

# Rent Increase Calculator

## Methodology note: incorporating the ABS's 2025 CPI re-referencing

June 2026

### 1. Purpose

This note explains a methodology issue identified in the rent increase calculator, and how it has been resolved. It covers: the legal requirement for which CPI figure must be used; the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) change that created the issue; the approach taken to fix it; and a full reference table of the index figures now used by the calculator, back to the March 2022 quarter.

### 2. The legal requirement

The Residential Tenancies Regulation 1998 calculates the maximum permitted rent increase using an “initial index number” – the Canberra rents CPI figure *that applied when the tenant was given notice of their last rent increase, or, if there has never been an increase, when the tenancy began*. The “current index number” is *the most recently published figure as at the date notice is given of the new proposed increase*.

The key word is “applied”. This means the figure that was actually in force and publicly available at that historical point in time – *not* a figure that was only calculated or published later, even if that later figure covers the same time period more precisely.

### 3. The ABS changes and implications for calculating rent increase

Two related changes took effect in late 2025:

- On 26 November 2025, the ABS moved from quarterly to monthly CPI reporting, with October 2025 as the first full monthly reference period.
- In its December 2025 CPI release, the ABS re-referenced its entire quarterly index series. The September 2025 quarter was set as the new “link period”, with its index value defined as exactly 100.00. All quarterly figures were previously expressed on a 2011-12 = 100 base, to one decimal place; they are now expressed on a September 2025 = 100 base, to two decimal places.

Re-referencing changes the level (the raw number) of every historical index figure, but does not change the percentage movements between periods, aside from minor rounding effects (which the ABS notes are larger in earlier, lower-valued periods of the series).

In ABS CPI data releases *after* December 2025, the tables include monthly figures that the ABS calculated retrospectively, after the re-referencing, and going back to 2022. *These retrospective monthly estimates did not exist at the time – they were only calculated and published in late 2025*. For any date before the re-referencing, they are not “the figure that applied” in the sense the regulation requires, even though they are a reasonable, more granular estimate of the same underlying trend.

### 4. Why the figures can't simply be mixed

The calculator's formula is a percentage-growth calculation:  $1.1 \times \text{rent} \times (\text{current index} - \text{initial index}) \div \text{initial index}$ . This only produces a meaningful result if both index numbers are expressed on the same reference base.

Comparing an old-basis figure (e.g. a 2022 quarterly figure on the 2011-12 = 100 base) directly against a new-basis figure (e.g. a 2026 monthly figure on the September 2025 = 100 base) would produce a meaningless result, because the two numbers are not on a comparable scale – it would be like comparing a measurement in centimetres directly against one in inches.

The ABS publishes a conversion factor specifically to address this. For Canberra rents, the factor for converting an old-basis (2011-12 = 100) quarterly figure to the new (September 2025 = 100) basis is 0.8033 (published in the December 2025 CPI release). Multiplying an old-basis figure by this factor expresses it on the new basis, without altering the percentage movement between any two periods – which is the figure the regulation's formula actually depends on.

## 5. The approach taken

The calculator now uses a single, continuous index series, all expressed on the new September 2025 = 100 basis:

- For the quarterly era (March 2022 – June 2025): the original quarterly figures, as actually published and applied at the time, converted to the new basis using the official ABS factor of 0.8033, rounded to two decimal places.
- For the September 2025 quarter specifically: the defined anchor value of 100.00 is used directly, rather than the factor-derived approximation (99.93), since 100.00 is the ABS's exact, authoritative figure for that quarter.
- For the monthly era (October 2025 onwards): the genuine monthly figures as published by the ABS, already on the new basis – no conversion needed.

Because converting both the initial and current index by the same factor leaves their percentage difference unchanged, this approach is mathematically consistent with using the original, historically-applicable figures – it simply expresses them on a basis that can be safely compared with current and future figures.

## 6. Worked illustration

To show the effect of the conversion (using the official factor of 0.8033):

Quarter	Originally published figure (old basis)	Value used in the calculator (new basis)
Mar 2022	115.7	92.94
Jun 2025	124.2	99.77
Sep 2025 (anchor quarter)	124.4	100.00 (set by definition, not by the factor)

The retrospectively-calculated monthly figures for this period are contained in more recent data releases – for example, the retrospectively-calculated monthly figures for December 2024 is 99.37. The corrected, regulation-consistent figure for that quarter (December 2024) is 99.29. The difference is small in dollar terms for most calculations, but the corrected figure is the one that reflects what the regulation actually requires.

## 7. Full reference table

This is the complete table now used by the calculator (as at 22 June 2026), covering the quarter ending March 2022 through to the most recent month added. Dates falling in each row's range should use that row's index figure as either the "initial" or "current" index number, depending on which date (tenancy start/last increase notice, or new notice) falls in that range.

Quarter / month	Original published figure (pre-Dec 2025 basis)	How it's derived	Index used in the calculator (Sep 2025 = 100 basis)	Date range this figure applies to (tenancy start / last increase notice / new notice)
Mar 2022	115.7	× 0.8033	92.94	(included for completeness; no current date range maps to this quarter)
Jun 2022	117.4	× 0.8033	94.31	27 Aug 2022 – 25 Oct 2022
Sep 2022	118.7	× 0.8033	95.35	26 Oct 2022 – 24 Jan 2023
Dec 2022	120.0	× 0.8033	96.40	25 Jan 2023 – 25 Apr 2023
Mar 2023	121.2	× 0.8033	97.36	26 Apr 2023 – 25 Jul 2023
Jun 2023	122.5	× 0.8033	98.40	26 Jul 2023 – 24 Oct 2023
Sep 2023	122.9	× 0.8033	98.73	25 Oct 2023 – 30 Jan 2024
Dec 2023	122.9	× 0.8033	98.73	31 Jan 2024 – 23 Apr 2024
Mar 2024	123.2	× 0.8033	98.97	24 Apr 2024 – 30 Jul 2024
Jun 2024	123.6	× 0.8033	99.29	31 Jul 2024 – 29 Oct 2024
Sep 2024	123.8	× 0.8033	99.45	30 Oct 2024 – 28 Jan 2025
Dec 2024	123.6	× 0.8033	99.29	29 Jan 2025 – 29 Apr 2025
Mar 2025	124.0	× 0.8033	99.61	30 Apr 2025 – 29 Jul 2025
Jun 2025	124.2	× 0.8033	99.77	30 Jul 2025 – 28 Oct 2025
Sep 2025	124.4	anchor quarter – set to 100.00 by definition	100.00	29 Oct 2025 – 25 Nov 2025
Oct 2025	n/a – first month of the new monthly series	published directly on new basis	100.01	26 Nov 2025 – 6 Jan 2026
Nov 2025	n/a	published directly	100.32	7 Jan 2026 – 27 Jan 2026
Dec 2025	n/a	published directly	100.43	28 Jan 2026 – 24 Feb 2026
Jan 2026	n/a	published directly	100.55	25 Feb 2026 – 24 Mar 2026
Feb 2026	n/a	published directly	100.71	25 Mar 2026 – 28 Apr 2026

Mar 2026	n/a	published directly	100.77	29 Apr 2026 – 26 May 2026
Apr 2026	n/a	published directly	100.77	27 May 2026 – 23 Jun 2026

## 8. Maintenance notes

- The latest rent CPI for Canberra for each month will be added it to the calculator's CPI table directly once the ABS releases a new monthly figure (with no conversion needed – the monthly series is already on the correct basis). Note there may be a small delay between when the ABS releases this figure, and when the calculator is updated.
- The date-range table itself should not need monthly updates; it already covers dates through to March 2027. It would only need revisiting if the ABS changes its release schedule again.
- If the ABS revises the conversion factor, or further re-references the series in future, the quarterly figures in Section 7 (March 2022 – June 2025) would need to be recalculated using the new factor; the monthly figures from October 2025 onwards would be unaffected.
- This note and the calculator should be reviewed periodically against the ABS's published methodology pages, and the legal logic checked against the Residential Tenancies Regulation 1998 from time to time, given how much has changed in the underlying data over a short period.