



FIRST CLASS REALTY & PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Make-Ready Checklist

Everything to prepare a property for market.

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DOWNLOADABLE OWNER RESOURCE

Prepared by First Class Realty & Property Management

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Before You List the Property

A make-ready is not just cleaning and photos. It is the point where pricing, condition, risk, compliance, and first impressions all meet.

Make-ready standard: safe, clean, functional, documented, priced correctly, and ready for a qualified resident.

This resource is a planning aid for rental owners and investors. It does not replace legal, tax, insurance, code, or licensed contractor guidance for a specific property.

1. Make it safe

- Address life-safety, security, trip hazards, water intrusion, electrical concerns, and habitability before cosmetic work.

2. Make it functional

- Confirm major systems, appliances, locks, doors, windows, plumbing, HVAC, and access work as expected.

3. Make it marketable

- Prioritize curb appeal, clean surfaces, lighting, paint touchups, odor removal, and clear listing photos.

4. Make it documented

- Keep photos, vendor invoices, owner approvals, scope notes, keys, access details, and final signoff together.

Owner Make-Ready Decision Points

- What must be completed before photos or showings?
- What should be priced as an improvement versus normal turnover work?
- What can wait until after lease-up without hurting safety, value, or resident experience?
- What rent range is realistic based on the final condition, not the desired condition?

Exterior + Curb Appeal

Curb appeal sets the tone before a prospect enters the home. Handle obvious exterior issues first because they shape perceived value and resident confidence.

Exterior Condition

- Remove trash, debris, abandoned items, yard waste, and old resident belongings.
- Mow, edge, trim shrubs, clear walkways, and remove weeds from beds and hardscapes.
- Inspect siding, trim, paint, brick, shutters, porch, deck, rails, steps, and fencing.
- Confirm gutters are clean and downspouts move water away from the structure.
- Check roofline from ground level for missing shingles, debris, sagging gutters, or visible damage.
- Pressure wash only where appropriate and avoid causing water intrusion.

Entry + Access

- Confirm keys, lockboxes, smart locks, garage remotes, gate codes, mailbox keys, and access notes.
- Replace damaged door hardware, deadbolts, strike plates, weatherstripping, and door sweeps.
- Clean front door, porch lights, house numbers, mailbox area, and entry glass.
- Check exterior lighting, motion lights, GFCI covers, handrails, steps, and trip hazards.
- Confirm windows close, lock, and have intact screens where applicable.
- Remove personal signage, old tenant decor, and anything that distracts from the home.

Market Readiness Notes

- Photograph the exterior before and after work so the owner has a clean record.
- Do not take listing photos until exterior trash, weeds, and entry issues are corrected.
- If the exterior condition pulls value down, adjust pricing or approve improvements before going live.

Interior Make-Ready Checklist

Use this room-by-room list to prevent sloppy turnover misses before photos, showings, or move-in.

Kitchen

- Clean cabinets inside/out
- Check sink, faucet, disposal
- Test stove/oven/microwave
- Clean appliances thoroughly
- Check refrigerator condition
- Repair loose hardware

Bathrooms

- Clean tub, tile, toilet, vanity
- Repair caulk/grout gaps
- Test fans and lighting
- Check leaks around toilet/sink
- Confirm drains flow properly
- Replace stained toilet seats

Bedrooms

- Clean floors and closets
- Repair doors and knobs
- Check windows and blinds
- Touch up walls/trim
- Test lights/outlets
- Remove odors or stains

Living Areas

- Patch and paint as needed
- Clean baseboards and fans
- Check flooring transitions
- Confirm smoke/CO devices
- Repair blinds/screens
- Remove scuffs and residue

Laundry/Utility

- Check washer hookups
- Inspect dryer vent area
- Check water heater signs
- Confirm HVAC filter size
- Clean utility spaces
- Remove lint/debris

Garage/Storage

- Remove all items/trash
- Sweep floors and corners
- Test opener/remotes
- Check safety sensors
- Label keys/remotes
- Confirm no pest activity

Systems + Safety

Do not let cosmetic work hide functional problems. A property should be safe and operational before marketing claims are made.

Mechanical + Plumbing

- Schedule HVAC service if performance, age, or season makes it necessary.
- Replace HVAC filter and document filter size and location.
- Check thermostat, registers, condensate line, exterior unit clearance, and visible leaks.
- Run hot water and check water heater age, corrosion, pan, and visible leak signs.
- Check all sinks, tubs, showers, toilets, supply lines, drains, and shutoff valves where visible.
- Test garbage disposal, dishwasher, ice maker line if active, and laundry connections.

Safety + Compliance

- Test smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors where required or appropriate.
- Confirm GFCI outlets function in kitchens, baths, laundry, garage, and exterior areas.
- Repair exposed wiring, missing outlet covers, loose handrails, broken steps, and sharp hazards.
- Confirm locks, windows, exterior doors, garage access, and lighting are secure.
- Document pest activity, moisture signs, mold-like growth, or suspected water intrusion for proper review.
- Keep code, HOA, municipal, and insurance requirements in the property file.

Do Not Skip

- Active leaks, no HVAC in peak weather, electrical hazards, broken locks, trip hazards, and unsafe stairs/rails should be treated as urgent.
- If a licensed trade is needed, use a qualified professional and keep the invoice with the make-ready file.
- The final condition should match the listing description and photos.

Cleaning + Photo Readiness

The home needs to look clean in person and in photos. Prospects notice grime, odor, poor lighting, and careless details immediately.

Cleaning Standard

- Deep clean kitchen, bathrooms, floors, baseboards, windowsills, doors, fans, vents, and fixtures.
- Remove pet, smoke, mildew, trash, and stale air odors before showings begin.
- Clean appliance interiors, drawers, cabinets, closets, and utility areas.
- Replace heavily stained blinds, damaged toilet seats, dirty filters, and burned out bulbs.
- Clean or replace HVAC returns, vent covers, light switch plates, and outlet covers where needed.
- Confirm all personal belongings, trash bags, tools, vendor materials, and cleaning supplies are removed.

Listing Photo Prep

- Turn on all lights and open blinds before photos.
- Hide cords, trash cans, plungers, toilet brushes, tools, lockbox packaging, and random vendor items.
- Close toilet lids, cabinet doors, closet doors, and appliance doors.
- Photograph rooms from clean angles that show layout, light, floors, and usable space.
- Capture exterior, entry, kitchen, living areas, bedrooms, baths, laundry, storage, yard, and parking.
- Do a final photo review before publishing. Bad photos make good homes look cheap.

Before Going Live

- Confirm rent price, deposit, pet terms, available date, showing instructions, utilities, HOA notes, and application criteria.
- Confirm all owner-approved work is either complete or clearly noted with timing.
- If the home still photographs poorly, fix the issue before marketing or price accordingly.

Final Signoff

Use this page before the listing goes live or before the next resident receives keys.

Final Review Checklist

- Exterior is clean, accessible, photographed, and free of obvious curb appeal issues.
- Interior is clean, odor-free, functional, and photographed accurately.
- Life-safety, locks, HVAC, plumbing, electrical, and appliances have been reviewed.
- Keys, remotes, codes, lockbox, mailbox, garage, and access notes are organized.
- Owner has approved required work, pricing, listing timing, and any deferred items.
- Listing details match the actual property condition and resident expectations.
- Final photos, invoices, approvals, and notes are saved to the property file.

Notes / Owner Decisions

First Class Realty & Property Management

Owner-focused rental management for investors who want cleaner operations, clearer reporting, and fewer preventable surprises.
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