



Ready to start setting down roots Down Under, **Vicky Gray** gets to grips with some Aussie homebuying basics...



Image: Shutterstock

When you are completely confident with your newfound area, it is inevitable that you will want to buy your first home, and start setting down roots.

The experience of buying your Aussie home should feel like a walk in the park in comparison to your UK experience. How can this be possible? Because of a chap by the name of Robert Torrens who came to Australia in the early colonial days. In 1858 he thought up a brilliant idea for simplifying the complex legal process of selling houses. He based his system on the method of registering ownership of ships according to merchant shipping law. At a sweep, he did away with the complex old English land laws.

When the owners sell their house the 'Certificate of Title' is known as 'Good Title' and guaranteed in law. This eliminates the need to

Open season

check back into the depths of the past to every owner that has ever lived there, just to make sure the property was theirs in the first place! The Torrens Title is the most common for standard residential suburban homes - but there are other titles too, depending on the property. For more information on title deeds, contact the land titles office in your chosen state.

Searching for your dream home will be much the same as the UK and often involves checking out the property section of the newspapers or surfing the internet. Oddly enough, people don't make a beeline for the real estate office as much as they do in the UK. When you have found one or more properties that you like the sound of, it's time to go and view them.

Above Go to lots of 'open viewings' to get a feel for the type of property you are looking for!

In the advertisement you will see the words 'Open', 'Open House' or 'Open Inspection'. This is a general invitation to prospective buyers to give the house a once over at a set time, often at the weekend.

The Open will be conducted by the real estate agent, so you can look around carefully and ask questions without any feeling of embarrassment. This was of a great relief to me, as when I was selling my house in England, I was terrible at showing people round my own house. I think the desperation of wanting to get to Australia as soon as I could, made any attempts at looking sane dissipate.

How could they not want to know about the baked bean-tin carousel in the top left hand kitchen cupboard? Once, I accompanied a gentleman upstairs, eager to show off our magnificently boarded-out loft, complete with easy-up ladder. I couldn't understand why he would not want to even poke his head up through the hatch. How was I to know he had a prosthetic leg... So you can empathise with my relief for never having to conduct another viewing! Go to lots of Opens to get a feel for what is available. 🇺🇸

■ This extract is taken from *Didgeridoos & Didgeridon'ts - A Brit's guide to moving your life Down Under* by Vicky Gray, priced £14.97 and available from Amazon.



REAL ESTATE JARGON

Lowset - This type of property would be better known as a bungalow in the UK

Highset - This is a property that has been built on 'poles' or 'stilts' (apparently to capture the breezes - most common in Queensland)

Yard - Garden

2-level or double story - This is a 'normal' house, just like in the UK, with an upstairs level

Character home - Older style home

Inground pool - This means that the property has a swimming pool

Robe, BIR, or walk in robe - This refers to a

built-in wardrobe - a 'walk-in' is a big one, usually in the master bedroom

Weatherboard - A wooden house.

Fully screened - Opening windows and doors with fly screens

Rumpus room - A 'family' room