PRAIRIE

PROPERTY TOOLS

FIRST-TIME LANDLORD STARTER CHECKLIST

FREE PRINTABLE RESOURCE

Prepare • Market • Organize • Maintain

A simple starting point for organizing your first rental property.

1. GETTING STARTED

Build the foundation before advertising the property.

☐ Learn the landlord-tenant rules that apply to the property's location
☐ Check whether rental registration, licensing, inspections, or permits apply
☐ Review applicable fair-housing requirements
☐ Confirm appropriate property and liability insurance with an insurance professional
☐ Create a secure system for property, renter, maintenance, and financial records
☐ Identify how rent and property expenses will be tracked
☐ Create a list of reliable service providers and emergency contacts
☐ Plan how maintenance requests will be received and documented
☐ Review safety and habitability requirements that apply to the property
☐ Set calendar reminders for recurring property tasks and important deadlines

PROPERTY BASICS

Property: _____

Target availability date: _____

Primary service / maintenance contact: _____

QUESTIONS TO RESEARCH

_____
_____
_____
_____

2. PREPARE THE RENTAL

Get the property ready before the first showing.

☐ Complete needed cleaning and repairs
☐ Check that doors, windows, locks, and access items function as intended
☐ Review smoke / carbon monoxide alarm requirements and manufacturer guidance
☐ Review heating, cooling, plumbing, electrical, and appliance concerns
☐ Address visible leaks, moisture, trip hazards, or other maintenance concerns
☐ Confirm included appliances / amenities
☐ Prepare keys, remotes, parking information, and access instructions
☐ Document property condition with dated notes / photos as appropriate
☐ Collect accurate property details for the listing
☐ Create a routine and seasonal maintenance plan

WORK TO COMPLETE BEFORE LISTING

Task	Provider / Person	Target Date	Done

3. RENT & RENTAL LISTING

Present accurate information and know your numbers.

BEFORE SETTING RENT

☐ Research comparable rentals in the local market
☐ List recurring property expenses
☐ Consider expected maintenance and turnover costs
☐ Understand utilities / services the owner will pay
☐ Confirm any fees or deposits comply with applicable law
☐ Review the numbers with qualified tax / financial professionals when appropriate

LISTING CHECKLIST

☐ Rent and availability are accurate
☐ Bedrooms / bathrooms are accurate
☐ Property features are described accurately
☐ Parking details are included
☐ Utility responsibility is clear
☐ Pet terms are stated accurately if applicable
☐ Current photos are used
☐ Inquiry instructions are clear
☐ Advertising language has been reviewed for fair-housing compliance

Monthly rent: _____

Security deposit / other permitted amounts: _____

Owner-paid utilities / services: _____

4. INQUIRIES, SHOWINGS & SCREENING

Use a consistent, documented process.

☐ Create a standard response for new inquiries
☐ Track prospect name, contact date, source, and next step
☐ Prepare a showing checklist
☐ Use consistent property information when answering questions
☐ Create written applicant criteria appropriate for your jurisdiction
☐ Apply screening criteria consistently
☐ Understand applicable rules regarding application fees, background information, credit information, and required notices
☐ Keep applicant information secure
☐ Document decisions and required communications appropriately
☐ Avoid questions or decisions based on protected characteristics

LEAD TRACKER

Date	Prospect	Source	Showing	Next Step	Status

Screening and fair-housing rules can be detailed and location-specific. Verify current requirements before accepting applications.

5. LEASE & MOVE-IN

Create a repeatable process for a smoother start.

☐ Use a lease / rental agreement appropriate for the property and jurisdiction
☐ Complete required disclosures, notices, and addenda
☐ Confirm amounts due and payment procedures
☐ Explain maintenance request and emergency contact procedures
☐ Document move-in condition as appropriate
☐ Provide keys / access items and record what was issued
☐ Confirm utility responsibilities
☐ Provide property rules / instructions that are part of the agreement
☐ Store signed documents securely
☐ Add important lease dates and reminders to the calendar

MOVE-IN DETAILS

Move-in date: _____

Lease end / renewal review date: _____

Keys / access items issued: _____

NOTES

_____
_____
_____
_____

6. ONGOING LANDLORD ROUTINE

Stay organized after the renter moves in.

☐ Record rent payments and property expenses
☐ Document maintenance requests and completed repairs
☐ Keep renter communications organized
☐ Schedule recurring and seasonal maintenance
☐ Keep service-provider information current
☐ Review insurance and property records periodically
☐ Track lease dates and required notice periods
☐ Follow applicable rules for property access / entry
☐ Keep deposits and related records handled according to applicable law
☐ Review the property management system monthly

MONTHLY LANDLORD CHECK-IN

Open maintenance items: _____
Upcoming dates / notices: _____
Income / expenses recorded: _____
Property records filed: _____
Next maintenance task: _____

FIRST-TIME LANDLORD MASTER CHECKLIST

Use this page as your one-page progress tracker.

☐ Legal / local requirements researched
☐ Insurance reviewed
☐ Record-keeping system created
☐ Property prepared
☐ Safety / maintenance items reviewed
☐ Rent / expenses reviewed
☐ Rental listing prepared
☐ Inquiry system created
☐ Showing process prepared
☐ Screening process reviewed
☐ Lease / disclosures prepared
☐ Move-in process prepared
☐ Maintenance process created
☐ Service contacts organized
☐ Calendar reminders created
☐ Monthly review routine established

MY NEXT 3 ACTIONS

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This checklist is a general educational and organizational resource, not legal, tax, financial, insurance, brokerage, screening, property-management, or fair-housing advice. Landlord-tenant laws and requirements vary by jurisdiction and can change. Verify current requirements for the property's location and consult qualified professionals when appropriate.

FREE RESOURCE FROM PRAIRIE PROPERTY TOOLS

Start organized. Build good habits. Manage with a clear plan.