



PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
PRO TIPS SERIES



Top 15 PROPERTY MANAGEMENT Tips

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Overview



This document has been developed to help property owners, investors and potential investors to understand the motivations behind the choices tenants make when renting a property. Every property owner wants quality tenants, low vacancy periods and high rents. The following information outlines 15 different ways you can maximise all three of these factors and therefore the financial return from your investment property.



1

PROPERTY'S PRESENTATION



First impressions count. Potential tenants when inspecting your property will be checking off a mental (and sometimes physical) checklist. Quality tenants may have a more demanding checklist, so you need to ensure your property presents in its very best light.

A well-presented property will:

- Generally attract better quality tenants who cause less damage throughout the tenancy
- Places your property above local comparable competition
- Commonly reduces your vacancy rate and increases the overall rent rate you can achieve.

A quality property manager will help you organise your property's presentation and will insist your property is clean and in its best possible condition before letting tenants inspect and move in.

Here are a few presentation tips:

Gardens Areas - mow the lawns, weed the garden beds, driveway and paved areas. If you have large vegetation (shrubs, trees etc) prune these to manageable acceptable levels, especially if they are overhanging your property's roof and neighboring houses. A jungle in the backyard is intimidating for any potential tenant.

Internal Areas Cleaned - nobody wants to move into an unclean property, this above all other presentation factors is the most important and automatically creates a strong first impression towards tenants. There's a large difference from doing your average weekly clean to preparing your property for a new tenancy. The following items need to be cleaned rigorously; toilets, ovens, windows, appliances, cupboards, exhaust fans, window tracks, cooking stovetops etc. A quality property manager can arrange a competitively priced 'vacate clean' for your property and in our experience will produce a better result.

External Areas Cleaned - if these outdoor areas are dirty, quality tenants will view this as extra work needed and this may detract value from the property. Especially as the outdoor entertainment areas in Perth properties are often a prime draw card and attention. If your BBQ is covered in grease and charred food scraps this will prompt potential tenants with similar assumptions for everything else within the property.

Appliances, Fittings & Fixtures - tenants when walking through a property have the assumption that everything they see works. Legally you can exclude appliances that don't work from a lease agreement, however this can give tenants the wrong impression, especially on a 40 degree day in the middle of summer when they're looking at an air-conditioning unit that doesn't work.

Hire Furniture - if you want to increase the number of potential tenants enquiring about your property, it may be worthwhile hiring presentation furniture for one day so professional photographs can be taken. You can reuse these professional photographs at the start of each new tenancy, so even if you currently have problematic tenants, the property will still present very well online.

Professional Photography - we highly recommend getting a professional photographer to take images of your property. It's very easy to tell the difference between professional and amateur photographs. You can reuse professional photography time and time again, and it will have a direct impact on the number of enquiries you receive and price you can achieve for your property.

Rubbish - it's essential to removal all rubbish from all areas of the property. Also apply lids to bins in home opens, everybody knows what's in a rubbish bin but nobody wants to see it.



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SIZE & NUMBER OF BEDROOMS AND BATHROOMS



Prospective tenants will have a minimum threshold for the number of bedrooms and bathrooms they need.

Search Criteria – tenants when looking for rental properties will input and typically save their search criteria on the various industry websites; realestate.com.au, domain.com.au, reiwa.com.au etc. If your property doesn't match the number of bedrooms or bathrooms a tenant is looking for then your property will be automatically excluded from the search results they receive. If you have rooms that can potentially be used as bedrooms (e.g. a study), we recommend including these in the property's total number of bedrooms.



More Bedrooms, More Rent – generally a two bedroom house will rent for more than a one bedroom house (there are exceptions though). This is because two professionals can typically afford more weekly rent than a single professional. This is especially prevalent for the younger demographic and student tenants.

Bedroom Sizes - are very important, generally there is one bedroom within a property that is smaller than the rest. If this bedroom is significantly smaller, this will then only suit a limited number of tenants who don't necessarily need this bedroom or have a young child or infant who can use it. A general rule is to ensure all bedroom sizes are never less than 75% of the other bedrooms within the property.

The most popular properties are 3 bedroom houses and 2 bedroom apartments in inner city locations close to public transport.

3

LANDLORD INSURANCE



Unfortunately some tenants during the course of a tenancy can be very destructive and can cause a variety of issues for property owners.

Instances such as losing a job or becoming ill can sometimes result in tenants defaulting on rent or even abandoning the property.

Events outside the tenants control such as storms, earthquakes, floods and fires can damage a property and its contents.

For the above reasons we highly recommend landlord insurance for every property owner.

What is Landlord Insurance? There are a number of different specialist insurance providers, who all have different definitions of landlord insurance. Essentially it's an insurance policy that covers some of the risks a property owner faces while renting out their property.

All specialist landlord insurance policies will vary, however items that may be covered are:

- Theft By A Tenant
- Accidental Damage
- Malicious Damage by a Tenant
- Default of Rent
- Broken Leases
- Death of a Tenant
- Court Ordered Tenant Hardship
- Court Ordered Eviction

When organising any landlord insurance policy, always ensure to carefully read what's covered, what the policy defines as events and the excesses and extent of the policy.

Google 'Landlord Insurance' for a list of potential insurance providers.

A quality property manager can obtain Landlord Insurance Quotes for you if you request this from them.

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MAKE SURE YOUR PROPERTY LEGALLY COMPLIES



There are a variety of minimum requirements for rental properties in Western Australia. If these requirements are not complied with, Landlords can face hefty fines.

Residual Current Devices (RCD's) – Laws introduced in 2009 require all home sellers (before sale) and landlords to install at least two RCDs, protecting all power points and lighting circuits. Find out more [here](#).

“Penalties of up to \$15,000 for individuals may apply if RCD regulations are breached.”

(e.g. Commerce, DMIRS, etc)

Smoke Alarms – it's the responsibility of the owner to ensure the smoke alarms fitted are:

- No more than 10 years old;
- In working order; and
- Permanently connected to consumer mains power.

Find out more [here](#).

Minimum Security Standards – there are a number of minimum security requirements for every rental property, including deadlocks, window latches etc. Find out more [here](#).

On top of the above the Residential Tenancies Act 1987 has undergone a review which has resulted in amendments to the act which are contained within the Residential Tenancies Amendment Act 2011, available [here](#).

Pools & Spa's – requires a barrier to be provided around private swimming or spa pools for the protection of young children who may enter that area with or without the knowledge or consent of the owner or occupier of the property. Find out more [here](#).

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PETS AND YOUR RENTAL PROPERTY



A growing number of tenants now have pets, cats, dogs, or something smaller, and are actively looking for rental homes that welcome their furry companions.

The Western Australian Residential Tenancies Act was updated in 2024 which has enabled tenants to have a more pragmatic way to apply for permission to keep a pet during their lease.

If a tenant's application is denied or not addressed within 14 days, they may appeal to the Commissioner for Consumer Protection or it may automatically be approved.

Unless your property has existing strata by-laws or council legislation that expressly prohibits certain pet ownership, there are very few instances where a landlord can refuse a pet request from a tenant. Citing reasons such as insufficient space, potential to be a nuisance, health and safety concerns or risk of property damage typically may not be sufficient.

If your tenant is requesting to keep a pet, make sure to:

Ask for the right paperwork.

Lease commencement: The pet and any conditions can be written into the tenancy agreement.

During the tenancy: Tenants must submit a Form 25 (Pet Request Form) to ask for permission. Landlords have 14 days to respond and, if refusing, must apply for Commissioner approval (unless refusal is based on law or strata rules). If not responded to within this timeframe it is assumed the pet is approved.

Understand when you can say no.

No Commissioner approval needed: If the pet breaks a law or strata by-law the application can be refused.

Commissioner approval needed: If the landlord wishes to refuse under the pet application, application to have the commissioner consultation on the request can be sought.

Know what conditions you can set.

Allowed without approval: Limit the number of pets, require regular cleaning/fumigation (e.g. carpets cleaned annually).

Requires Commissioner approval: Any other conditions, like a pet staying outdoors or birds being caged, need approval.

Know the bond rules.

- A pet bond of up to \$260 can be charged—only if the pet is capable of carrying parasites that affect humans (like dogs or cats).
- As of 2025, pet bonds can also cover pet-related damage, not just fumigation.
- The standard security bond can still cover cleaning or damage caused by pets.
- Pet bonds must be lodged with the Bond Administrator.
- Assistance animals are exempt from pet bonds.

Consider strata rules.

If your rental is part of a strata complex, pet requests may be automatically refused under existing by-laws, or require Council of Owners (COO) approval. Tenants are encouraged to check strata by-laws before applying. There is no set timeframe for a COO to respond, and property managers may need to help facilitate communication.

When it comes to pets and your rental property, ensure you follow the correct process to help reduce risks and keep your tenants satisfied.



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KNOW THE TOTAL FEE YOU'RE PAYING



Before appointing a property management company to manage your property, make sure you fully understand what they're charging.

Multi-Fee Offering - the majority of real estate companies offering property management services are setup charging multiple fees. These fees while sounding small individually add up to a substantial amount, generally between 14% - 18% of total revenue, and this can increase to as much as 25% of total revenue for short term leases under 6 months. Here are a list of the industries commonly charged fees:

- Leasing Fee (2 weeks of rent)
- Management Fee (8 – 10% + GST)
- Petties & Postage Fees
- Meeting Fee
- Attendance Fee
- Title Search Fee
- Tenant Enquiry Fee
- Annual Financial Summary Fee
- Court Attendance Fee
- Property Condition Report Fee
- Periodical Inspection Fee
- Final Bond Inspection Fee
- Releasing Fee

- Administration Fee
- Inventory Report Fee (if furnished)
- Inventory Inspection Fee (if furnished)

Single Fee - Clear Property Management along with a few other specialist property management companies within the industry have abandoned the multi-fee approach and have opted to charge one fee that covers every cost to manage your property from start-to-finish. While being far easier to explain, it also works out to be less, especially over the long term.

“Management fees can vary from company-to-company by as much as 30%.”

Varying Fees – the total management fees charged can vary from company to company by as much as 30%. Again making it imperative to know the exact total cost your chosen property management company is charging. The typical property management company will find it difficult to give you an exact cost figure per year, so beware. An attractive glossy brochure isn't worth paying an extra 5% of your total rental income.

“Make sure you know the total amount you're paying.”

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AFTER – HOURS & WEEKEND HOME OPENS



This seems like a given, we've all seen the countless real estate signs on the weekends while driving around. What you don't know is, 19 out of 20 of those signs are for properties that are for sale, not rent.

Again there's only a few specialist property management companies that are conducting home opens after-hours and on weekends.

Don't do Monday-to-Friday 9am-to-4pm Inspections - if you or your property manager are completing home opens during 9am – 4pm from Monday to Friday, the majority of potentially interested tenants are at work and will be unable to attend.

Lunch-Hour CBD – the only location and timeframe where a midday inspection during the working week are effective, is within inner- city CBD properties between 12pm – 2pm.

However again generally these inspections are not as effective as after-hour or weekend inspection times. Plan your after-hour inspections from 5:30pm – 7pm within summer months and 4:45pm – 6pm during winter months, sunlight changes everything. Plan your weekend inspections preferably on a Saturday from 9:30am to 3pm.



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BE REALISTIC ABOUT YOUR RENT



Pricing your property above the market value will commonly achieve the following:

Reduce Your Campaigns Enquiry - when tenants search for rental properties, they don't commonly single out one property and stop their search. They look through dozens, create short lists, compare the number of bedrooms, bathroom, car bays, the distance from the nearest train station etc. So if your property is 10% – 20% over market value it will quickly be picked up by potential tenants who will either not enquire and move on, or enquire with the first question: Is the property's rent negotiable? A similar property down the road...

Increase Your Vacancy Period – following on from the above point, if your property's receiving low enquiry levels, then your marketing campaign will drag on for a longer period.

Decrease Your Overall Rental Return - following on from the previous point, if you're experiencing any vacancy period, then you're sacrificing potential rent which affects your overall rental income.

1st Price, Correct Price - the above problems can all be avoided if the first price you set is in line with the overall market. See the following example:

Tenant A has offered \$500/pw for Property A, which is what market evidence suggests its worth.

However Property A is marketed at \$525/pw.
3 weeks goes past and Property A is still vacant = $3 \times \$525 = \$1,575$ in vacancy cost
= $\$25/\text{pw} \times 52 \text{ weeks} = \$1,300$ (additional rent over 1 year if achieved)

So if Property A was initially leased to Tenant A after the first inspection at \$500/pw, you would be \$275 better off financially.

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MARKET WITH A SMART STRATEGY



You or your property manager should have the following in mind:

- Highest Calibre Tenant(s) Possible
- Highest Rent Achievable
- Desired Lease Length & Terms
- Desired Lease Start & Finish Date

Specific – make your goals specific, for example you want to rent your property by the 1st of January 2015 for \$600/pw to a professional couple making a combined income of \$100,000/p.a., who don't have pets.

Measurable – 'don't give your property manager the brief of 'I want the highest rent per week' or 'I want a good quality tenant'. This is very subjective and your interpretation of the 'highest rent per week' could be completely different to your property managers. Give a specific brief on what you want that's easily measurable.

Achievable – don't give yourself 3 days to take professional photographs, build a marketing strategy, hold home opens, interview interested tenants and

sign a lease agreement. Complete research or listen to your property manager and set timeframes and goals that are achievable.

Realistic – building on point 8 of this document, if you think your property is worth \$1,000/pw and all market evidence suggests \$700/pw then you're not being realistic, and your strategy is likely to underperform with large vacancy cost and low tenant enquiry levels.

"Target what works and specifically what you're after."

Targeted – do your research or listen to your property manager and target what works and specifically what you're after. If you're looking for a 2 – 3 year lease agreement, state this in bold text in the first couple of lines in all your advertisement copy. If you want to achieve a premium rent, upgrade your advertising spend in certain areas.

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GET A DEPRECIATION SCHEDULE



Firstly, a depreciation schedule is a legitimate deduction against assessable taxable income generated by a residential investment property.

As soon as you purchase a property you should organise a depreciation schedule and give this

report to your Accountant or Tax Advisor who will ensure all the necessary tax deductions are claimed for your property. A depreciation report is inexpensive compared to the tax deductions they generate. Google 'Property Depreciation' for a list of potential providers.



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BEGIN YOUR CAMPAIGN AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE

It's essential to begin your leasing campaign with as much time up your sleeve as possible. When property owners are under time pressure, unfortunately compromises are made and typically the best outcome isn't achieved.

When time isn't costing you rent, this allows you or your property manager to:

Interview more tenants - giving you the best chance to find the highest caliber tenant possible

Go for a higher rent/pw - if you have 6 weeks of campaign time, you can test the market for a couple of weeks at a higher rent per week.

Go for the lease terms you want – again you can test the market to see if there's a tenant that will agree to the specific terms you want within your property's lease agreement.

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CONSIDER AIR CONDITIONING

Perth has a hot climate, and as seen by the adjacent chart the average temperature through November, December, January, February and March for the last 20 years has been close to or over 30 degrees celsius.

"Does the property have air-conditioning?"



Is usually within the top 3 questions tenants ask when inspecting or investigating a property for rent.

If have air-conditioning unit(s) that are broken, ensure you fix them. If you don't have air-conditioning, considering installing it or another option such as ceiling fans.



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BE SECURITY CONCIOUS

Some tenants are extremely security conscious and even though they love all aspects of your property, if there is an 'unsafe' element or feeling they may not rent it.

Walk around your property and put yourself in the shoes of a tenant. If there's a window, fence, door or gate that could potentially cause security concerns, attempt to fix this area of concern before you show potential tenants through if it's possible.

Remember, if it's the middle of the night with strange noises coming next door, nobody likes the knowledge that there's no lock on the back gate allowing anybody to walk through into the property.

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HOW MANY PROPERTIES ARE THEY MANAGING?

Many real estate companies have different internal setups of how many properties each property manager is managing within their individual portfolio. Don't appoint a property manager without asking how many properties they manage within their portfolio.

80 Properties + / Per Property Manager – we've found if a property manager is lumped with more than 80 properties to personally manage their service level

starts to substantially decrease, their errors increase, calls and email aren't returned, inspections missed, basically their job and portfolio starts to become a mess.

Up to 80 Properties / Per Property Manager – in portfolios of up to 80 properties a property manager has enough time to provide quality levels of service. They're able to keep their portfolio under control and stay on top of their inspections, emails and calls.



As explained above, traditional real estate companies that offer multiple services commonly neglect property management and generally direct 90- 95% of their attention and resources towards selling properties. This trickles into all aspects of their property management service, causing multiple problems throughout the process. To avoid these problems we stress that you choose and only use a company that specialises 100% in property management.

What is a specialist? – Many companies use the

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USE A PROPERTY MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST

term 'specialist' as a marketing prop. We define a 'specialist' as a company that directs 100% of its focus, knowledge and resources in offering one service, with no other distractions or considerations.

What a property management specialist can do – they can provide you peace of mind with an end-to-end service, where you handover your property's keys and receive rental income every 2 weeks, knowing your property's in professional hands. This personally removes the stress, potential conflict and negotiation from the property management process.

About Rent Choice!

Rent Choice is a specialist property management company focusing 100% on personalised residential and commercial property management. For more than five years, we've provided effective property management solutions that maximise owners' property investment. We built our team of fantastic property managers solely focused on property management to meet this need.

Rent Choice has come a long way from managing 216 properties to over 1,000 in just a few years. Our team of experts boasts investor backgrounds and local expertise from Mandurah to Yanchep. We add value at all stages of property management, from vigorous leasing to minimising vacancies, selecting great tenants, strategic renovations, and being 'can-do' with tenants and owners.

Our leadership team sits on industry boards and committees, advising on the Western Australian Real Estate Industry and showcasing our genuine passion for property. With unmatched care and industry knowledge, we reassure landlords of our commitment to their properties.

We don't have a sales department or salespeople. Our team understands that not all Landlords are the same, which is why we offer three flexible fee structures - so you can choose what best suits your needs! If you want to learn more about how Rent Choice can help manage your property, please contact us at hello@rentchoice.com.au



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