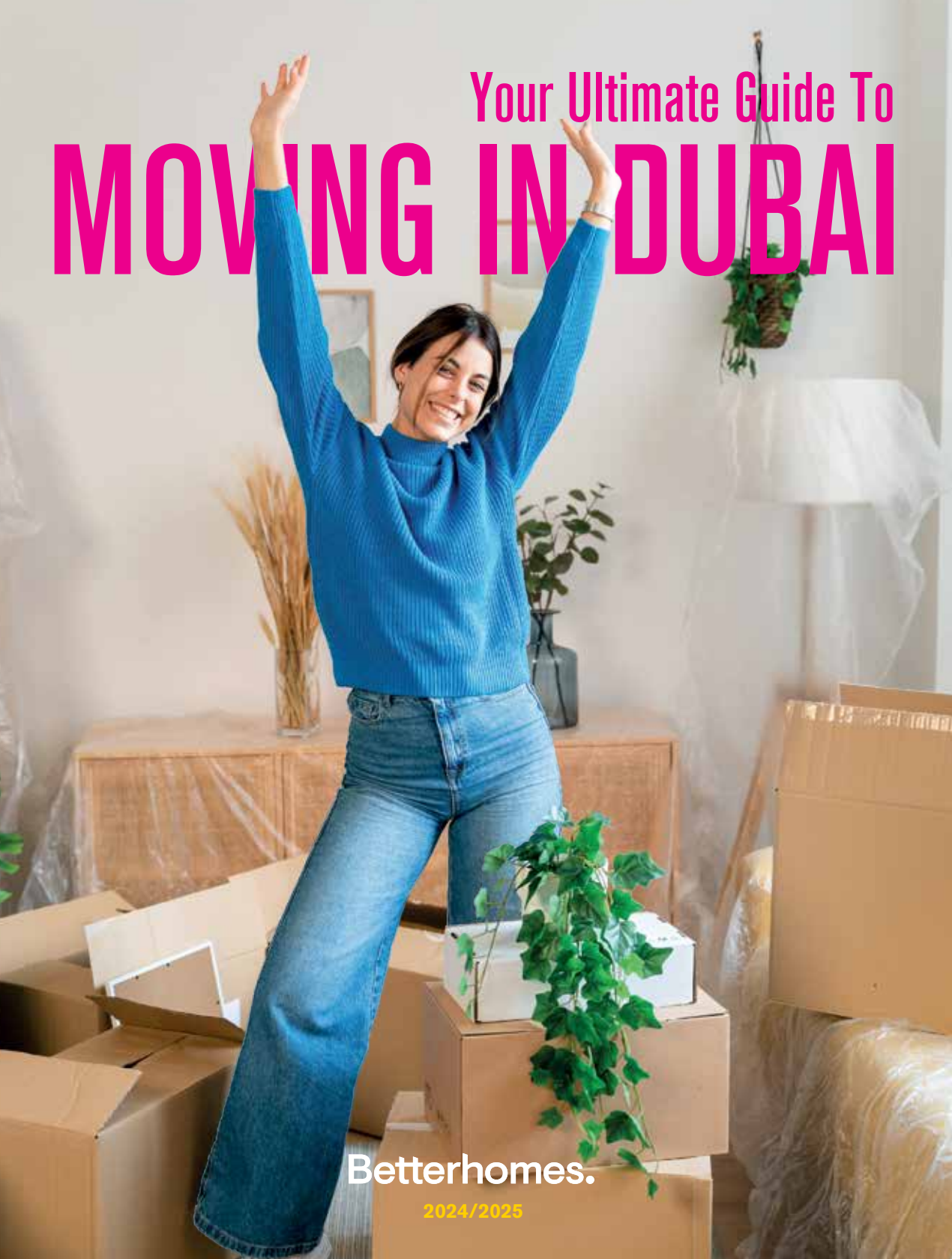


Your Ultimate Guide To MOVING IN DUBAI



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....to your new home. Dubai continues to pave the way for opportunity, attracting investors and global citizens at record levels and delivering an unrivalled world-class lifestyle and business environment. Named as one of the top two most liveable cities in the Middle East and Africa in the Economist Intelligence Unit's 2024 Global Liveability Index, it also stands proud in the top five of best global cities to work in, according to Boston Consulting Group report data. Whether you're a long-term resident or recent arrival, Dubai ticks the lifestyle boxes for single professionals, couples, and families, and is consistently heralded as one of the top 10 safest cities in the world. A future economy forerunner and vital East to West hub anchored by groundbreaking policymaking and a commitment to sustainable economic growth, this is where individuals, entrepreneurs, SMEs and multinationals choose to live, work and thrive. With a booming real estate market to explore, our practical guide is designed to help you seamlessly settle into your new home. From getting your utilities connected (pg8) to home maintenance services (pg20), it's all here. Plus, the essential contacts list (pg50) is a handy reference for when you need to find a reputable cleaner, handyman, delivery service – and more – or when unexpected emergencies arise! We've also got the inside track on how to tie up admin loose ends when you do decide to move on (pg44). Or, if you're looking to stay for the long-haul and invest in any of Dubai's exciting off-plan projects or in the secondary market, we'll take you through all the important details when it comes to making the switch from renting to buying (pg48).

Enjoy your new home and this dynamic city!

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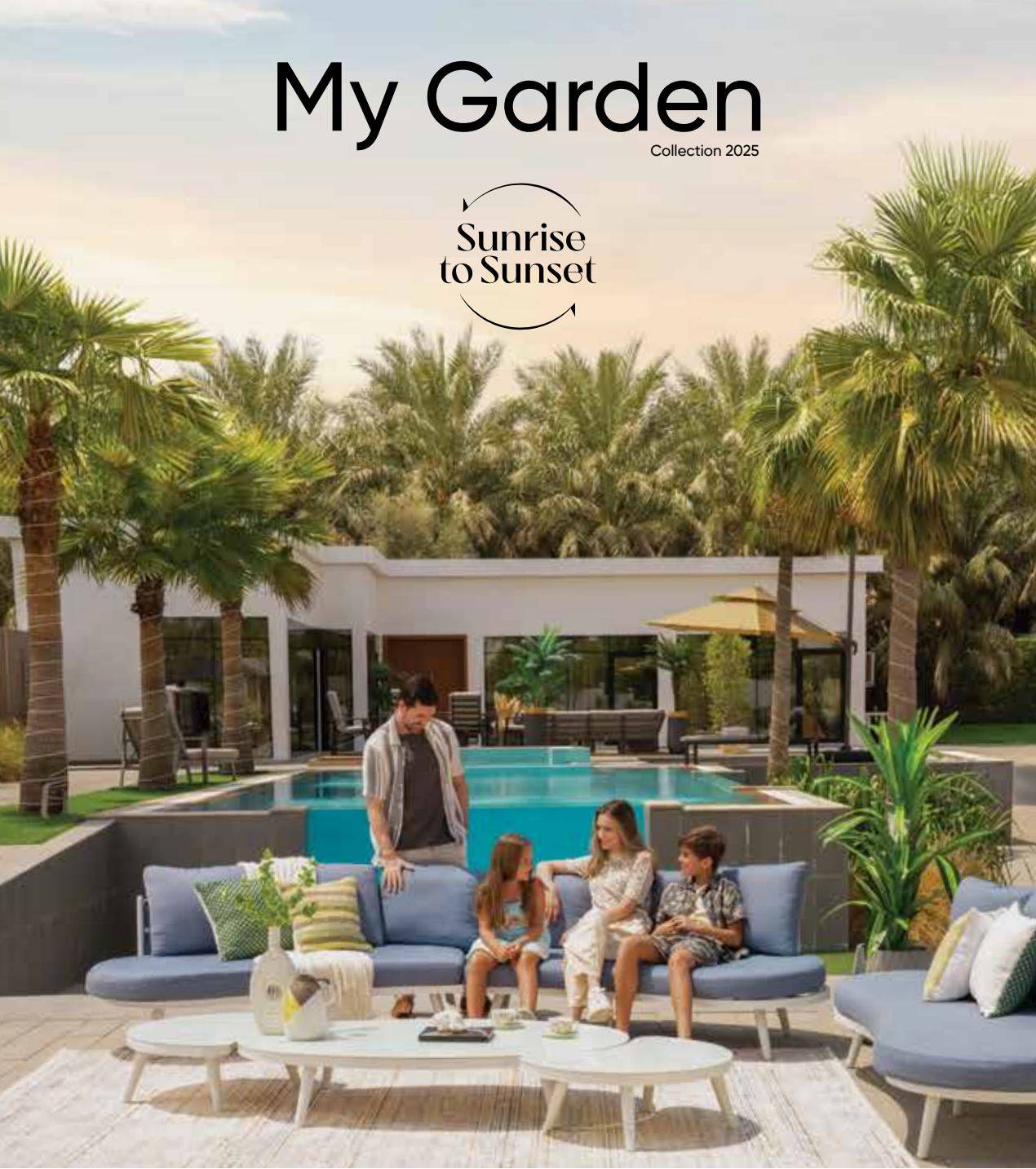
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MOVING IN



Smooth moves

You're ready to make the move but is your new home ready for occupancy? Avoid post-move maintenance issues with a room-by-room sweep before you settle in

HOMEOWNER: New build properties invariably come with a snagging list and the developer will allow access prior to collecting the keys (and handing over final payment). Check, check and check again before the contractor is sent back in to make good on any minor or major defects under the Defect Liability Period. Buying an older home? Make sure there's an inspection contingency clause included in the purchase contract. If not, you can file a case in person or online at the Dubai Land Department Amicable Settlement Centre (DLD-ASC) for expert mediation. Worst case scenario, given the time and costs involved, a case can be filed with DLD/ Dubai Property Court.

TENANT: Landlords are legally obliged to hand over a property

in full working order. Make time to conduct a thorough inspection before you move in, from checking that the toilets flush and the A/C cools properly to checking that each room has been given a fresh coat of paint. It's also a good idea to request a 48-hour window tenancy clause to report any maintenance issues after moving in, to fast-track necessary repairs. Double check there are no outstanding DEWA bills or service charges owed by the last tenant before signing the lease. If you do face issues, the DLD Rental Disputes Settlement Centre (800 4488) is there for advice and case filing assistance.

Market value

With rents soaring across Dubai, both tenants and landlords should keep an eye on the Real Estate

Regulatory Authority (RERA) Rental Increase Calendar. The easy-to-navigate service tracks current fair rental rates – and potential increases – for the location, number of rooms and current market value. dubailand.gov.ae/en/eservices/rental-index

HELP AT HAND

Download the free Dubai REST (Real Estate Self Transaction) app for smart access to a host of real-time real estate services including the Rental Increase Calculator, lease management, Ejari registration, submission of rental dispute cases, and more. Available from the App Store or Google Play.



Power up

Get ready to hit the ground running. Register your tenancy and arrange for utilities connection before moving in

How to register your tenancy

Ejari (My Rent) is the mandatory registration of your tenancy contract and is designed to offer full protection of rights to all parties covered within the tenancy agreement. The easiest way to register, once all approved paperwork is in hand, is via the Dubai REST (Dubai Real Estate Self Transaction) app or online at dubailand.gov.ae/services where you simply need to register, upload the required documents, and pay. Alternatively, visit one of the Dubai REST/Ejari centres dotted around the city to complete the process in person.

Required documents: original tenancy contract, security deposit receipt, Emirates ID, passport copy with residency visa, copy of the landlord's passport (signature must be visible), copy of a valid Power of Attorney document if relevant, title deed and nine-digit DEWA premises number.

Fees: Dh\$120 online/via the app or Dh\$215 in person (excl. VAT).

Timeline: Immediately via the app/website and within 10 minutes if application is made at one of the Dubai REST/Ejari centres. If you don't mind waiting three or four days, your real estate agent at Betterhomes can register your Ejari for you online.

GREEN LIGHT

Activate your Dubai Electricity & Water Authority (DEWA) account online at dewa.gov.ae, via the DEWA app, or visit one of the self-service kiosks at any DEWA Customer Happiness Centre.

1. Documents

You will need your Ejari number, property title deed (for owners) or tenancy contract (for renters), Emirates ID and passport copy along with your DEWA number (if you're an existing customer) and nine-digit premises number (which

is located on a mounted wall plate next to your front door).

2. Fees

Activation charges are Dh\$130 for a small meter connection (Dh\$330 for large meter). You will also need to pay a security deposit of Dh\$2,000 for an apartment or Dh\$4,000 for a villa.

3. Timeline

Your account will be activated within 15 hours of registration and security deposit payment.

4. App+

The DEWA smart app allows you to register your connection, monitor usage and pay your bill. Plus, the Hayak option allows you to live chat with customer support.

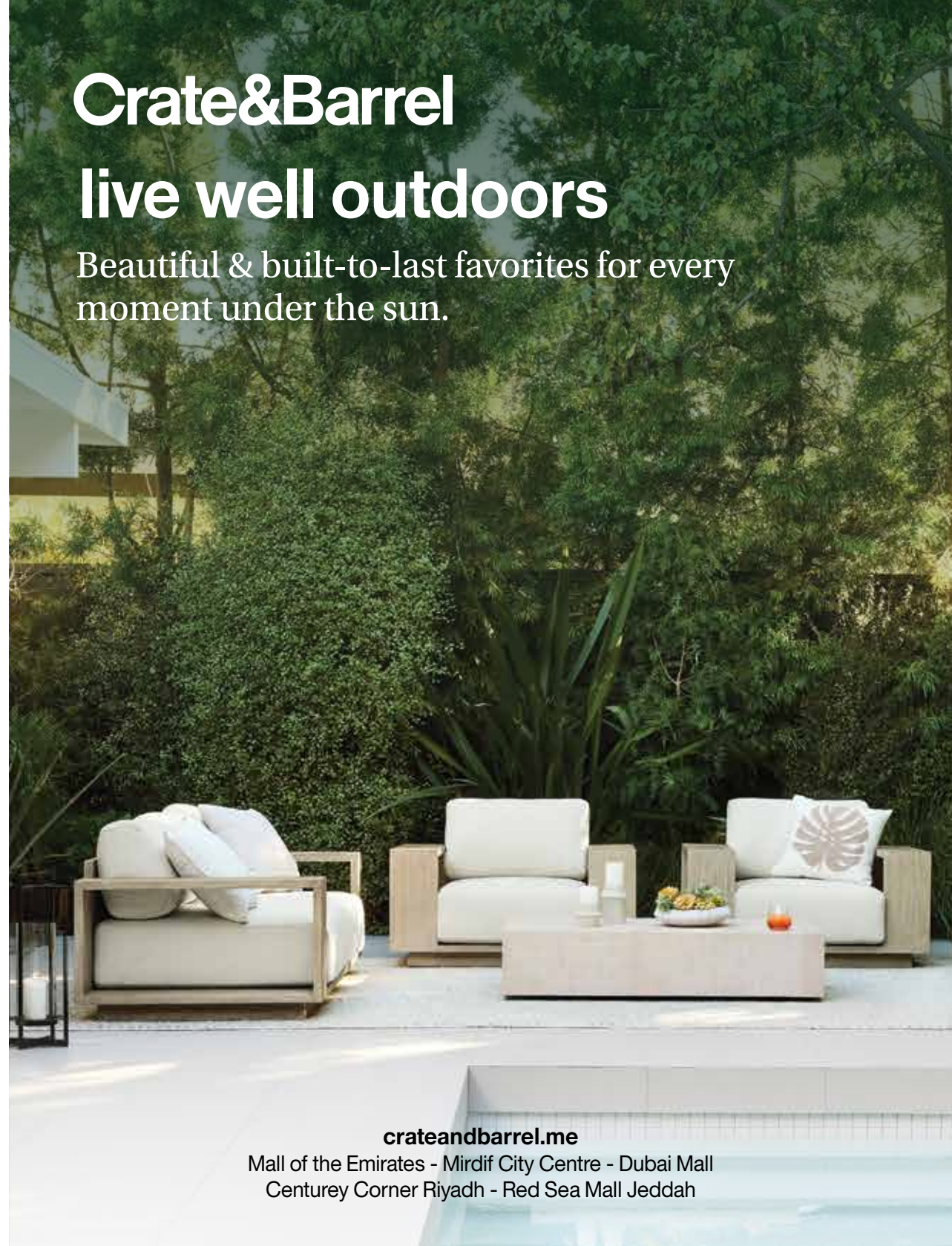
5. Account transfer

The 'DEWA Move-To' service lets you transfer your account – including the deposit – to your new home and can be done online at

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dewa.gov.ae or via the DEWA app. Submit your new Ejari contract details, the contract account number of your former home and settle any outstanding dues to register the transfer. Moving to a bigger home? You'll need to pay the security deposit difference.

Need to know: EMPOWER

If you live in a community where Empower chiller services registration is required, this can be done online at e-services.empower.ae

Step 1: Register as a new customer (landlord or tenant) by entering your contact details

Step 2: Create a username and

password then initiate a new registration request

Step 3: Enter your DEWA account number, building name and unit number

Step 4: Upload the required documents for a tenant (tenancy contract, Ejari, Emirates ID, residence visa copy) or landlord (title deed, passport copy with signature page)

Registration charges are based on the project and building location plus a security deposit of Dh\$2,000 (apartment) or Dh\$3,000 (villa). If you're a first-time landlord, onetime connection fees and administration charges will also be applied. Processing time is one to three days.

DOORSTEP ESSENTIALS

Dubai doesn't have mains gas supply and many high-rise apartment buildings do not allow gas cylinders (although some newer buildings have centralised supply systems). Villa residents can order individual gas cylinders for home delivery from local suppliers who will also connect or replace empty cylinders.

A one-off connection fee/ refundable deposit (cost varies) will apply, with full cylinders costing anywhere from , while cylinders cost from around Dh\$70-300 depending on size.

Tap water in Dubai is safe to drink although it's not the tastiest. The main UAE produced water brands will come to your home to install a water cooler for a fee (see page 50, Essential Contacts) while Liquid of Life (liquidoflife.net) is one of several companies that install under-the-sink water filtration systems.

For fresh filtered hot and chilled water direct from the tap, Quooker's Hi-Flow three-stage system purifies Dubai tap water through a worktop faucet linked to a small tank tucked away in the kitchen cupboard to deliver 108°C water plus chilled and sparkling options.

Pack and go

Planning a big move can be overwhelming so get organised early and book in expert help to ensure a hassle-free relocation. Here's how...



Pack an overnight bag so that after a busy day of moving you have a change of clothes, fresh towel and essential toiletries to hand. And don't forget your phone and laptop charger.

TIME CRITICAL

Factor in an eight to 12-week window to give you enough time to properly organise your move. With plenty of relocation companies eager to secure your custom, shop around for quotes while also looking at online customer reviews or requesting recommendations from trusted friends and colleagues. A valid trade licence and insurance are non-negotiables.

PAPERWORK AND PERMITS

Before moving day dawns it's essential to obtain any required move-out and move-in permits. Regulations and access/exit timings vary so contact your real estate agent, building manager or building/ community security to get this sorted in advance. You'll probably need to complete a form and provide documentation including tenancy contract copy or title deed, passport,

visa, etc., along with the moving company's trade licence, insurance and movers' Emirates ID copies. Factor in up to five days to get the permit(s).

HANDS OFF

While you will want to pack precious items yourself, Dubai's movers are masters at bubble and felt wrapping every last glass through to the bulkiest furniture pieces in a matter of hours. They'll even strip your closet and transfer clothing in handy hanging wardrobe cartons.

BODY COUNT

The bigger your home, the more people you'll need to manage the process. For a two-bedroom apartment a team of four is the norm while a four-bed villa may need up to 15 master movers. Allow one to two full days to get you packed up, relocated and unpacked the other end.

International moves

Relocating to a new country requires in-depth planning. Start by researching a credible global relocations company, ideally one with offices in Dubai. Door-to-door service begins with a house survey to assess container space requirements. There's plenty of paperwork to complete (plus insurance), after which your life will be professionally packed and loaded on a Dubai-bound vessel. Your relocations liaison should complete the necessary customs formalities this end, with doorstep delivery and unpacking included. For most international relocations insurance is a must-do but be sure to select shipment protection that gives you complete peace of mind.



Storage smart

Looking for a short-term storage solution while in moving limbo? Dubai offers secure air-conditioned self-storage or assisted storage facilities with secure spaces in all shapes and sizes

SIZE MATTERS

Storage units and lockers range from minipods and 10 sqft boxes up to 500 sqft (apartment-size) units. These are housed in air-conditioned warehouses to prevent deterioration or damage

STORAGE RESTRICTIONS

Fill your space with everything from an (empty) fridge freezer to a year's supply of canned goods and your entire wardrobe, but perishables, plants and flammable items are a no-go.

DO IT YOURSELF

Self-storage is super convenient. Drop off your items at a standard

storage locker set-up in a 24/7-accessible warehouse to having a storage pod delivered to your door for you to load before being transported to a drive-up warehouse facility. Mega move? Book a team of expert packers to help with the packing.

LOCK AND GO

Most facilities have 24/7 security in place but do double check before dropping off your worldly possessions. Individual units often come with built-in locks that allow you to create your own passcode or you may need to provide a padlock.

CUSTOM SOLUTIONS

With units leasable from 30 days up to six months, or longer, shop around to find an arrangement that suits your timeline and space requirements. A security deposit is standard.

FULLY COVERED

It's super important to check whether insurance is included in your storage agreement, as not all facilities offer this as part of the package. If the amount is less than the value of your possessions, additional cover may be required.

See page 52 for storage solutions.



VISUAL RECORD

Leaving a rental property or moving into a new build, it's a sensible idea to take pictures of each empty room as proof of good order or as record of any obvious issues/defects. Keep on file in the event of any deposit return challenges or snagging follow-up.



Arabian aesthetic

Discover the perfect pairing of Middle Eastern influences and contemporary design at Aura Living

City skylines across the UAE and beyond are a celebration of architectural innovation and future-forward thinking, tied to the region's history, heritage and culture by a rich thread of motifs and elements that epitomise Middle Eastern design.

Stepping off the city streets and into the home, modern Middle Eastern interior design is a blend of traditional elements and contemporary aesthetics, says Miles Young, Managing Director at Aura Living. "Think rich textures, luxurious materials and intricate patterns that reflect the region's cultural heritage."

Looking to bring a touch of the Middle East into your living spaces? Miles suggests starting with a colour palette that uses off-white and neutral tones to set the scene; with

the judicious use of gold as a nod to regional opulence."

"For furnishings, we love a soft chenille-upholstered sofa paired with a natural marble coffee table to make an eye-catching statement. Add accent pieces such as glass vases in an array of vibrant colours with scented candles to cast a warm glow and create a luxurious ambience that pays homage to Arabia," he notes.

At Aura Living we are redefining the concept of home comfort with a thoughtfully curated selection of pieces that blend sophisticated design with exceptional quality to deliver ultimate relaxation.

Looking for more on-trend inspiration? Go to auraliving.com/ae or visit our showrooms at The Dubai Mall or Umm Suqeim Road, Dubai.



Get connected

Etisalat and Du are the UAE's go-to telecommunications companies for broadband, TV, mobile and fixed-line packages. Some residential buildings may only offer one provider so always check before signing on the dotted line

Etisalat (etisalat.ae)

- Step 1.** Submit a request online, or via the My Etisalat UAE app.
- 2.** A technician will visit your home within four to seven days to scan the required documents and install your chosen services.
- 3.** Alternatively, you can visit any one of Etisalat's customer service centres.
- Documents:** Emirates ID and passport with residency visa; valid Ejari-registered tenancy; or title deed if you're the homeowner.
- Need to know:** You can only apply

for services once you have a UAE residency visa and you need to know your full building address and Makani number for the application.

Du (du.ae)

- Step 1.** Submit a request online or visit one of Du's customer service centres located in major malls.
- 2.** Schedule a technician visit online as part of the application process.
- 3.** Upload the required documents.
- 4.** A technician will visit your home to install your chosen services within seven days.
- Documents:** Emirates ID, valid Ejari-registered tenancy or title deed if you're the homeowner.
- Good to know:** You can only apply for services once you have a UAE residency visa.

Family calling

Both Etisalat and Du offer different international calling packages for fixed line and mobile, and regularly offer promotional deals. Virgin

Mobile (part of the Du family) is another option (virginmobile.ae). Skype and FaceTime are currently unavailable in the UAE but Zoom and Microsoft Teams are accessible alternatives. Screen time is also possible with other VoIP apps, including Google Meet, BOTIM, C'Me, HiU Messenger and Voico, which you can access via Etisalat and du (fixed monthly fee may apply).

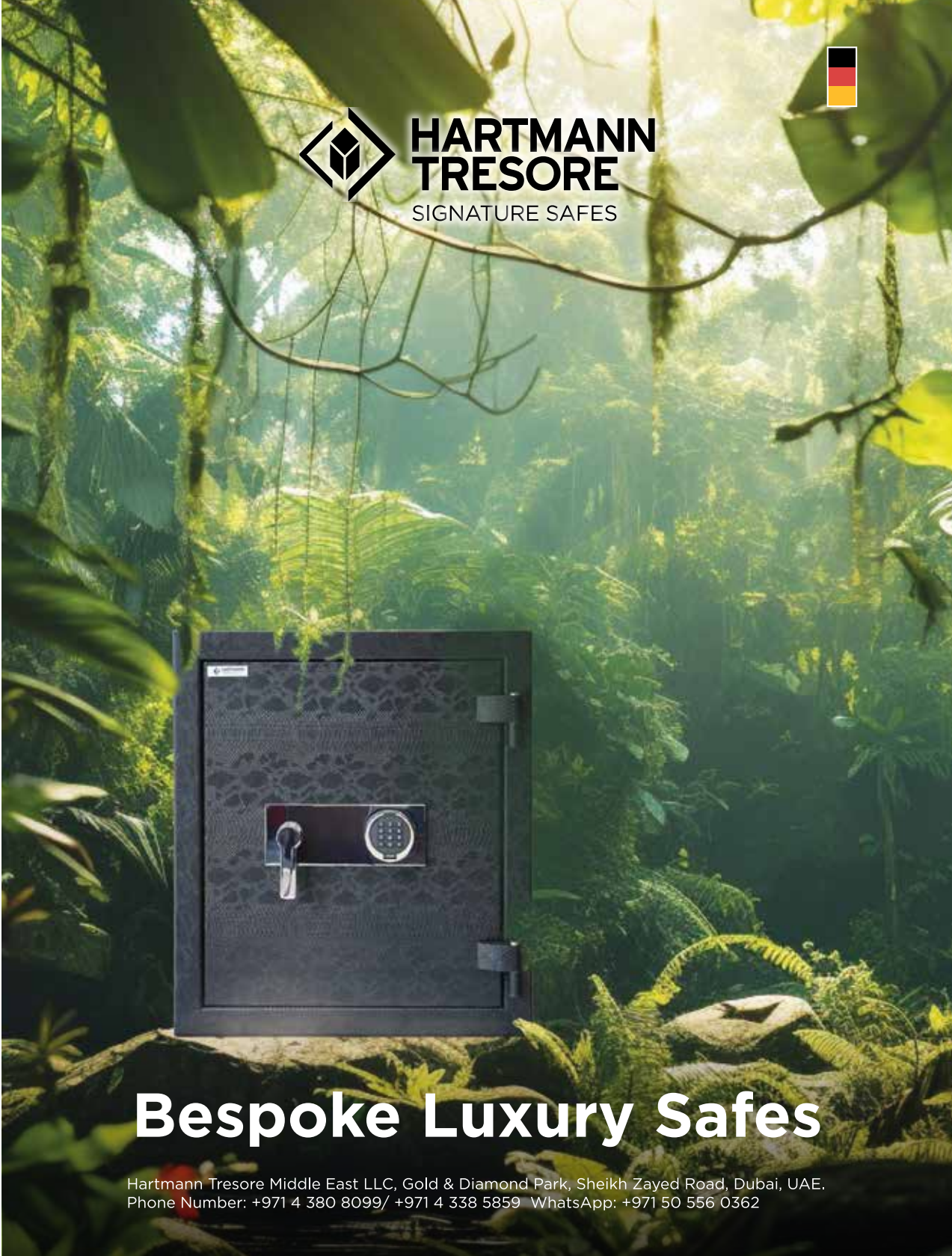
Need to know: Local and national landline to landline calls are free in Dubai.

Snail mail

Letterboxes aren't a thing in the UAE with a post office (PO) box network used instead. PO boxes are located either at your nearest post office with 24/7 collection or situated within some local communities/apartment buildings. PO boxes can also be installed on request at villas in selected areas. Register online to rent a private PO box through Emirates Post (emiratespost.ae). Different options are available including access to a smart management service (epbox.ae) for shipment requests, registered document handling, courier services, and on-demand delivery. The 'My Home' package also offers weekly home delivery and entrepreneurs can set up a business PO box. Registration is online with annual rental fees starting from Dhs300.

MAKANI

Makani ('my location' in Arabic) is a unique 10-digit number assigned to each building or villa and linked to a GPS coordinate. You'll find it on a plaque posted in your building lobby or at the building/villa main entrance.



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HOME HACKS**On call cleaning**

Dubai has plenty of pay-by-the-hour maid service companies on hand to spruce up your home on a regular basis. If your preference is live-in help then you will need to legally sponsor them and arrange for a UAE residency visa. On top of salary, costs include a medical fitness test, a deposit and nonrefundable fee for the visa, Emirates ID, health insurance and an air ticket home as per the contract. Depending on nationality, a refundable security deposit payable to the embassy of the maid's home country may be required as well as recruiter fees.

You can also hire a maid who remains under the sponsorship of the licensing authority. See *tadbeervisa.com*

Shop and ship

If you're a fan of Amazon Prime, you'll be happy to hear that the same service is available with amazon.ae. and costs Dh\$16 per month. The Prime service includes free delivery on items ordered from amazon.com and amazon.ae, with same day or one-day delivery available

on thousands of items. Aramex also offers a shop and ship service (shopandship.com) with access to 40+ personalised global mailing addresses and affordable shipping rates from over 80 international destinations.

Say cheers

As a (non-Muslim) resident in the UAE aged 21+ years a liquor licence is required if you want to purchase or possess alcohol in Dubai. Download the License DXB app to complete the hassle-free application in a few easy steps or visit one of the government-authorized beverage companies — African & Eastern (africaneastern.com) or MMI (mmidubai.com) — to process your licence request. All you need is scanned copy of your Emirates ID and passport details. Once approved, a virtual licence is viewable on the License DXB app or you can collect a physical card from a preselected store after around 4 weeks. Alternatively, pop into an A&E or MMI store to do it on the spot. Cost? Free! Once you have your license you can then order home delivery via mmihomedelivery.ae or africaneasterndx.com

**UAE PASS**

Downloadable from the App Store or Google Play, UAE PASS is a national digital identity and signature solution that lets you access over 5,000 e-government services. Using your registered digital signature, you can legally complete transactions such as buying a car, paying government bills and renting a house. Account set-up only takes a couple of minutes; use your mobile to scan your Emirates ID, fill in your contact details, choose a user code and password, and submit a biometric face scan to go live. Alternatively, to complete the process, pop into a UAE PASS kiosk (locations are listed at digitaldubai.ae) to complete the final verification process using your Emirates ID and fingerprint.



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Top-to-toe sparkle

Make sure your new pad is gleaming inside and out before you unpack. Book a room-by-room deep clean and sort minor DIY dramas with on demand services aplenty

CLEANUP CREW

An empty house is an open invitation to scrub, mop, wash and polish every corner. Urban Housekeeping (050 184 9266 or WhatsApp 055 558 8614; urbanhousekeeping.com) offers a chemical-free heat-based steam cleaning service and can also sanitise everything from carpets and sofas to mattresses and curtains. For a top-to-bottom deep clean, BusyBees Dubai also does outdoor areas and uses eco-friendly detergent products throughout (058 823 8501/050 709 0626; busybeesdubai.com). Hand over monotonous everyday chores such as vacuuming, dusting and ironing to the team at Helping UAE (800 989; helping.ae). Their easy-to-use online booking system lets you find a maid at short notice or lock in a long-term cleaner, however big or small your residence.

DIY AT YOUR DOOR

Dubai also offers a wide range of qualified on-call handyman and maintenance companies for all your DIY dramas. One call is all it takes for a leaky tap to run smoothly and your paintings will be hung in minutes. We Will Fix It (800 349; wewillfixit.com) has been helping residents sort out their maintenance niggles for 15+ years and the qualified team of friendly professionals can turn their hand to most things from a water tank deep clean to plug wiring and a/c cleaning. Download the Urban Company app (available on the App Store

or Google Play) to search for an approved electrician, plumber, handyman, a/c expert or pest control service and simply select from a full menu of available services, which also indicate approximate costs. Toolboys (800 8289; toolboys.ae) also offers furniture assembly and repair as well as carpentry services along with socket replacement, drain cleaning, and more. Most firms have emergency callout support for an extra charge.

PAINT JOB

Replace the boring magnolia on your walls with a cheery touch of colour or standout feature wall. If renting, it's worth noting that if you decide to go full colour then you are required to repaint in the original shade before moving out. Get arty and create your own custom colour or choose from a rainbow spectrum by downloading the Jotun ColourDesign app (available on the App Store and Google Play; jotun.com). Upload a photo of your space, select the desired colour and see your living spaces transformed. A professional painting service can also be booked through the website. For a professional finish, the experts at TipTop Technical Services (04 422 8198/ 055 271 9291; tiptop.ae) can also paint or colour treat walls, ceilings, doors and banisters to your specific requirements.

WINDOW DRESSING

Poorly hung curtains or cheap blinds can completely spoil the

aesthetic of a room and it's a job best left to the professionals. While there are endless off-the-shelf options to choose from, Dubai has plenty of custom-made curtain services. The Satwa area has always been a hotspot for tailor shops while the Al Quoz district is home to a growing community of talented tailors ready to press pedal to the sewing machine metal. Alternatively, Blinds & Curtains (04 252 2025, blindsandcurtains.ae) is an easy-to-book online service with a reputation for quality and affordability. International brand Sedar (800 73327, sedarglobal.com) has showrooms across the UAE with a full catalogue of curtains, drapes and blinds, plus a free installation service. Most will come to you to measure up and can often turn around your chosen designs in as little as a week.

LIGHT BULB MOMENT

The right light fittings can make or break the ambience of any room by adding a sense of drama, creating cosy spots to relax in, or making a grand statement. IKEA (800 4532; ikea.com) is the international go-to for affordable lighting solutions, from fun kids' room lamps and home office solutions to smart integrated kitchen lighting. For something uniquely desirable, Luxxe Home (04 229 9322; luxxelighting.com) is a repository of stunning lighting design from contemporary chandeliers to retro wall sconces. Another Dubai favourite is

Huda Lighting (04 341 1301, hudalighting.com), which stocks the latest collections and lighting solutions from some of the world's most sought-after brands. Or, for bespoke illumination, Victoria Cronin (056 163 3621; victoriacronin.com) retails exquisite Uzbek silk lampshades and hand-painted designs.

WHITE GOODS

Tape measure at the ready, make sure to do your homework

before committing to a white goods purchase as not all homes are necessarily designed to fit 'standard' sized refrigerators, dishwashers, etc. For your big-ticket items, Sharaf DG (sharafdg.com) has stores across Dubai while Sweden's Electrolux brand (electroluxarabia.com) is known for affordable, sustainable quality appliances. New residents can also often bag a barely used secondhand bargain on Facebook Marketplace.

Go green

There are recycling bins located in most residential communities and close to the big, local supermarkets but, if you're short on time, get in touch with Green Truck (greentruck.ae) or Take My Junk (800 JUNK, takemyjunkuae.com.ae). Fees/gratuities may apply. Dubai Municipality (800 900) also offers a free collection service for bulky items including home furniture, electrical and electronic waste in many, but not all, areas.



Maintenance must-dos

Tenant or homeowner, ensure your home has a clean bill of health by scheduling regular maintenance check-ups to keep everything in tip-top working order

Poor a/c performance or breakdowns, leaking taps and pipes, clogged drains, badly fitted or damaged cabinets and chipped paintwork top the list of maintenance complaints.

Regular a/c filter cleaning is critical to reduce unit stress as blocked filters can restrict airflow, which can lead to a breakdown. Water heaters and pumps are also heavy usage systems and need to be periodically checked as water damage in the event of a breakdown can be catastrophic, affecting surrounding areas in the home. Electrical distribution boards and electrical systems should also be checked regularly

to spot any degradation, which occurs over time. For villas, drain cleaning and flushing every six months is a hygiene imperative and helps avoid the possibility of an airborne bug infestations. The checking of internal and external pipe leaks to avoid huge water utility bills should also be factored in.

If you're travelling for the summer, book a pre-trip a/c check to avoid any nasty surprises upon your return. Water tanks should also be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected in line with local authority standards as water and heat create the perfect breeding ground for harmful bacteria, diseases and parasites.

DON'T:

- Rely on third party and outsourced companies who sell your leads
- Be tempted by one-time marketing led offers
- Take service provider apps at face value, do some research
- Go with a company that doesn't have its own in-house team

DO:

- Go direct and speak to different maintenance companies
- Look for licensed technicians
- Look for uniformed technicians, it's a good sign of a reputable outfit!
- Check out customer testimonials and longevity in the market

ASK THE EXPERT: ANNUAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS

Why commit to an annual contract?

Preventive maintenance means that potential issues can be caught early, before they become an expensive problem. It also helps to prolong the lifespan of high-cost systems like air-conditioning units. Emergency breakdowns are also automatically covered for callouts.

What do I need to know before signing?

Always check if the company has local community experience, particularly the areas that may require regular checks. Ask your neighbours for recommendations and look at online reviews. A good company will always follow strict guidelines regarding process safety and have a team of well-trained, qualified technicians who also provide great customer service.

What services are usually included?

Regular a/c unit servicing (x3 annually) and annual plumbing and electrical check-ups. The contract should also specify emergency response times.

As a tenant, what should my landlord cover?

Standard terms currently state the landlord should cover any costs of major repairs and the tenant covers minor works, but the details can be left open to interpretation, and often vary. Always read the small print! Many non-Dubai resident landlords opt to pay for an annual maintenance contract, which can benefit both landlords and tenants, particularly regarding an emergency response to any major or unforeseen problems.



Safe as houses

Although Dubai enjoys a deserved reputation as one of the safest cities in the world, it doesn't hurt to be extra vigilant when it comes to keeping your own home safe and secure

Homeowner: Firstly, re-key or replace the locks on exterior doors as you never know who may still be holding an old set of keys.

Consider upgrading door security with electronic motorised locks, which are easy to install and operate. These locks offer keyless entry via a smartphone app and also unlock using a PIN cod or fingerprint. Installation is simply as the lock works with various thickness doors, which don't need to be removed. It can be clamped, glued or screwed onto the existing door cylinder, keeping the original key intact.

Think about installing outside lighting to deter intruders (including motion-activated solutions) and a security system that offers monitoring services. Don't forget to secure garage doors as well, as these often have access to the home.

Tenant: Discuss security with your landlord and check what measures are in place (locks, lighting, door and window condition)

before signing the lease.

Ask for dodgy locks to be re-keyed or replaced; request an electronic motorised lock if possible; consider temporary door wedges for added security; or invest in additional locks. If you live in an apartment building, be mindful of common entry points like the main entrance, lobby, and stairwells and report any security concerns to building management.



Consider renters insurance to protect your belongings in case of theft or damage.

Locked and loaded

Reiner Kaltenbach of Hartmann Tresore (hartmann-safes.com) explains why a safe is a good investment "As well as the obvious protection from fire, flood, theft, etc., in some instances it can lead to reduced insurance premiums for your homeowner's insurance, as it demonstrates a commitment to security. Safes offer easy and organised access to important items when you need them and can also be used to secure sensitive information, such as financial records and digital storage devices."

What kind of safe should I buy?

- Look for safes that have been internationally tested and certified.
- Check the fire resistance ratings. These are usually measured in 30, 60 or 120-minute exposure protection time blocks.
- Choose a safe with a strong, tamper-resistant build.
- Consider safes with shelves, drawers, or compartments for optimal organisation.
- Pick a lock that works for you: electronic (biometric-fingerprint recognition or digital keypad, mechanical combination dial, or traditional key. Some safes have lockout features that temporarily disable the locking mechanism after multiple failed attempts.

Top tip

- Safes should be anchored to the floor or wall to prevent removal so ensure there are pre-drilled holes for secure attachment.
- Always check the manufacturer warranty and defect or malfunction cover.



Get the look

Make Pan Home your go-to destination for on-trend indoor and outdoor living where style and spend blend beautifully

Timeless design meets trending aesthetics at Pan Home with inspired collections that bring every design dream to life at a price point to suit all pockets.

For a flavour of the vibrant and quintessentially Italian Amalfi Coast across your al fresco spaces, our creative design team marries pops of colour and playful patterns in a thoughtful nod to the region's stunning natural landscapes, panoramic Mediterranean vistas, and parade of enchanting villages.

Unwind in shaded comfort with an aperitivo in hand under the contemporary elegance of our



Inessa gazebo and matching sofa set. Reminisce about past travels to the lively piazzas of Positano and Sorrento – or plan your next coastal sojourn – while lounging amid the balmy pairing of a warm background palette accented by an eye-catching mix of patterns and textures.

Perfect for solo relaxation, or as the setting for social entertaining with family and friends, our collection elevates your outdoor aesthetic, whatever the occasion or season, thanks to high-quality, all-weather design and the Pan Home guarantee of quality.

Head inside to discover another carefully curated experience, this time melding warm rustic influences with a modern, mid-century mood. Think earthy colours harmonised with vintage accents that evoke a feeling of

nostalgia, packaged together with a touch of homely comfort.

Sink into the welcomingly plump embrace of our three-seater Nukro sofa, which features nuanced minimalist detailing and walnut veneer finishing for the ultimate in chic idyll comfort. We've added a Kieve marble coffee table with ribbed textural leg detail in a nod to bespoke design values for a uniquely contemporary feel.

Rooted in tradition yet embracing modern motifs and accents, this on-trend yet timeless collection sets the scene for upgraded living that seamlessly delivers on quality, comfort, style and budget.

Looking for more on-trend inspiration? Visit our stores in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, and Al Ain, or shop online at panhomestores.com.



Renovation 101

Eager to give your new home a style makeover and add some unique personality? From back-to-brick renovations to subtle styling, our resident experts share their insider secrets



THE BIG PICTURE

Finding the right design team to bring your interior dream to life is critical. Mihir Sangane, Co-founder and Creative Director at Designsmith (designsmith.ae), helps you navigate the decision-making process.

What should you look for when considering a potential interior designer/contractor?

Review their portfolio. Do previous projects align with your vision and style? It's crucial to choose a team whose work resonates with what you're looking for.

Discuss the process. How are design decisions, changes or unexpected challenges handled?

Communication is key, so gauge how open and responsive they are.

Check references and client testimonials. This will give invaluable insight into the company's reliability and professionalism. The right team should not only be skilled but also easy to work with, keeping your needs and preferences at the forefront.

Why hire a design firm rather than self-manage the project?

Hiring a design firm brings expertise, experience, and a network of reliable vendors and suppliers to the table. A professional team understands the nuances of space planning, functionality, and aesthetics,

ensuring a cohesive design that aligns with your lifestyle.

They can help manage budgets more effectively, avoiding costly mistakes and making sure you get the best value for your investment.

Working with a dedicated professional team also means less stress as they will handle everything from concept to completion, allowing you to focus on enjoying your new space.

Which rooms should you renovate first, and why?

Kitchen and bathrooms should be your primary focus when it comes to renovations. These spaces are used daily and significantly impact both quality of life and the home's resale value. Investing

in high-quality materials and finishes in these areas ensures durability and a timeless look that won't require frequent updates.

Next, consider the living room or any shared spaces, as these are where you entertain guests and spend family time. A well-designed living area can create a welcoming atmosphere and make the entire home feel more cohesive.

Any potential hidden costs that homeowners may not be aware of?

Building materials. Prices can

change without warning, for various reasons, so leave some wiggle room in your budget for those fluctuations.

Approval costs. Permits and approvals from local authorities can quickly add up depending on the scope of the renovation.

MEP works. This covers all mechanical, electrical, and plumbing requirements. These can be complex and escalate quickly, so it's important to plan ahead and make sure you're covered.



RENOVATION TIPS FROM THE PROS

Start with a clear plan. Know exactly what you want to achieve before starting any work. This includes preparing a detailed layout, a mood board to communicate style preferences, and a realistic budget. The more detailed the plan, the fewer surprises you'll encounter along the way.

Focus on lighting. Lighting is a game-changer in any space. Consider a mix of ambient, task, and accent lighting to create layers and add depth to your rooms. Natural light is priceless – maximise it by using sheer curtains or reflective surfaces to make a room feel more open and inviting.

Personalise with accessories, not big changes. If you're looking to refresh a space without a full renovation, focus on elements like rugs, cushions, artwork, and plants. These can add colour, texture, and personality without the commitment of structural changes. It's a cost-effective way to make your space feel new and uniquely yours.

Interiors made easy

Interior design gurus Marco and Cinzia Tedeschi (@smartrenovationdubai) and Anam Clarke (@thedesignerstudiouae) on creating a stylish and beautiful home



PLAY WITH PROPORTIONS

Create visual interest by mixing furniture and décor of varying sizes and heights. Use a large statement piece like a floor lamp or oversized artwork to anchor the room, and layer in smaller pieces for balance. This technique adds a playful, eclectic feel and keeps the eye moving throughout the space, making even small rooms feel more dynamic and engaging.

GET PERSONAL

Personalise your home with meaningful objects. Dress spaces to let your personality

shine through by incorporating cherished family heirlooms, artwork, souvenirs from your travels, etc. These items help create a warm and inviting atmosphere that reflects your unique story.

AMBIENCE IS EVERYTHING

The right lighting is just as important and can transform a space. Consider a combination of overhead lighting options, such as recessed lights or chandeliers, with table lamps, floor lamps, and wall sconces to create a warm and inviting atmosphere. Experiment

with different lighting options to highlight architectural features and create a focal point in each room.

STEP IT UP

Create visual flow with rugs to define and connect spaces, especially in open-plan homes. Choose colours and patterns that complement the room's palette and furniture. Layering rugs can add depth and personality, while a single, larger rug can unify a space. Remember to use rugs of different textures and shapes to create visual interest and guide foot traffic naturally.

BE BOLD

Don't be afraid to mix and match vibrant combinations in any space. Layering different prints like florals, stripes or geometric designs can add depth and personality to a room. Just keep a cohesive colour palette to tie everything together and avoid visual overload.

DELICIOUSLY FUNCTIONAL

Combining kitchen design with functionality is key to ensuring the heart of the home is well designed, functional and aesthetically pleasing. A great kitchen layout will promote a smooth workflow with ample space for cooking, prepping, and dining. Don't forget to maximise storage with smart cabinetry, drawers, and pull-out shelves to keep your space clutter free.

MIX AND MATCH

Combine vintage pieces with contemporary furniture to create

a unique, personalised style.

A modern sofa paired with an antique coffee table or a retro lamp on a sleek desk can make a space feel curated and balanced. Mixing eras keeps a room from feeling too sterile or too traditional, providing a dynamic look that feels both fresh and timeless.

LOOK UP

Maximise a room's potential by using vertical space. Install floating shelves to display books or décor and add hooks or pegboards for storage. In kitchens, use tall cabinets or open shelving to keep counters clear. In living rooms, vertical artwork draws the eye upward, creating the illusion of higher ceilings and a more spacious feel.

GO GREEN

Adding plants to your home instantly brings life and a sense of calm to any room. Use a mix



of tall plants, hanging plants, and small potted varieties to create a dynamic, lush look. Plants also improve air quality, making your space feel fresh and inviting. Opt for low-maintenance options like succulents or snake plants if you're new to plant care.



Dysfunctional to dream space

AI Meera transformed this dreary, impractical AI Bateen JBR kitchen into a modern culinary haven



The client was deeply dissatisfied with their existing kitchen, which was far from functional and aesthetically unappealing,” says Sara Aji, senior designer at AI Meera. Challenges included a lack of preparation areas, insufficient storage and an overall feeling of congestion. “The service window bar counter was narrow with an absence of comfortable seating arrangements, while the existing cabinets were outdated and poor quality,” she shares. In addition, the refrigerator was awkwardly placed, and the absence of ample natural light meant artificial lighting was essential, even in daytime. A 360-degree transformation was the only solution with the redesign journey driven by the client’s specific requirements. Says Sara: “To resolve the congestion problem we restructured the layout, optimising the use of space and ensuring that the kitchen felt open and inviting. We also removed the service window bar counter to create an open-plan kitchen setup with an anchoring island in the centre.” This allowed for a dedicated preparation area that perfectly addressed the lack of space for cooking and meal prep. At the same time, it transformed the space into an inviting area for hosting guests. “Modern, matt handleless cabinets were introduced to enhance both the aesthetics and durability of the kitchen, while the refrigerator



THE VERDICT

This kitchen transformation is a testament to how properly researching and selecting a professional studio that will deliver a thoughtful design can transform a dysfunctional space into a welcoming modern culinary haven...
Sara Aji, senior designer



Before



was strategically relocated to a more functional area,” she notes, and elaborates further: “We installed a wider, dark-coloured sink and tap to match the upgraded aesthetic and meet the client’s needs.” Final touches included a light-coloured porcelain countertop, which was selected to reflect the light and enhance the kitchen’s newly bright and airy feel, while outdated

appliances were replaced with modern, energy-efficient models. Lighting was another critical focus with Sara ensuring that ample natural and artificial light sources were combined to brighten the kitchen throughout the day. And, for extra storage, the utility room was fitted with cabinets and a washing machine to double up as a pantry and laundry room.

RENO KNOW-HOW

Investing in a major renovation for the heart of the house is a major undertaking. We asked the Al Meera (almeera.me) team for their top tips on the right way to approach a kitchen revamp.

Prioritise functionality

Before diving into aesthetics, consider how you use your kitchen. Think about the kitchen triangle (the relationship between the sink, stove, and refrigerator) and ensure that your layout facilitates easy movement between these areas.

Invest in quality materials

While it may be tempting to cut costs, investing in high-quality materials will pay off in the long run. Durable countertops, cabinetry, and fittings are essential for withstanding the daily wear and tear of a busy kitchen.

Maximise natural light

A bright kitchen feels more inviting and spacious. Incorporate large windows, glass doors, or skylights if possible. If your kitchen lacks natural light, consider using reflective surfaces such as glossy tiles or glass backsplashes for light amplification.

Focus on the details

Finishing touches can elevate your kitchen’s design. Hardware,

lighting fixtures, and backsplashes are areas where you can inject personality. Mixing metals or adding a pop of colour with these elements delivers a cohesive and stylish look.

Incorporate smart storage

Innovative storage solutions can make a world of difference. Pull-out pantries, deep drawers, and custom organisers for utensils and spices help keep your kitchen tidy and functional. Consider vertical storage options to maximise space in smaller kitchens.

Work with specialists

The success of your kitchen renovation greatly depends on the expertise and reliability of the kitchen design company you choose. A specialised company will not only ensure that the work is done to a professional standard, but will also help you navigate design choices, manage the timeline, and keep the project within budget.

Plan for the future

When designing your kitchen, think about how your needs might change. If you plan to expand your family or entertain more frequently, ensure your design can accommodate these changes. Flexibility in your layout and ample storage can help future-proof your kitchen.

KITCHEN FIXES ON A BUDGET

Update hardware and fixtures

Get an instant facelift by swapping out old cabinet handles, drawer pulls, and taps. Choose modern designs or finishes that complement your kitchen’s style but deliver maximum impact.

Add open shelving

This is a cost-effective way to update your kitchen. It creates an airy feel and allows you to display your favourite dishes, plants, or cookbooks. Top tip: It’s also a great reminder to keep your kitchen organised and tidy.

Replace lighting fixtures

Updating lighting can have a big impact without breaking the bank. Consider replacing outdated ceiling lights with pendant lights and modern fixtures that add style and improve functionality. Opt for energy-efficient LED lights to brighten the space while also saving on electricity costs.

For more design inspiration call +971 800 1199, visit almeera.me or pop into a showroom: UAE (Al Khalidiyah 2, Abu Dhabi; Sheikh Zayed Road, Dubai); Oman (Maabela 7, Muscat); Qatar (Salwa Road, Doha).



Bespoke bathroom inspiration

Minimalism redefined was the makeover mantra for this Emirates Hills master bathroom

A modern, minimalist aesthetic was the client brief for the master bathroom in this luxury five-bedroom villa. With a keen understanding and appreciation of interior design, they wanted the space to embody elegance and simplicity while mirroring current trends.

The existing bathroom was cluttered with an overabundance of furniture, design themes and colour palette that restricted space and disrupted flow. The Casa Milano team had a clear goal: maximise available space to create an open and refined setting in line with principles of modern minimalism.

With a clean, cohesive look in mind, the transformation included installation of a freestanding bathtub and freestanding mixer tap to instantly elevate the sense

of luxury and spaciousness.

Challenges are the norm for any high-end renovation project and the sourcing of premium materials is a perennial issue, but Casa Milano's well-stocked inventory of best-selling sanitary ware ensured seamless project continuity.

Flooring has been reimagined in monochromatic tones to harmonise with the sleek vanity units, basin mixers and sanitary collection. A further wow factor is the tiling, with the existing small, outdated tiles replaced with on-trend large-scale (120x80cm) alternatives for a seamless aesthetic.

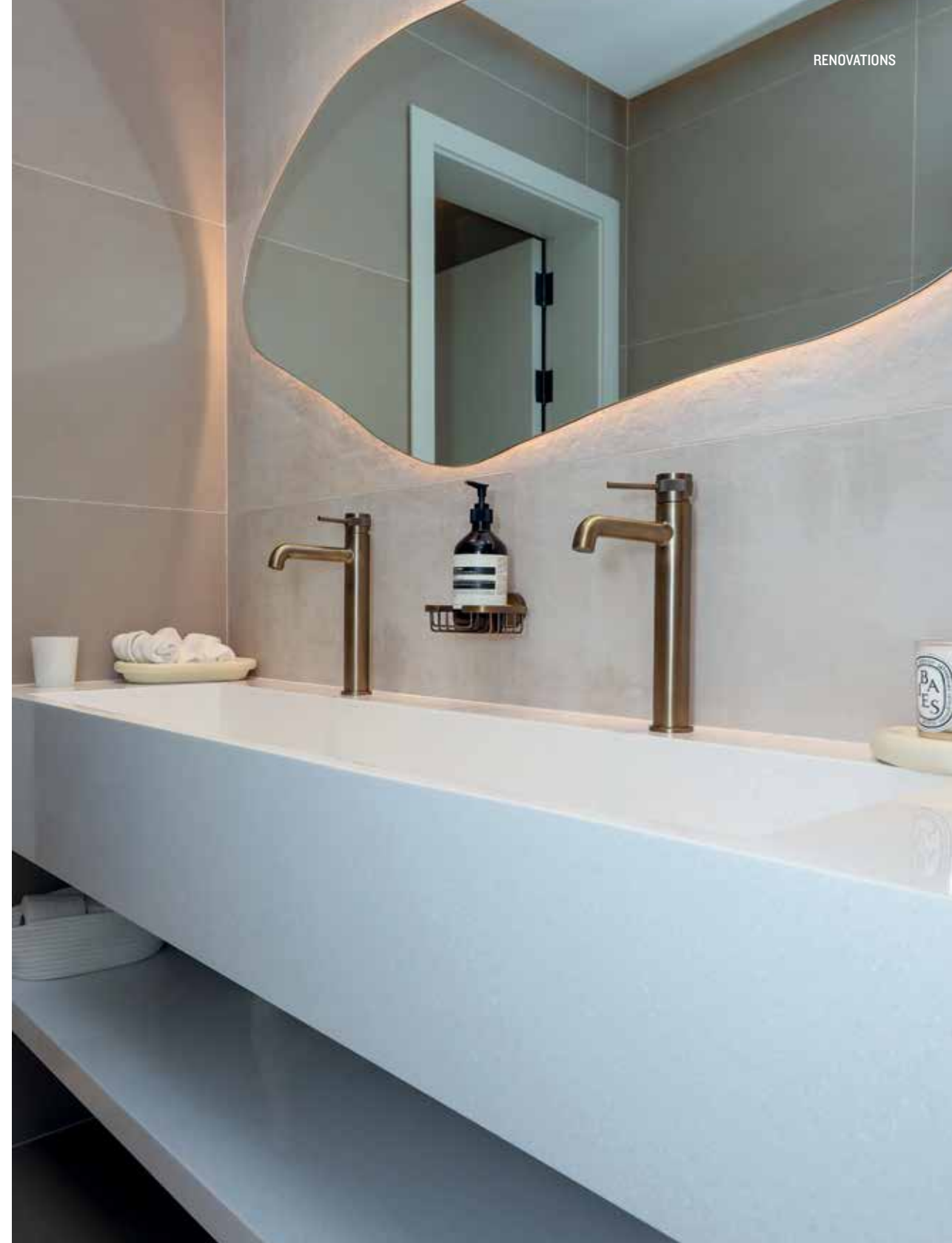
The bathroom floors also feature a matte finish for an understated feel, which contrast with the refined sheen of the gloss walls. This ticked

all the boxes with the result a sleek, open space that feels serene and harmonious.

A particular standout feature was customisation of the colour palette to meet the client's preferences. Best-selling monotone shades including rust copper, brushed nickel, matte grey and brushed bronze from the Sapphire and Spain collections were used to full effect, along with matte gold from the Euphoria collection.

THE RESULT

Minimalist perfection and a meticulously crafted bathroom that now feels spacious, uncluttered, and functional. A calm, inviting space where style meets functionality; perfectly aligned with modern trends.



Design your dream bathroom

Azhar Sajan, Director & Founder at Casa Milano gives the insider track on the art of bathroom aesthetics and functionality



“When upgrading your bathroom, a combination of functionality and design is essential. A well-planned space not only meets your daily needs but also enhances your home’s overall aesthetic.

Before diving into aesthetics, think about the space you’re working with. Whether it’s a small or large bathroom, a smart layout makes all the difference. Consider compact fixtures for smaller areas or floating vanities to create an illusion of space.

Functionality is a priority because a bathroom should be as practical as it is beautiful. Ensure easy access to fundamentals such as basins, showers, and toilets. Think about user needs - be it a family-friendly setup or a luxurious home retreat - and ensure the space works for them.

High-quality fixtures and big-ticket items like basin mixers,

exposed shower columns and bathtubs are worth the investment. Not only do high-quality fixtures add a touch of elegance, but they also offer long-lasting durability. Brushed nickel fittings with various colour options provide both style and strength.

You don’t want your bathroom to quickly become dated so go neutral for a timeless look. Think neutral tones such as whites, greys, and beiges, which are perfect when creating a timeless backdrop; and feature larger tiles (glossy or matte). You can always add personality with accessories, from toilet roll holders and mirrors to concealed mechanisms, which will easily elevate the look and feel of the entire space.

Lighting plays a vital role in both functionality and mood. Layered lighting, where you

combine ambient, task, and accent lights, is ideal for creating a balanced, well-lit space. Consider dimmable options to shift from bright, task-focused light to a more relaxing ambiance.

Bathrooms are often wet and steamy environments, so my final tip is to make the most of this as the perfect place to introduce low-maintenance plants. Indoor greenery not only enhances the look but can also help purify the air, making your bathroom feel like a spa retreat.”

STYLE ON SHOW
For more bathroom design inspiration, visit casamilanoitaly.com or head to any of the Casa Milano showrooms in Dubai: Sheikh Zayed Road; Salah Al Din Street, Al Khabaisi; and Salahuddin Street, Hor Al Anz.



TIMELESS VS. TREND

Embrace trends but think about design elements that will stand the test of time.

1. Nature is always on-trend so look to incorporate materials such as stone, wood, and greenery to create a calming, spa-like atmosphere.
2. You can’t go wrong with a timeless white,

beige, grey or other neutral tones. The perfect blank canvas on which to introduce different design styles, they are less likely to quickly feel dated.

3. Don’t over-design and instead opt for streamlined, minimalist fixtures that set the tone for the rest of the

bathroom; and also help maximise available space.

4. Always in fashion, technology is constantly evolving and enhances the bathroom experience. Consider integrating smart taps, for example, that can dispense both water and soap.

Garden masterclass

Embrace al fresco living with expert insight from Sayed Habib, director at Danube Home (danubehome.com), on how to make the most of the great outdoors... from sunrise to sunset



Q What are the steps for a garden makeover?

A Firstly, how big is the outdoor space and how do you plan to use it? Is it for entertaining family and friends? A space for your children to play? Or simply a cozy area for relaxation? The next step is to decide on furniture and décor pieces. For entertaining you'll want more seating options and an outdoor kitchen setup, whereas for a kid-friendly space, consider outdoor toys such as swing sets, slides or a trampoline. And, for relaxation, a comfy sun lounger and outdoor armchair are essential while a gazebo adds a touch of luxury. For smaller spaces, a top tip is to invest in multifunctional furniture.

Q Is it important to zone different areas?

A Creating focused spaces is key. For example, if sitting and sipping a great cup of coffee in the early morning peace and quiet is how you like to start the day then a stylish table set up for breakfast and comfy chair to lounge in is the way to go. Throw in a chic umbrella for welcome shade, and you've got the perfect tranquil breakfast nook.

Q How can you flexibly design spaces for all times of day?

A When the afternoon rolls around, you want a space that can keep up with your plans. Think about adding loungers that can double as extra seating, and maybe a large outdoor umbrella or snazzy gazebo for shade. A barbecue area is a must to turn your space into a lively spot for casual lunches and hanging out with family and friends. Modular furniture is a fantastic option as it's easy to rearrange for lounging or dining as needed. And, for a relaxing evening, aim for a cosy vibe. Choose soft lighting solutions such as garden lanterns



or string lights, to create a warm, inviting glow. Pair with comfortable chairs to sink into, textural blankets and cushions; plus, you can't go wrong with a fire pit for warmth and ambience.

Q What makes a great space for get-togethers?

A If you love hosting friends and family then definitely include a dining set for bigger gatherings so everyone can relax in comfort. Whether you opt for a top of the range barbecue or go all out with an outdoor kitchen and bar setup, there's nothing quite like cooking and dining al fresco. Add some outdoor sofas or lounge chairs around the fire pit to continue the party away from the dining area, while the kids have their fun in their own dedicated play area. Consider an outdoor fountain to really enhance the atmosphere.

Q How can I ensure my outdoor space stays in great shape?

A It's important to choose durable materials, such as aluminium or stainless steel furniture, that can handle different weather conditions. Always make sure to use protective covers when the space isn't in use and regular maintenance is also key. Investing in quality and taking care of your purchases makes all the difference and will ensure your garden will weather both seasons with items built to last year after year.

DIVE IN

If a pool is a priority in your new home, do your research on the types of pool available and what best suits your space. Major factors to consider are budget and timescale as this is a big-ticket item so getting it right will pay off in the long run. Expedite the process by making sure you have all the relevant documentation, including the as-built drawings, in hand. It's also worth getting a mechanical, electrical and plumbing (MEP) check or full survey on an existing pool to help understand potential issues. Permissions are also critical and vary by community and location. For the most up-to-date information on the rules, regulations and costing, choose a pool design firm that is also up to speed with municipality and community guidelines.



SIZE MATTERS

Small can be beautiful with these balcony or terrace tips.

Choose compact furniture pieces that will sit snugly in a smaller outdoor area. Avoid cluttering the area with an overwhelm of furniture or décor items.

Look for multifunctional or easy-to-move pieces that give you the opportunity to make the most of the limited space.

Free up floor space by installing wall-mounted shelves, hooks, or vertical planters to add greenery to your balcony or terrace.

Artificial plant fences are another practical solution that add privacy and create a beautiful green area to bring you closer to nature.

Opt for light colours to make your balcony feel more spacious, open and inviting. Add pops of colour for an instant talking point and personality.



5 WAYS TO REFRESH YOUR SPACE

1 Get zen with a relaxation zone.

A chic lounge paired with a pergola or shade-giving umbrella are all it takes to create a chilled-out afternoon or weekend hideaway while a café table and chair surrounded by a wall of plant sets the scene for a quiet coffee spot.

2 Think lighting for feel and function.

When it comes to outdoor spaces, lighting plays a crucial role in not just creating ambience but also enhancing functionality – so think carefully when making lighting choices from solar powered directional pathway lights to strings of fairy lights for starry night feels.

3 Refresh the greenery. Whether you want real plants, high-quality artificial options, or a mix of both, rethink your landscaping while considering the time you have to take care of the garden. If you're not blessed with green fingers, high-quality artificial greenery is the answer to keeping your garden looking fresh all year round.

4 Let your personality shine. Make the space yours by including items that reflect your personal style such as a set of colourful cushions, eye-catching outdoor rug, or collection of garden ornaments. These little details can make a big difference by adding a pop of colour, print, and texture to your garden. They can also be swapped out seasonally to create distinctive looks you love.

5 Invest in climate suitable furniture.

Look for materials like aluminium and water-resistant fabrics that have been specially created to withstand and thrive in all weather conditions. And don't forget about maintenance – a little care goes a long way.

Home of style

Dubai's sought-after stores for everything you need and all you desire to style your space



Bloomr

The kind of store where your intention is a single throw pillow but you walk out with a renewed design vision and clutch of unique accessories. The wonderfully curated seasonally changing collections are always inspiring and quality is the watchword whether you're picking up a furniture piece or 'welcome to your new home' gift.

We love: Superior faux foliage
bloomr.com

Casa Milano

Elevate your bathroom experience with high-end Italian inspiration. This homegrown UAE company designs sanitaryware sanctuaries that scream opulent luxury with a contemporary twist; from freestanding bathtubs and recessed vanity units right down to tiles, lighting and the ubiquitous soap dish.

We love: OTT bathtub chic
casamilanoitaly.com

CB2

Part of the Crate and Barrel family, CB2 is the go-to for sophisticated, high-quality design at an approachable price. Timeless meets edgy across seasonally changing beautifully curated collections that speak to whatever your brand of personal style.

This is where the likes of Kravitz Design meets chic cosy comfort.

We love: The cool collaborations
cb2.ae

Danube Home

Affordable quality across more than 50,000 homeware products means you can kit your entire house out and feel good about it. With every conceivable product category on offer, peruse sofas, dining sets, wardrobes, sunloungers, and more; or make



Bloomr

a date with the interior design team for some style advice.

We love: Awesome seating selection
danubehome.com

Dubai Garden Centre

A green Aladdin's cave, this is where those in the know not only go to pick up a perennial or pot plant but also custom-made planters, pergolas, benches, bird houses as well as a third-party conservatory design service.

We love: Hand-carpentered kids' playhouses
dubaigardencentre.ae

IKEA

This global homeware icon is where you go to do up your

home on a budget. The Swedish brand offers its simple yet stylish products at two branches: Dubai Festival City and Festival Plaza Mall, Jebel Ali. Perfect for homes of every size, you'll find lots of options for clean, uncluttered living.

We love: Scandi storage solutions
ikea.com/ae

Kaiser

Dream kitchen design meets German-engineered excellence. Whether you're looking for a high-end family-friendly space or a professional chef-quality kitchen, Kaiser offers contemporary tailored design from A to Z. The



Marina Home

result? A gorgeous kitchen that ticks all your boxes.

We love: Custom design options
kaiser.ae

Marina Home

A three-decade-long legacy and reputation for an eclectic handcrafted offering that draws on design inspiration from around the world, ensures that every visit is an adventure. Discover a treasure trove of unique pieces spanning mid-century, Japandi rustic, and much more; with everything you need for stylish indoor and al fresco living.

We love: Endless styling opportunities
marinahomeinteriors.com

Pottery Barn

Manhattan vibes and some serious design credentials anchor this popular homeware store. Handcrafted, fair trade and organic collections sit alongside on-trend yet timeless pieces that will sit pretty in your dream Dubai home.

We love: Handcrafted accessories galore
potterybarn.ae

Rattan House

Your go-to for contemporary designed, highly durable and weather-resistant outdoor furnishings, this is a popular one-stop destination for everything from sun loungers, rattan garden sofa sets and parasols to fire pits and outdoor rugs.

We love: T5-yr warranty on own brand furniture
rattanhouse.com

Sanipex Group

Cover all the home styling bases with Bagnodesign showrooms for dream bathroom design, and Sanipex Gallery dedicated to exclusive brands spanning bathroom, wellness, kitchen and outdoor living. You can even try before you buy with 'The Visualiser' online room design tool.

We love: Trending tile designs
sanipexgroup.com

THE One

A sought-after staple of the home furnishings scene since 1996, this UAE-born brand is a go-to for home interiors inspiration. A sense of adventure and eccentricity is fused with classic style across its seasonally inventive collections for unique room-to-room experiences that delight and excite.

We love: Sumptuous bedroom feels
theone.com

West Elm

Modern design enthusiasts go wild for the Brooklyn studio-based furniture and home décor company. Strong sustainability values resonate throughout its collections with a commitment to delivering solidly made, ethically produced Fair Trade certified pieces.

We love: Sustainable ceiling to floor solutions
westelm.ae

Moving on

Leaving the UAE for pastures new or relocating to a different community? Dot the i's and cross the t's for a hassle-free exit



TENANT CHECKLIST

If your tenancy contract is coming to an end and you're unsure about next steps, it's the legal responsibility of the renter to give notice or confirm contract renewal 90 days in advance. Most landlords and management companies will send a renewal notice (with updated terms) well before the deadline but mark it on the calendar anyway. If you do decide to move on, then here's some tips for a smooth move...

Make good. Normal wear and tear aside, you're legally required to hand over your apartment or villa in good condition. This includes repainting walls to their original colour, filling in any holes from picture hooks, wall-mounted TVs, etc., and leaving the place in general good working order. Can't be bothered or out of time? This may land you with an unexpected maintenance invoice or the loss of your security deposit.

Inspection ready. The landlord, management company or appointed agent will inspect the property to make sure everything is in order. The final step is to hand back the keys, at which point your deposit should be returned, although this often takes time to be credited to your bank account.

Power off. On the actual day your tenancy expires (or ahead of time if you move out early), you will need to file an online DEWA 'Moveout' request. This usually takes 24 hours, and the final bill will be sent to your email. There's a Dh\$100-300 disconnection charge (excluding

VAT), plus final bill amount. Any DEWA deposit will be refunded if leaving or transferred to your new property. If you already have a new home sorted, you can transfer your account through the online 'Move To' service. With Empower, it's a similar process but you'll also need to visit their offices in person to make the final payment, retrieve your deposit and get the clearance certificate.

Cut the connection. To cancel your Du phone/internet package, either submit a cancellation request online (du.ae), via the app or call the customer care line (800 155) at least three days prior to moving out. You will receive a call-back within 72 hours to walk you through the final steps of the process after which you pay your final bill online or in person (and collect any monies owed). Etisalat is a similar story (800 101). If you have a long-term package, don't forget to check the small print as you'll probably be locked into a contracted period with penalties for early cancellation, plus there's a standard 30-day cancellation notice period.

Local moves. Du and Etisalat accounts can easily be transferred by making an online request or calling the customer helpline. Get the ball rolling at least four working days before you relocate, and make sure you have your full (new) address details and proof of residency documents for uploading. A technician appointment at your new location will then be scheduled (fees of Dhs100-300 apply). Same as moving in, some communities will require you to obtain a moving

out permit or, for apartment buildings, a landlord no-objection certificate/letter.

RENEW OR RELOCATE?

Home is where the heart is, but are you still getting a good deal or is it time to reconsider your options? Current rental rates for your community or area can be checked using the RERA Rental Increase Calculator. Type in your location and residence basics to check what the going annual rental rates are like. Find it at dubailand.gov.ae/en/eservices/rental-index. Think you're paying more than you should? The first step is obviously to negotiate, but this must be done at least 90 days before your contract expires. If the situation isn't resolved and the RERA Rental Increase Calculator is in your favour, consider filing a complaint with the Dubai Land Department's Rental Dispute Settlement Centre. A 3.5% fee (based on total annual rent) is payable, but if you win the case, this is refunded. Additional admin fees apply.

Check the small print of your existing rental agreement and negotiate on some of the finer points to secure a better deal. This could be payment in multiple cheques, an upfront payment discount, or asking for an additional parking space.

SOLD!

The sales process explained... If you're a landlord who is selling and are ready to accept a buyer offer, your agent is on hand to help you agree terms and prepare a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or Form F to be signed by both parties. Note: this locks you

into the deal. Next step is for the buyer and seller to meet at the offices of the developer to apply for a No Objection Certificate (NOC) to sell the property (this is usually paid for by the seller). Any outstanding service charges owed by the seller must be settled at this point. Once the NOC is issued, both parties make a trip to the Dubai Land Department to transfer ownership. Payment must be made by manager's cheque on the day of the transfer. Once completed, the new title deed will be issued in the name of the buyer.

EVICITION NOTICE

Receiving an unexpected eviction notice can be overwhelming, so it's good to be in the know when it comes to your legal rights as a tenant. If your landlord wants to move into the property themselves, or sell it, a written 12-month notice period is required and can only be sent via registered mail or via the notary public. Eviction (upon expiration of current contract) is only possible if the landlord plans to demolish the property, is selling, has immediate family moving in, or if it needs serious maintenance/renovation (Dubai Municipality technical report required).

DEAL BREAKER

Need or want to cut short your tenancy contract? Check the terms and conditions regarding early exit penalty clauses. In addition, your current Ejari contract remains live until all issues are resolved. If you have issued post-dated cheques, ask for them to be returned or for written confirmation of non-encashment.



Ready to buy

If you're envisioning a long-term future in Dubai, purchasing property could be a wise investment. But is now a good time to buy? We asked the experts at Betterhomes



KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Liam Dawett, Branch Sales Manager, Business Bay at Betterhomes lists the key considerations for making a sound investment

1. Location: accessibility to work, schools, etc.; capital appreciation potential in prime areas; lifestyle offering
2. Budget: decide overall affordability and your financial threshold; available financing options; alignment with your bigger picture investment strategy
3. Rationale: personal use, rental income or capital appreciation; return on investment; exit strategy
4. Price: is it fair market value for the community/area; negotiation potential; cost versus value based on location, amenities, appreciation potential
5. Amenities: quality of life; resale value potential; rental appeal now and in the future

Dubai's real estate market has been on an upward trajectory in recent times, delivering consistent growth across all sectors, as Richard Waind, CEO of Betterhomes explains: "Over the last four years, the Dubai market has gone from strength to strength, fuelled by a growing population and renewed interest from overseas buyers." With record-breaking sales and strong demand from both end-users and investors, the question many are asking is: 'Is now the right time to buy?'

A go-to destination for high net-worth individuals (HNWIs) looking for a safe and welcoming destination to raise their families and grow their businesses,

Betterhomes data reveals that, as an asset class, real estate has outperformed almost all other options with over 7% gross yields and double-digit year-on-year capital appreciation.

The increasingly transparent nature of the market, supported by the availability of open data from Dubai Land Department, has seen foreign investment into Dubai property reach an all-time high. Domestically, residents continue to enter the sales market, despite rising interest rates with rising rental costs and fear of eviction making property ownership an attractive option. At the same time, supply in the secondary market remains tight, and high-quality new launches are routinely oversubscribed, but all indications are that Dubai will likely continue to grow, and the market alongside it.

Government policies also play a crucial role in shaping Dubai's real estate market. The UAE's liberalised visa framework, which offers 10-year residency permits and 100% foreign ownership of onshore companies, has been instrumental in attracting both investors and residents. Additionally, the recent introduction of a 10-year 'Blue Visa' for individuals contributing to environmental protection, is further cementing Dubai's appeal as a forward-thinking, sustainability focused destination.

The emirate is characterised by its business-friendly environment, tax benefits, multiple job opportunities, and high standard of living. These factors have led to a population influx, driving increased demand for residential units. However, with rising demand, understanding the dynamics of interest and

FEE BREAKDOWN

There are various fees associated with buying a property, totalling around 7% of the purchase price. These include:

- 4% DLD + AED 4,200 registration fee + AED 580 admin fee covering title deed, affection plan, knowledge and innovation fees.
- 2% brokerage fee (excl. VAT)
- AED 4,000-7,500 for conveyancing
- 0.25% of the loan amount + AED 290 for mortgage registration fees payable to DLD
- Bank processing, up to 1% of loan amount
- Valuation costs, up to AED 3,150
- Service fees
- Renovation fees

mortgage rates is crucial for prospective buyers. "While mortgage interest rates have seen an increase, they are still relatively low compared to many global markets," notes Jeffrey De Souza, Head of Mortgages at Betterhomes. "For many buyers, the cost of monthly mortgage repayments is still lower than equivalent rental payments, making homeownership a viable and attractive option. Moreover, with Dubai's property market showing such strong growth, buyers can expect high returns on their investment, even in the current rate environment."

Investing in off-plan properties offers a unique opportunity to secure a stake in Dubai's ever-evolving real estate market. With flexible payment plans, competitive pricing, and the chance to customise your future home, off-plan investments remain an attractive option for both seasoned investors and first-time buyers. "As Dubai continues to grow, the potential for capital appreciation and rental yields make this a compelling

choice for those looking to capitalise on the city's dynamic development.," says Wassim Abdallah, Head of Off-Plan and Investments, Betterhomes.

Dubai's resilient economy is another factor that makes now an opportune time to buy. The city's GDP growth rate of 3.3% at FY 2023 reflects its strategic focus on sustainable development. Government initiatives like the Quality of Life Strategy 2033, which aims to transform residential communities into '20-minute cities', are designed to further enhance the living experience.

Given the robust demand, ongoing government support, and a resilient economy, whether you are looking to secure a family home, invest in luxury real estate, or capitalise on favourable market conditions, Dubai offers a wealth of opportunities. As Richard Waind puts it: "Dubai's real estate sector is positioned for continued growth, making it a prime time for both end-users and investors to enter the market."



Essential contacts

All those handy numbers you need, at your fingertips

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Police 999

Al Ameen Service
(Dubai Police)
800 4888

For reporting crimes
anonymously

Al Ameen SMS service
050 189 4444

Ambulance 998

Fire 997

Electricity failure 911

Water failure 922

FOR OFFICIAL PAPERWORK

Al Manara Center

For Ejari registration
(for Ejari typing centre
list go to dubailand.gov.ae),
DEWA and telecoms
connections, UAE driving

licence applications, visa
and real estate services.
800 900, dm.gov.ae

Dubai Land Department

Homeowner real estate
services, Ejari registration,
Dubai Rental Dispute
Settlement Centre. 800
4488, dubailand.gov.ae
Real Estate Regulatory
Authority (RERA)
04 203 0555, dubailand.gov.ae

UTILITIES

DEWA 04 601 9999, dewa.gov.ae/en

Empower 04 375 5555,
empower.ae

PHONE, TV & INTERNET PACKAGES

Du 800 155

All Du mobile customers
(postpaid/prepaid) are
welcome to sign up to

Amazon Prime as an
add-on subscription with
certain packages including
12 months free access.
du.ae

Etisalat

800 101 (24/7) for callers
within the UAE.
etisalat.ae

OSN

Sign up for a variety of
user-interest TV packages.
New customer 04 247
3536; existing customer
04 367 78888, osn.com

Netflix

Streaming service offering
a variety of award-winning
TV shows, movies, anime,
documentaries, and more.
netflix.com

CLEANING SERVICES

BusyBees Dubai

Total home service

solutions, from deep
cleaning, to furniture
cleaning, maid services,
move in/out cleaning,
steaming and sanitising.
058 823 8501/050 709
0626, busybeesdubai.com

Urban Housekeeping

Offers a chemical-free
heat-based steam
cleaning service,
and can also sanitise
your carpets, sofas,
mattresses and curtains.
050 184 9266 or
WhatsApp 055 558
8614,
urbanhousekeeping.com

Helping

Offload time-consuming
everyday chores
and book online for
shortnotice cleans or to
request long-term home
help. 800 989,
helping.ae

PEST CONTROL

Rentokil Boecker

Pest control experts with
emirate-wide coverage,
offering the latest tools
and techniques to keep
your home bug free.
800 73787 or WhatsApp
054 993 1461

National Pest Control

Well established company
with a highly professional
team and pest control
expertise. Part of the
Rentokil group. 04 324
2342, natpest.com

MAINTENANCE SERVICES

We Will Fix It

One of Dubai's original
maintenance companies,
the friendly team can turn
their hand to most things,
from a water tank deep
clean to plug wiring. 04
807 3295, wewillfixit.com

Handyman Dubai

A full A to Z of services
includes exterior and
indoor paint jobs and
masonry repair through
to furniture assembly
and mosquito net
fitting. 056 662 3611,
handymanservicesdubai.com

Toolboys

Ultra-efficient and just
a phone call away, get
your prized 65-inch TV
wall mounted, smoke
alarms fitted and furniture
polished. 800 8289,
toolboys.ae

Hitches & Glitches

Long-running independent

home maintenance
company in the UAE.
Also offers renovation
and refurbishment
services. 800 42634,
hitchesglitches.com

VFix Maintenance

Provides painting, a/c,
electrical, tiling and
plumbing services. Get a
speedy estimate by filling
in the online form. 054 767
0077, vfixmaintenance.com

Octopus

24/7 support with a wide
range of solutions to cover
all your home maintenance
and repair needs. 800
3993, octopus.ae

GAS DELIVERY

For villa residents who
require a gas cylinder,
there are around 55 gas
distributors that deliver to
your door in Dubai. Order
your preferred cylinder
size through **Emirates Gas**.
800 36427, emiratesgas.com

WATER DELIVERY

To save multiple trips
to the supermarket,
most residents have a
fivegallon bottle water
cooler at home. Numerous
companies offer doorstep
delivery, including: **Mai**
Dubai 800 6243 8224,
Masafi 600 525 256, **Oasis**
Water 600 522 261 For
an eco-friendly solution,
install the **Quooker tap**,
which dispenses hot,
chilled and sparkling
filtered water. 04 330
3063, quooker.ae

SAFETY & SECURITY

ACE

Go-to DIY and hardware
store with large selection
of security lighting,
window and patio locks,
door deadbolts, smoke
alarms and more. 800 275
223, aceuae.com

Hartmann Tresore

German-manufactured,
tested, certified and
customised safes and
high-quality door locks.
04 380 8099, safes.ae

Locksmith Dubai

Promises to reach you
within 30 minutes,
whether you've lost
your car or home keys
or need extra keys cut
in a jiffy. 055 448 3370,
locksmithdubai.ae

Safety Screens

Australian-owned
company with door and
window screen solutions
for residential properties
across the UAE. 056 129
6944, safetyscreens.ae

HOME UPGRADES

Designsmith Dubai

Multi award-winning
architecture, interior
design and fitout
company with extensive
residential experience.
050 485 2970,
designsmith.ae

Innerspace Dubai

Award-winning interior
design team with
specialist kitchen
renovation expertise.

Official distributor
for high-end German
Häcker and Kaiser
kitchens. 04 252 6500,
innerspacedxb.com

Secret Gardens

A bespoke pool and
whirlpool design
company that can build
your dream swimming
pool. 04 262 6382/
050 927 8089,
secretgardenslandscaping.com

The Big Fitout

Specialists in European
style residential
kitchen and bathroom
renovations, this British-
owned renovation
company only takes on
projects within select
communities. 058 5050
200, thebigfitout.com

GROCERY DELIVERY

Carrefour

Free grocery delivery
service for orders over
Dhs150, and large kitchen
appliances. 800 73232,
carrefouruae.com

Instashop

Offers fast online
delivery from a range
of supermarkets and
shops, including organic
specialists. instashop.com

Kibsons

Online grocery delivery
service that also stocks
brands like Sainsbury's
and M&S Food products,
plus fresh flowers and
kids' essentials.
kibsons.com



MOVING & STORAGE

Allied Moving Services

A leading global mover with 600 locations in 40 countries and a multilingual team with over two decades' market experience. 04 818 0400, allied.com/ae

Crown Relocations

International moving company with a portfolio of services including a shared container service and settling-in services. 04 230 5300, crownrelo.com

Santa Fe Relocations

Global relocation and

storage specialists across 47 countries. Obtain a free online quote. 04 332 1595, santaferelo.com

Storall

Offers safe and secure storage units for anything and everything that won't fit in your house or apartment. 04 880 3644/054 757 5390, storall.ae

The Box

Self-storage and mini warehousing services provider with around-the-clock availability and choice of flexible storage options. Check out the handy 'move packs' that

come in all shapes and sizes, available through the online store. 800 843 269, theboxme.com

COOL HOME DELIVERIES

Dubai is known for delivering an ultra-easy lifestyle. In a city where you can get almost everything delivered to your door, make the most of these cool home delivery options:

Cafu

No time to get to the petrol station? Fret not, as you can get fuel delivered straight to your door 24/7 - and no delivery fee. Simply download the app, place

an order and a man in a van will come to fill you up, wash your vehicle, and more. 800 692238, cafu.com

Hello Chef

Pre-portioned ingredients and recipe cards for the week's dinner delivered to your door. 04 383 9399, hellochef.me

Pets Lounge

Treat your furry friends to an at home (or in-van, as is usually the case) spa treatment with a mobile grooming service that pulls up outside your door. 052 216 6773, petsloungeuae.com



Supporting flexible adult education, allowing students to learn around their own schedule and lives. Study with supportive tutors in the heart of the arts district. Take a short course or build up to a fully accredited Diploma and make a change in your life today.



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www.designerseducation.com
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Quooker®

The ultimate in kitchen innovation



The tap that delivers 100 °C boiling, hot, cold, and sparkling water instantly, all from one tap

Whether you're entertaining guests, preparing gourmet meals, or enjoying a refreshing drink, Quooker brings effortless luxury to your kitchen. Experience Quooker at our Dubai Showroom or visit www.quooker.ae to book your exclusive consultation

