

Texas 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/texas-squatters-rights>

Texas has several adverse possession periods, from three years for someone holding a title document to ten years or more for others. Owners usually remove an unauthorized occupant with an eviction suit in justice court.

Key points

- Depending on the facts, adverse possession takes 3, 5, 10 or 25 years of peaceable and adverse possession.
- Someone holding title or color of title can claim after 3 years of adverse possession.
- The 5 year route requires a recorded deed, paying the property taxes and cultivating, using or enjoying the property.
- Owners usually remove an unauthorized occupant through an eviction suit, called forcible entry and detainer, in justice court.

Texas at a glance

Rule	Texas	Law
Adverse possession period	Depending on the facts, adverse possession takes 3, 5, 10 or 25 years of peaceable and adverse possession.	Civil Practice and Remedies Code sections 16.024 to 16.028
Claim under a document (color of title)	Someone holding title or color of title can claim after 3 years of adverse possession.	Civil Practice and Remedies Code section 16.024
Paying property taxes	The 5 year route requires a recorded deed, paying the property taxes and cultivating, using or enjoying the property.	Civil Practice and Remedies Code section 16.025
How owners remove occupants	Owners usually remove an unauthorized occupant through an eviction suit, called forcible entry and detainer, in justice court.	Texas Property Code chapter 24

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:

- Civil Practice and Remedies Code sections 16.024 to 16.028
- Civil Practice and Remedies Code section 16.024
- Civil Practice and Remedies Code section 16.025
- Texas Property Code chapter 24
- Property Code section 24.004 and Texas Rules of Civil Procedure 510
- Property Code sections 92.008 and 92.0081

Official sources:

- Texas Constitution and Statutes (Texas Legislature Online): <https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/>
- Texas Judicial Branch: Rules of Civil Procedure:
<https://www.txcourts.gov/rules-forms/rules-standards/>

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