

Landlord Guides How To Prepare Your Property For Rent.

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So, you've decided to lease your property - and no doubt, attracting high quality tenants and the best rent you can achieve, are now high on your landlord wish list. But, before you put up that 'For Rent' sign and advertise online, you'll want to take certain steps to ensure your rental property has everything that ideal tenant is looking for.

A well presented property will always fetch a higher rent and attract those premium tenants every landlord dreams about. When you add to that proper preparation and attention to detail, the occupancy process is seamless from start to finish.

Here are our recommendations so your investment is not only super appealing to A-grade tenants, but also makes the competition fade far away in comparison.

Cover The Basics

Before tackling the aesthetics, you'll want to make sure your property meets the basic requirements of a quality household.

Does your property have

- Phone/internet connection
- Heating and cooling
- Security – changing locks between tenancies is recommended and always have a spare sets of keys for yourself and your managing agent (including window locks, garage and swipe cards)
- Privacy – curtains and/or blinds should be installed on all windows, plus fencing or screening in place, where required
- Good water pressure
- Smoke detectors

Also check whether any aspect of your property fails to meet current regulations or safety guidelines.

Consider fixtures such as smoke alarms, pool fences, stairs, railings, balconies, blinds and curtains, glass and windows. Also, does it meet the electrical and water efficiency standards under the local Residential Tenancies Act?

Surpass The Standard Clean

Anything less than sparkling clean can be off-putting to a new tenant. It also sets the precedent for the standard of cleanliness expected when your tenants vacate.

Your best move is to invest in professional cleaning so your property looks spotless, smells fresh, and removes any signs of previous inhabitants. (This is particularly important if the previous tenants had pets).

Give it an extensive detailed clean that includes

- Professionally steam cleaning or dry-cleaning carpets
- Re-polishing floorboards and tiled flooring
- Cleaning windows and flyscreens
- Cleaning curtains and/or blinds
- Detailed cleaning of all interiors and furnishings
- Cleaning exteriors (houses) – including removal of cobwebs, cleaning weatherboards, gutters and fittings
- Cleaning exteriors (apartments) – including removal of cobwebs, cleaning terraces, balconies and fittings
- Emptying all trash and recycling bins

If It's Broken Fix It

Often when living in a property, there can be things that get neglected and we grow used to living with them. Now is the time to get them sorted, so your property is in mint condition. Inspect every fixture, from the letterbox to the back fence and everything in between, and check if it needs replacing or repairing.

Look out for problem areas such as

- Mouldy bathroom grouting
- Leaking washers or taps
- Broken tiles and chipped paint
- Broken light fittings and burnt out light bulbs
- Broken door and window latches
- Smoke detectors overdue for service
- Clogged guttering and/or drains
- Heating and/or cooling systems requiring service
- Dirty fireplaces
- Faulty or damaged appliances
- Faulty swimming pool filters and/or equipment
- Faulty fences, gates or security systems

Attention given to a minor repair today, can potentially save you spending dollars to fix a bigger problem down the track.

Add Value With Improvements

Updating the interior of a home instantly lifts it's mood and appeal to tenants. New paint, carpet and light fittings are an affordable way to transform outdated spaces. Adding extra creature comforts like heating and reverse cycle air conditioning can also potentially add value to a property.

If you can afford to go one step further, then modernising a kitchen or bathroom is a great long-term strategy. It will immediately elevate the perceived value of the property and increase its rental return.

Tidy Up All Outdoor Areas

The first thing people notice when they visit a house or apartment is the outside. Is the front door dirty? Is the lawn overgrown? Are there cobwebs hanging from the eaves? You'll want to create a great first impression for all your visitors!

For apartments pay particular attention to

- Cleaning paving and/or outdoor tiles
- Hosing down and cleaning courtyards and balcony flooring
- Removing cobwebs
- Cleaning external light fittings
- Cleaning glass doors, windows and flyscreens

For houses and townhouses, pay particular attention to

- Weeding garden beds and pruning hedges
- Trimming back vines and overhanging trees
- Mowing lawns and reviving dead patches
- Cleaning front entrance and external light fittings
- Cleaning garage door and garage flooring
- Removing cobwebs from eaves
- Cleaning windows and glass doors
- Sweeping and hosing down driveways, pathways and paved areas
- Removing stains from driveway
- Removing all garbage and garden refuse

If the grounds of your home require special attention, you may wish to arrange for the gardening to be included in the rental agreement. Alternatively, you could arrange for the tenant to cover the cost of a contractor to conduct regular maintenance, such as lawn-mowing, clearing gutters and pool cleaning, as part of their rental fee.

Organise Service & Utilities

Before a tenant moves in, don't forget to check final readings for gas, telephone, electricity and water. If you have an alarm connected to a security service, remember to cancel your account or transfer it over to the tenant's details, if required. Likewise, pool, garden or grounds maintenance contractors may need updating or cancelling.

Note:

Before cancelling your electricity, gas or water accounts, always check with your Client Relationship Specialist first, to ensure it doesn't affect any security systems or ongoing utilities required to maintain your property.

Set Up Landlord Insurance

Whatever you do, make sure you have landlord insurance in place before leasing. No matter whether you're managing the property yourself or whether you're using an agent, a landlord insurance policy will cover you for unpaid rent and any unforeseeable damages that result from the leasing period.

Style It Up To Stand Out

Prospective tenants are no different to prospective buyers – they're all attracted to a well-presented property. Just like a stylist can boost the look and feel of a sales property, styling your rental property will dramatically boost its appeal and set you apart from the crowd.

Consider leaving furniture in the property or bringing in a professional styling company for the open inspections. If you don't wish to go so far as a property stylist, then do your very best to prepare your property for an eye-catching photo shoot and a great 'first impression' at every open-for-inspection.

**Need more advice preparing
your property for rent?**

Get in touch with a Taylors
Property Specialist today.