

Tenant-Proof your rentals

10 Proven Steps to
Avoid Bad Tenants

A practical playbook
for Ontario landlords



Why This Guide Matters



Bad tenants can be costly.
Unpaid rent, property damage,
legal fees and months of
vacancy add up quickly,
Proactive screening and clear
leasing practices can save
time and money.

This guide summarizes
industry best practices
and checklists to help
you avoid high-risk
renters.



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Define Your Ideal Tenant Profile

Identify your ideal tenant by considering:

income-to-rent ratio,
rental history, and
lifestyle preferences
(pets, smoking).

A clear profile sets expectations and helps you filter candidates quickly.

Knowing what you are looking for ensures you target applicants who fit your property and your standards.



Craft a Stand-Out Listing



Write a detailed, transparent listing that includes rent, deposit, pet rules and required documents. A clear listing deters unqualified applicants and attracts serious renters.

- Use bullet points to highlight features and requirements.
- Be upfront about credit checks, employment verification and any income thresholds.



This clarity saves time and draws the right tenants.

Use Pre-Screening Questions



Before scheduling viewings, ask simple pre-screening questions to confirm move-in date, employment status, income and pet ownership. This step saves time and weeds out unqualified applicants.

Sample questions:

- *How soon do you need to move?*
- *What is your monthly income?*
- *Do you have pets?*
- *Have you ever been evicted?*

These questions give you a quick snapshot of the applicant suitability.



Automate Credit & Background Checks

Use digital tools to conduct credit reports, background checks and employment verification. Set a minimum credit score and watch for red flags such as late payments or criminal history.

Automating these checks ensures consistency and reduces the risk of human bias. Services like CasaYa streamline the process so you can quickly approve or decline applicants.



Verify Income & Employment



Request recent pay-stubs, tax documents or employment letters to confirm that applicants can afford the rent. Look for steady employment and a history of reliable income.

Consider using third-party services to verify employment and income. Ensuring applicants have the means to pay reduces the likelihood of missed rent payments and evictions.

In-Person / Video Interview

Conduct an in-person or video meeting to gauge the applicant's punctuality, attitude, and preparedness. Ask about their rental history, reasons for moving and lifestyle preferences.

Observe how they present themselves and whether they respect your time and property. A personal interaction can reveal behavioural cues that do not show up on paper.



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Use a Rock-Solid Lease

Always use the standard Ontario residential lease and include clauses about late payments, inspections, maintenance responsibilities and subletting.

Make sure both parties sign and date the lease. Keep digital copies for your records. A detailed lease protects your rights and clarifies expectations for the tenant.



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Collect First & Last Month's Rent



Secure the tenancy by collecting first and last month's rent plus any allowed key deposit before handing over the keys. Provide a receipt for each payment.

Using a clear payment schedule and secure payment methods ensures you receive funds and tenants understand your expectations from day one.



CasaYa

Create a Welcome Package

Provide a welcome package with contact information, house rules, move-in inspection checklist and instructions for maintenance requests.

Setting clear expectations at the start fosters a positive landlord-tenant relationship. Include information about rent due dates, emergency numbers and how to submit repair requests.



How CasaYa Makes It Easy

1. Create listings with predefined criteria:
2. Pre-screen applicants using custom questions and our digital form.
3. Run credit and background checks with one click.
4. Collect and verify employment and income documents.
5. Manage references, schedule interviews and track communications.
6. Generate and e-sign official Ontario leases.
7. Maintain digital records.



“CasaYa helped us reduce vacancy time by 50% and find tenants we can trust.” – Happy Landlord



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Next Steps & Bonus Resources

Ready to upgrade your tenant screening?
Sign up for CasaYa's free listing and
download our Move-In/Move-Out
Inspection Template.

visit rentcasaya.com to get started.
Follow us on social media for more
landlord tips and resources.

Stay in touch:
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