

Arizona Squatters Rights: Adverse Possession and Removing Occupants

Summary for landlords and property managers. Last reviewed October 29, 2026. Full guide: <https://www.generationadvisory.com/laws/arizona-squatters-rights>

Arizona's general adverse possession period is ten years, with shorter periods for someone holding a title document or paying taxes under a recorded deed. Owners usually remove unauthorized occupants through a forcible detainer case.

Key points

- The general adverse possession period is ten years of peaceable and adverse possession, with shorter periods in specific situations.
- Someone in possession under title or color of title can claim after three years.
- Someone who holds a recorded deed, pays the taxes and uses the property can claim after five years.
- Owners usually remove people who never had permission through a forcible detainer case in justice or superior court.

Arizona at a glance

Rule	Arizona	Law
Adverse possession period	The general adverse possession period is ten years of peaceable and adverse possession, with shorter periods in specific situations.	A.R.S. section 12-526
Claim under a document (color of title)	Someone in possession under title or color of title can claim after three years.	A.R.S. section 12-523
Paying property taxes	Someone who holds a recorded deed, pays the taxes and uses the property can claim after five years.	A.R.S. section 12-524
How owners remove occupants	Owners usually remove people who never had permission through a forcible detainer case in justice or superior court.	Arizona Revised Statutes, Title 12 (forcible detainer)

Mistakes to avoid

- Waiting months to act after someone moves in.
- Changing locks or removing belongings yourself.
- Accepting rent or utility payments from the occupant.
- Leaving a vacant property unchecked for long stretches.

Verify current law

Laws named in this summary:

- A.R.S. section 12-526
- A.R.S. section 12-523
- A.R.S. section 12-524
- Arizona Revised Statutes, Title 12 (forcible detainer)
- A.R.S. section 33-1377
- A.R.S. section 33-1367

Official sources:

- Arizona Revised Statutes (Arizona State Legislature): <https://www.azleg.gov/arstitle/>
- Arizona Judicial Branch: eviction information: <https://www.azcourts.gov/>

General information, not legal advice. Check current law and talk to a Arizona attorney before you act. Last reviewed October 29, 2026.