

# FIND THE PERFECT TENANT



# WE DO MORE THAN JUST COLLECT RENT

West Property Management Offers Complete Management Services  
From Townhomes and Single-Family Homes to Homeowners &  
Condominium Associations, No Matter the Size.

# CONTENTS

- 01 Marketing Your Home
- 02 Pre-Screening Rental Applicants
- 03 Screening
- 04 Conducting Background and Credit Checks
- 05 Verifying Income and Checking Credit History
- 06 Accepting or Denying a Rental Applicant

# 01 | MARKETING YOUR HOME

# MARKETING OVERVIEW

Let's start with getting online. Which websites are highly used in your area?

Start with a simple search on Google.

“Rental houses in [City, State]” or “Houses for rent [City, State]”

When we googled for rental houses in Columbia, MD the top sites were:

- Zillow
- Trulia
- Rent.com
- Realtor.com

# CREATE YOUR LISTING

## Every listing needs:

- GOOD pictures for both inside AND outside. Hire a photographer if you like, but a cell phone can get the job done.
- List the most desirable details about your property. Most sites allow you room to include a description but don't overdo it. No one wants to read a book, think of this more like a theatrical trailer instead of the whole movie.
- Good contact information. Speed to answer inquiries is important. You want your property to be the first one potential tenants see and fall in love with.



Keep in mind while writing your description that you can use area attractions to get the attention of the right tenant and you should tailor this to who would be most attracted to your property.

An example would be if you are trying to rent out your downtown Baltimore condo, you probably would want to make mention of how close they would be to the Inner Harbor. If you are listing a property in an incredible school district, make sure to include those details.

And of course, you can always have a licensed realtor help you with all of this and the rest of the process.

If you still need help but are not ready to hire a realtor, Let our experts help! <http://westpropmgt.com/>

# 02 | PRE-SCREENING RENTAL APPLICANTS

# PRE-SCREENING OVERVIEW

When you receive a call or email from a prospective rental tenant, always pre-screen before meeting in person. The easiest way to do this is by setting fair rental criteria and explaining that criteria.

## **Typical rental criteria include:**

- Gross monthly income should equal approximately three times or more the monthly rent
- Favorable credit score
- Employment with acceptable proof (i.e., pay stubs) of the required monthly income
- Good references from all previous landlords

Ask the prospective tenant if he or she meets these qualifications. If they don't, don't waste your time screening them further, or even book a showing.

# 03 | SCREENING

# SCREENING OVERVIEW

The main goal of tenant screening is to help find quality tenants who will pay rent on time and take care of your property as if it were their own.

To select responsible tenants, it's important to filter out good potential tenants from the mountain of applications you might receive.

It's important to ask the right type of questions so you have all of the information you need to make a smart decision about who will live in your property.

# RENTAL APPLICATION

A good rental application will give you quick information about your prospective tenant:

- Name
- Current address
- Reason for their move
- Employer information
- Income
- Landlord references



# 04 | CONDUCTING BACKGROUND AND CREDIT CHECKS

# TENANT SCREENING OVERVIEW

There are various tenant screening sources you can use to run a background or credit check on a rental tenant. Before digging into the screening data, you need to decide what kind of background or credit score you'll allow.

The things to look closely are:

- Felonies
- Prior evictions filed
- Prior evictions carried out
- Bankruptcy
- Judgments
- Other criminal or bad financial histories

# CREDIT CHECK OVERVIEW

Credit checks are among the best ways to learn if an applicant is financially responsible or not. When reviewing your prospective tenant's credit and background reports, look out for these red flags: notable debt, undue payments, bankruptcy filing, and prior eviction history.

A solid financial and background history is a predictor that a tenant will pay rent on time, is free of relevant criminal history, and will treat the property with respect. This is just one way to make sure that you are protecting your investment.

Note: it's always a good idea to rent to someone with good credit. Even if an applicant is otherwise perfect, bad credit may indicate financial imprudence—and no amount of personality or charm can substitute for that.

# **05 | VERIFYING INCOME AND CHECKING CREDIT HISTORY**

# EMPLOYMENT VERIFICATION OVERVIEW

Your rental application should include a section about employment. They should include the name and phone number of their current employer. Call and speak with the manager, owner, or human resources manager.

## **Then, the important questions to ask are:**

- How much do the renters currently earn?
- How long have the renters worked there?
- Is this job considered temporary?

# RENTAL HISTORY OVERVIEW

You should also have a section regarding rental history. Call their previous landlords for at least the past five years.

**When talking with previous landlords, consider asking the following questions:**

- How long did the rental tenant rent from you?
- What was their monthly rent?
- Did the rental tenant give proper notice when vacating?
- Was the rental tenant refunded their security deposit?
- Would you rent to this rental tenant again?

# **06 | ACCEPTING OR DENYING A RENTAL APPLICANT**

# DECISION OVERVIEW

To avoid discrimination complaints, always process rental applications on a first-come, first-served basis. Process each rental application until you discover the applicant does not qualify.

When you deny a rental applicant, it is important that you clearly document your reasons for why you are denying the renter to avoid discrimination complaints. Always inform the rental tenant with written notice.

When you find a rental applicant who meets all your requirements, you can verbally let your future tenant know that they are approved.

## ALSO...

Don't forget to gather references for potential tenants and check their credit histories.

You should also take safety precautions when screening a tenant—after all, this person is a stranger.

Once you've found the right tenant, ask for a reasonable security deposit and arrange an appropriate payment schedule.



**READY TO EXPLORE A MORE HASSLE-FREE  
LANDLORD EXPERIENCE?  
WE CAN HELP.**

# NEXT STEPS

These are only a few of many responsibilities when renting out your home.

- Are you licensed?
- Have a financial plan?
- Maintenance plan?
- Time for inspections?

If you answered no to any of these, give our team a call 301-854-0791 or visit us online <https://westpropmgt.com/>



West Property Management offers complete management services from townhomes and single-family homes to Homeowners & Condominium Associations, no matter the size.

---

**West Property Management**

301-854-0791

<https://westpropmgt.com>

[info@WestPropMgt.com](mailto:info@WestPropMgt.com)

Managing  
**1+ BILLION**  
in Assets

---

Representing  
**1,500+**  
Properties



# FIND THE PERFECT TENANT

