Section 3 of the guide: Buying a resale apartment in Dubai: the process, the costs and what to check before you sign

What to check before you sign

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1. The Title Deed. The DLD has a Title Deed verification service, on its website and in the Dubai REST app. You enter the details from the deed and check that it is valid. Compare the owner's name and the apartment details with the contract. If anything does not match, stop and ask.

2. Service charge debt. According to the DLD, accumulated service charge debt can lead to the unit being sold to cover it. The developer will not issue the NOC until the debt is paid, but it is better to know about a debt before signing, not after. Ask the seller for the current status, and check the annual rate in advance in the DLD Service Charge Index, so you know how much you will pay later.

3. A tenant in the apartment. This is the easiest thing to miss when buying resale:

- **The contract continues after the sale.** Under the Dubai tenancy law, a change of ownership does not affect the tenant's right to keep living in the apartment under the contract signed with the previous owner, if the contract has a defined end date. In other words, you buy the apartment with the tenant and with the tenant's terms.
- **What to check:** a tenancy contract in Dubai is registered in the DLD's Ejari system. Ask the seller for the registered contract, and check when it ends and how much the tenant pays.
- **If you want the apartment empty,** the law allows the owner to ask for eviction at the end of the contract if the owner wants to sell the apartment. However, this is only possible if the tenant was notified at least 12 months before the eviction date, through a notary public or by registered mail.
- **If the seller has already given the tenant notice,** the law has no explicit provision on whether that notice passes to the buyer, and law firms in Dubai disagree on this. So if an empty apartment matters to you, check it with a local lawyer before signing, and do not rely on a verbal promise.

4. The condition of the apartment. A ready apartment can be seen before you buy, and that is an advantage. It is worth inspecting the apartment before signing, or at least before transfer day. You should check the air conditioning, plumbing, electrics, and waterproofing in the wet areas and on

the balcony. Whatever you find goes into the contract addendum, stating who fixes it and by when, or it becomes part of the price negotiation. When I guide a purchase, I arrange a professional property inspection, depending on the case.

5. The seller's mortgage. If the Title Deed or the checks show there is a mortgage, ask in advance for the outstanding balance letter from the seller's bank, so you know the amount of the cheque to the bank on transfer day.

The full guide on the site: u810properties.com/en-guide-resale

Looking at a ready resale apartment?

Send me the apartment you are looking at, and we will go through the documents together before you give a deposit.

Send a WhatsApp message →

This information is general and correct as of the update date. It is not legal advice, and it does not replace reviewing your contract with a local lawyer.