

# Getting Your Home Rent-Ready

The step-by-step guide to preparing your property for the rental market.

# Preparation - the Key to Renting Your Property

Whether you purchased a property specifically for an investment or are changing your current residence into a rental, it takes commitment and quite frankly, some good old-fashion elbow grease. Doing it right - the first time - saves time, cost, and headaches. Having your home prepared helps ensure you attract the best quality tenant in the fastest time possible. We have put together some tips to help guide you along the way.





## Step One: Getting Rid of Stuff

We're talking everything but the toilet paper! Household cleaners, toilet plungers, used cleaning brushes and brooms, decorations, yard tools, lawnmowers, barbecues, etc., should all be removed. Don't forget removable satellite dishes and cable wires. The leaner and cleaner - the better. (If you are creating a vacation rental, the rules are different, of course, but these tips are for long-term rentals)

Pests: this is a biggie on the list of things to get rid of. Pests aren't fun, but they happen and now is the time to take a stand - before a tenant moves in. Serious issues often require an exterminator, but some pests can be eliminated with DIY sprays and kits.



## Step Two: What to Keep

This is a short list. It's limited to items that will help with home repair.

- Carpet remnants
- Spare tile
- Leftover matching paint

Label all items and designate an out-of-the-way storage area. Garage shelves or closet is an excellent choice.



## Step Three: Maintenance and Repair

Ensure all appliances are cleaned and working well.

Replace items in disrepair, such as:

- Door stops
- Sink stoppers
- Bathtub stoppers
- Smoke detector batteries
- Missing or damaged screens
- Cracked, or even just worn toilet seats
- Burned out light bulbs

Have the furnace or AC inspected to ensure everything is working well.

Change air filters and clean around vents. We strongly recommend replacing any reusable filters with disposable filters. Tenants are more likely to change disposable filters each month than to clean a reusable one. Hint: As part of your lease agreement, you can require tenants to replace filters once a month, but always check HVAC filters during routine inspections.

Finally, if it's time for a new coat of paint on woodwork and walls, do it. Nothing adds life to a rental like fresh paint – just be sure to use neutral colors.





## Step Four: Make it Shine

This may be step #4, but it's a high priority. A pristine rental is key to attracting quality tenants.

Every surface needs to be spotless – above, behind, and under – every corner:

- Walls, windows, floors
- Cupboard and closets – inside and out
- Appliances
- Toilets, sinks, tubs, and mirrors
- Ceiling fan blades, blind slats, vent covers, and door tracks

You can DIY, but we highly recommend choosing professional cleaning. It's one of the most cost-effective ways to prepare your home for rental and simplify your move out.





## Step Five: Carpets

Carpets should be professionally cleaned whether you're just starting the rental game or you're in between tenants. Take time to remove any rolls or wrinkles. Again, professional services are a time-saving plus. Hint: Many lease agreements require tenants to have carpets professionally cleaned when they are vacating a rental.



## Step Six: Curb Appeal

The front yard is the first thing a prospective tenant sees, and the backyard is often the last. Make a good impression and a lasting one.

- Clear out flower pots, yard furniture, garden decorations, etc., as well as any trash laying around.
- Repair any outdoor items that stay, such as water spigots, sprinklers, or drip heads.
- Ensure that trash and recycle bins are empty, cleaned out, and stored in an appropriate place.
- Weed the landscaping and clear out any debris. Depending on the season, you may need to trim shrubs, cut back plants, etc. Freshen up mulch or landscaping stones if you have them.
- Keep your lawn mowed and trimmed. (This may be another item for hire)





## The Homestretch: Paperwork and Details

### Keys, Locks, and Remotes:

- All outside doors should be re-keyed between tenants and keypads reprogrammed.
- Ensure remotes for overhead garage doors are working. Provide as many remotes as bays.
- Ensure mailbox keys, HOA issued gate remotes, cards or keys for community pools and fitness centers are accounted for, labeled correctly, and in good working order.

Keep utilities - water and electricity - turned on during vacancies.

Evaluate your insurance policy. Check with your agent to confirm you have adequate liability coverage. Hint: 300K should be your minimum, but \$500K to 1 million is ideal. Also be mindful of your deductible.



We know - it sounds overwhelming but taking the time to do it right will make the difference between a bad experience and a great one. The team at Rentals America is here to help! We're always happy to assist you with any of the items mentioned, and we can make vendor recommendations if needed. We can arrange for quotes from independent vendors if required.

***We're at your service!***

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