paint more than one coat.
- If possible, paint all of the end surfaces and sawn surfaces before installation.
- Allow enough time for the paint to dry.
- Use chemicals according to the manufacturer's instructions.



Work that requires a professional

Replacing or shortening partition doors

- Ask the property manager for permission to make alterations.
- The door is selected according to the door opening and the handing of the door is checked.
- If the door replacement requires the frame to be replaced, the old frame and the skirtings around the doorway are removed.
- A new frame is attached appropriately, depending on the wall material.
- Check that the frame is straight and confirm the cross-measure and, in particular, the straightness of the hinge side frame.
- Install the partition door according to the instructions of the manufacturer.
- The door skirtings are installed back in place after the work.
- If only a partition door is replaced, it is important to ensure that the hinges of the new partition door match the old frame.
- If a partition door is shortened, the structure of the door must be taken into account. Due to the structure of hollow "cardboard doors", the door can only be shortened very little.
- The partition door is shortened neatly.
- A sufficient gap of about 20 mm is left between the door and the floor.

Installing blinds and roller blinds on windows

- Ask the property manager for permission to make alterations.
- Surface-mounted blinds and roller blinds are attached to the wall or window trim, not to the window frame.
- Blinds between the windows can only be installed by a professional (lead-throughs of the shutter and adjustment mechanisms of the blinds must be made without damaging the window glass).
- Choose the appropriate size of blinds according to the window opening.
- Choose light-coloured blinds that share the same colour scheme as the rest of the building's blinds.
- Install the blinds according to manufacturer's instructions.
- When moving out, any surface-mounted blinds and roller blinds must be removed and any fastening marks restored.
- Leave any blinds installed between the windows and on the surface of single-glazed balcony doors in the apartment (the blinds and their mechanisms must be in working order when moving out).

Installing blinds, roller blinds and vertical blinds on the balcony

- Ask the property manager for permission to make alterations.
- Choose blinds that do not disrupt the overall look of the facade.
- If blinds are already installed on other balconies, choose blinds with a similar colour scheme.
- Have the blinds installed on the inside of the balcony glazing or balcony railings.
- The blinds may not disturb other residents, and under no circumstances should they become detached from their fastenings.
- Make sure that the installation does not damage any balcony glazing or glass railings.
- Fastenings must not be drilled into the metal structures of the balcony.
- Leave the balcony blinds in the apartment – the blinds and their mechanisms must be in working order when moving out.
- Any visual barriers installed on the balcony must be consistent with the overall look of the building.

Installing coat racks, towel hooks and towel racks

- Ask the property manager for permission to make alterations.
- If possible, use products that do not require drilling holes in the tiled walls.
- Always have a professional carry out any installations in wet rooms and on tiled walls.
- If the installations call for screws, a structural detector or wall radar must be used to ensure that there are no water pipes or electrical wires running through the area to be drilled.
- The locations of the holes must be selected and measured carefully and at a sufficient distance from the shower.
- Appropriate tools must be used for drilling.
- In wet rooms, holes must be drilled at a slight, upward-facing slope and the waterproofing of the drilled hole must be patched with waterproofing silicone before installing the plug or screw.
- Appropriate fastening solutions must be used and the plugs and screws must be selected according to the wall material.
- Install the products according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- The need to remove installations when moving out is determined by the moving inspector.

Replacing vinyl floor covering

Please note that in wet rooms, the floor covering may also serve as waterproofing. In that case, the covering can only be replaced by a professional with a waterproofing certificate.

- Ask the property manager for permission to make alterations.
- The new floor covering is selected according to the intended use.
- Skirting boards, thresholds, lead-through cover plates and fixtures are removed from the space.
- The old vinyl floor covering must always be removed. Dust may form when removing the covering, which is why it is important to take care of dust protection.
- Remove any adhesive residues under the old floor covering.
- The floor surface is carefully levelled and cleaned.
- Have the floor covering installed according to the manufacturer's instructions so that it covers the entire floor surface neatly. In dry rooms, a margin of about 5 mm is left next to the walls. In wet rooms, the floor covering must be extended onto the walls by at least 100 mm.
- Reinstall the skirting boards, thresholds and lead-through cover plates you removed.

Resurfacing the wall between the kitchen top cabinets and the countertop, i.e. the intermediate kitchen space, with tiles or decorative panel

- Ask the property manager for permission to make alterations.
- Kitchen sockets and light fixtures must be disconnected from the fuse box before starting work.
- Surrounding surfaces and structures must be protected so that they are not damaged during the work.
- Old tiles or panels must be removed before installing new ones. The panel can be mounted on top of pre-existing tiles.
- The surface must be carefully levelled and cleaned.
- Install the new tiles or plates according to the manufacturer's or seller's instructions.
- The tiles are seamed and any gaps are covered.
- The edge of the sink is sealed with silicone.
- Removed skirtings, cover plates and other installations are put back in place.
- Disconnected electricity is reconnected after work.

Building a terrace

- Ask the property manager for permission for alterations and detailed instructions for the construction of the terrace.

- You can build a terrace of up to 20 square metres in your apartment yard.
- The terrace must not be attached to structures.
- The area covered by the terrace is delimited so that it does not extend to the plot boundary.
- An area of at least one metre in width is left between the terrace and the plot boundary.
- Design and build the terrace, including its foundations, frame, levels, stairs and railings, in a way that makes them safe to use.
- Install railings at points where the floor level of the terrace rises half a metre above the ground.
- When moving out, a terrace in good condition can be left in place, whereas a terrace in poor condition must be dismantled and the attachment points restored. The apartment inspector assesses the situation on a case-by-case basis.

Building a fence or an animal fence in the apartment yard

- Ask the property manager for permission to make alterations.
- You can install a fence in your apartment yard.
- Take into account the city's construction order, zoning, building supervision instructions and possible permit process.
- The area to be fenced must be delimited so that it does not extend to the plot boundary. An area of at least one metre in width must be left between the fence and the plot boundary.
- Choose the materials and the design of the fence to fit the overall look of the property.
- Build the fences in such a way that they do not cause an inconvenience to the neighbours.
- Remove the animal fence when moving out.

Installation of wire mesh for pets on the balcony

- Ask the property manager for permission to make alterations.
- When choosing your wire mesh, make sure that it is as discreet as possible and does not significantly disrupt the overall appearance of the facade.
- Install the mesh in such a way that it does not disturb other residents and stays firmly in place.
- Make sure that the installation does not damage any balcony glazing or glass railings.
- Do not drill mountings into the metal structures of the balcony.
- Remove the wire mesh when moving out.

Installing pergola roofing

The installation of pergola roofing may require a building permit. If that is the case, the housing company will be responsible for the costs of the building permit. The pergola roofing must not cause any inconvenience to other users of the property.

- Ask the property manager for permission to make alterations.
- A permission to install pergola roofing can only be granted for a one-storey building.
- The property owner's representative determines the maximum area of the roofing.
- You may install roofing only in your own apartment yard or balcony.

Building a playhouse

- Ask the property manager for permission to make alterations.
- You may build a playhouse only in your own apartment yard.
- Design and build the playhouse in such a way that it does not cause any inconvenience or danger to other users of the property.
- The floor area of the playhouse must not exceed 6 m².
- The playhouse must be removed when moving out and the yard area is restored at your expense.

Building a greenhouse

- Ask the property manager for permission to make alterations.
- You may build a greenhouse only in your own apartment yard; on your balcony, you are allowed to install a mini greenhouse.
- The floor area of the greenhouse must not exceed 6 m².
- The greenhouse must not cause any inconvenience to other users of the property.
- The greenhouse must be set up in such a way that frost cannot damage its structures.
- The greenhouse must be removed when moving out and the yard area is restored at your expense.

Installing a dishwasher when the apartment has a connection for a dishwasher

- Ask the property manager for permission to make alterations.
- This work must be carried out by a professional.
- A drip tray is installed under the dishwasher.
- The door of the dishwasher cabinet is removed, including its frames, shelf plates and base plate with plinths. The parts must be stored and reinstalled if the dishwasher is removed.
- When removing the dishwasher, the water and drain connections are plugged with appropriate parts and seals. Incorrect plugging can cause water damage, which is your responsibility. We will check the plugging in connection with the moving inspection.
- You will receive an installation certificate. Deliver it to the property manager and archive it in your apartment's resident folder.
- Your personal dishwasher may not be left in the apartment without permission.

Adding and replacing household appliances

- Ask the property manager for permission to make alterations.
- A drip tray is installed under refrigerators, freezers and dishwashers.
- If household appliances are replaced, they must be left in the apartment when moving out.
- When replacing the cooker hood or the extractor fan, the ventilation system of the property must be taken into account. An extractor fan cannot be installed in place of the cooker hood. Installation of an activated carbon filter is not allowed.
- The level of household appliances in the apartment must not be lowered. Please note that the moving inspector may require a household appliance to be replaced with the original or equivalent.
- Replacing a more recently installed dishwasher or refrigeration appliance with the old, original appliance that has been sitting in storage is not possible.

Tiling a separate toilet

- Ask the property manager for permission to make alterations.
- This work must be carried out by a professional.
- Skirtings, covers of electrical appliances, fixtures, etc. are removed from the surfaces to be tiled. The room fuse is disconnected or the power to the room is cut off from the electrical cabinet before removing the covers of the electrical appliances.
- The plumber removes the toilet seat and sink.
- The electrician disconnects the fixed electrical equipment, such as the mirror cabinet.
- Surrounding surfaces and fixtures are protected so that they are not damaged during the work. Dust protection must also be kept in mind.
- Drainage is plugged for the duration of the work.
- The old covering is removed and the surface to be worked on is carefully levelled and cleaned.
- If there is a floor drain in the space, it must be ensured that the floor slopes towards it.
- Have a certified professional install the waterproofing according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- An inspection must be ordered from the property management office for the installation of waterproofing.
- The surfaces are tiled and sealed in accordance with the material manufacturers' instructions for use.

- The edges and corners are sealed with sanitary silicone.
- Removed skirtings, covers of electrical appliances and fixtures are reinstalled.
- Disconnected water, drainage and electrical fixtures are reinstalled.
- When the cover plates of the electrical appliances have been reinstalled, connect the electricity to the room.

Replacing floor covering

New flooring is chosen according to its purpose. The permitted materials are parquet, laminate, tile and vinyl. In apartment buildings, the floors of wet rooms, such as sauna, bathroom and toilet, can be tiled. In terraced houses and detached houses, the utility room, hallway and kitchen can also be tiled. If these rooms do not have hydronic underfloor heating, comfort underfloor heating connected to the electricity in the apartment must be installed.

- Ask the property manager for permission to make alterations.
- The old flooring and its fastening materials, such as adhesives and mortars, are always removed before new flooring is installed.
- Skirting boards, thresholds, lead-through cover plates and fixtures are removed from the space.
- The floor surface is carefully levelled and cleaned.
- Footfall noise insulation is used on laminate and parquet floors.
- If the floor covering acts as waterproofing in a wet room, only a certified waterproofing professional may replace the flooring.
- Order a professional to install waterproofing in the wet room.
- An inspection must be ordered from the property management office for the installation of waterproofing.
- Parquet, laminate and vinyl are installed according to the manufacturer's instructions so that they cover the entire floor surface neatly. A margin of about 5 mm is left beside the walls. In wet rooms, the floor covering must be extended onto the walls by at least 100 mm.
- Reinstall the skirting boards, thresholds and lead-through cover plates you removed.
- When making changes to the flooring, remember to ensure that the doors can be opened without obstructions and leave a gap of at least 20 mm under the door.

Tiling the bathroom

- Ask the property manager for permission to make alterations.
- The work requires special professional skills and must be ordered from an industry specialist.
- An inspection must be ordered from the property management office for the installation of waterproofing.
- Skirtings, covers of electrical appliances, fixtures, possible lowered ceiling structures, etc. are removed from the surfaces to be tiled. The room fuse is disconnected or the power to the room is cut off from the electrical cabinet before removing the covers of the electrical appliances.
- A plumber is required to remove the toilet, shower mixers and sink.
- An electrician is required to remove any fixed electrical equipment (such as mirror cabinet and light fixtures).
- Surrounding surfaces and fixtures are protected so that they are not damaged during the work (including dust protection).
- Drainage is plugged for the duration of the work.
- The old flooring and its fastening materials (adhesives, mortars) are removed.
- The surface is carefully levelled and cleaned.
- The slope of the floor is checked to ensure that the floor slopes towards the floor drain in accordance with the current regulations.
- The professional installs the waterproofing according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Tiling requires the installation of comfort underfloor heating that is connected to the electricity in the apartment.
- The surfaces are tiled and sealed in accordance with the material manufacturers' instructions. The edges and corners are sealed with sanitary silicone.
- Removed skirtings, covers of electrical appliances and fixtures are reinstalled.
- Electricity is not connected to the room until the work is completed.
- Excess supplies and waste generated in the work are properly recycled or disposed of.

Installing comfort underfloor heating in tiled spaces

- Ask the property manager for permission to make alterations.
- The work requires special professional skills and must be ordered from an industry specialist.
- An inspection must be ordered from the property management office for the installation of waterproofing.
- If the floor covering acts as waterproofing in a wet room, only a certified waterproofing professional may replace the flooring.
- The comfort underfloor heating must be connected to the apartment's electrical network.

Adding electrical and ceiling sockets and adding and replacing fixed luminaires

- Ask the property manager for permission to make alterations.
- The work requires special professional skills and must be ordered from an industry specialist.
- If cabling is to be carried out as a surface installation, the cables must be installed in a cable box or skirting board with cable trunking.

Installing water points – drainage points, water taps, toilets and showers

- Ask the property manager for permission to make alterations.
- The work requires special professional skills and must be ordered from an industry specialist.
- An inspection must be ordered from the property management office for the installation of waterproofing.
- If the new plumbing fixture differs from Avain's plumbing fixture selection, the responsibility for maintenance is transferred to the occupant of the apartment.
- Fixture shut-offs must be installed in the immediate vicinity of each water point.
- The fixture shut-offs must also be replaced when replacing plumbing fixtures.
- Before moving out, the plumbing fixtures that differ from Avain's plumbing fixture selection must be replaced with the original fixtures or fixtures that comply with Avain's plumbing fixture selection.

Installing a car (electric car/plug-in hybrid) charging point

- Contact the property manager via the fault notification link in the Kotiavain app or at avainasunnot.fi. Provide your contact information, apartment number, parking space number and information about the vehicle to be charged (make and model), as well as the date when the need for charging becomes relevant. The property manager will conduct a resident survey to determine the need for charging points, puts installations out to tender and orders the work. Each user will be charged a non-refundable delivery fee of EUR 150–300 (depending on the number of users).

Installing an air source heat pump

An air source heat pump may only be installed by an installation company that is approved by the Finnish Safety and Chemical Agency and has a refrigerant certification.

- Ask the property manager for permission to make alteration and for detailed instructions for installing an air source heat pump.
- We recommend choosing your equipment from a well-known manufacturer (Mitsubishi, Daikin, Hitachi, Panasonic, Toshiba, Sharp, Fujitsu).
- When installing the outdoor unit on the exterior wall of your apartment, make sure that the unit can be serviced.
- Take into account the removal and potential freezing of the condensate water from the outdoor unit.
- If the outdoor unit remains visible, a discreet cover must be built around the unit.
- The electrical connection of the device is installed with a separate fuse and it must be included in the electricity measurements of the apartment.
- The responsibility for the maintenance of the air source heat pump lies with you.
- The installed air source heat pump and its operating, maintenance and care instructions must be left in the apartment when moving out.

Moving, opening and removing non-load-bearing partition walls

- Ask the property manager for permission to make alterations.
- The number of electrical sockets and switches must not be reduced during alterations.
- If there is a trace of the removed wall on the ceiling and the floor, it must be properly patched. This often requires the complete re-surfacing of the floor.

Constructing an infrared or steam sauna

- Ask the property manager for permission to make alterations.
- A prefabricated infrared sauna package can be installed in various living spaces without major alterations.
- A steam room cabinet can be installed in a room with ventilation, waterproofing and a floor drain. If the apartment sauna is transformed into an infrared or steam sauna, the electrician removes the sauna stove and installs the infrared heater or steam stove.
- No changes may be made to the sauna's thermal insulation, vapour barrier and ventilation equipment.
- An apartment sauna converted into an infrared or steam sauna must be converted back to its original condition when moving out (sauna stove in line with the selection of Avain Asunnot).

Installing safety equipment on the front door

- A peephole, safety chain, burglar guards, hinge pins and safety lock can be installed but must be left in place when moving out.
- Deliver one of the safety lock keys to the maintenance company immediately after installation.
- Return the remaining keys with the other keys when moving out.
- The installations must be tidy and carried out by a professional.
- Installing your own keypad or similar is not allowed.
- Any rekeying is not allowed.

