

Personal Rental Readiness Plan

This planning tool will help you prepare for your next rental experience by assessing your current situation, identifying your priorities, developing a financial plan, and creating a strategy for finding and securing appropriate housing.

1. Rental Readiness Assessment

Begin by honestly assessing your current situation and readiness for renting.

Financial Status

Current savings available for rental expenses:

\$

Monthly income (after taxes):

\$

Monthly budget for housing (30% of monthly income recommended):

\$

Estimated credit score range:

Select one



Rental History

Previous rental experience:

Select one



References available:

- ☐ Previous landlord(s)
- ☐ Employer
- ☐ Personal references
- ☐ Professional references

Housing Needs Assessment

Number of bedrooms needed:

Select one



Transportation considerations:

- ☐ Need parking for vehicle(s)
- ☐ Need access to public transportation
- ☐ Prefer walkable neighborhood
- ☐ Need bike storage/bike-friendly area

Pet considerations:

- ☐ No pets
- ☐ Dog(s)
- ☐ Cat(s)
- ☐ Other pets

Timeline

When do you plan to move?

Select one



2. Financial Preparation Plan

Savings Goal

Based on your rental research and current savings, set specific goals for upfront rental costs.

Expense	Estimated Amount	Current Savings	Amount Needed
Security deposit	<div>\$</div>	<div>\$</div>	<div>\$</div>
First month's rent	<div>\$</div>	<div>\$</div>	<div>\$</div>
Last month's rent (if required)	<div>\$</div>	<div>\$</div>	<div>\$</div>
Application fees	<div>\$</div>	<div>\$</div>	<div>\$</div>
Moving expenses	<div>\$</div>	<div>\$</div>	<div>\$</div>
Utility deposits/setup	<div>\$</div>	<div>\$</div>	<div>\$</div>
Essential furniture/supplies	<div>\$</div>	<div>\$</div>	<div>\$</div>
Emergency fund (3 months' rent recommended)	<div>\$</div>	<div>\$</div>	<div>\$</div>
TOTAL	<div>\$</div>	<div>\$</div>	<div>\$</div>

Monthly Housing Budget

Plan your monthly housing budget, keeping total housing costs around 30% of your monthly income.

Expense	Estimated Amount	Notes
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Rent	\$	Notes
Electricity	\$	Notes
Gas/heating	\$	Notes
Water/sewer	\$	Notes
Internet	\$	Notes
Renter's insurance	\$	Notes
Parking	\$	Notes
Other (specify)	\$	Notes
TOTAL MONTHLY HOUSING COSTS	\$	Notes
Monthly Income	\$	After taxes
Percentage of Income for Housing	%	Target: 30% or less

Credit Improvement Plan

If your credit needs improvement, outline specific steps to improve your score before applying for rentals.

Current credit issues to address:

- ☐ No known issues / Not applicable
- ☐ Late payments
- ☐ High credit utilization
- ☐ Errors on credit report
- ☐ Accounts in collections

☐ Limited credit history

Action steps to improve credit:

List specific actions you'll take to improve your credit score before applying for rentals...

Tip: Many landlords will accept cosigners, larger security deposits, or advance rent payments for applicants with limited credit history or credit issues.

3. Rental Search Strategy

Location Preferences

Identify your preferred neighborhoods or areas and why they appeal to you.

Preferred Location	Reasons/Benefits	Potential Drawbacks
<div>Location 1</div>	<div>Benefits</div>	<div>Drawbacks</div>
<div>Location 2</div>	<div>Benefits</div>	<div>Drawbacks</div>
<div>Location 3</div>	<div>Benefits</div>	<div>Drawbacks</div>

Property Feature Priorities

Rate the importance of different property features to focus your search.

In-unit laundry:

Select priority

▼

Dishwasher:

Select priority

▼

Central air conditioning:

Select priority

▼

Private outdoor space:

Select priority

▼

Dedicated parking space:

Select priority

▼

Pet-friendly policy:

Select priority

▼

Gym/fitness center:

Select priority

▼

Security features:

Select priority

▼

Storage space:

Select priority

▼

Other feature:

Specify other feature

Select priority

Deal-Breakers

List conditions or features that would immediately eliminate a rental property from consideration.

List your absolute deal-breakers (e.g., no pets allowed, no parking, unsafe neighborhood, etc.)

Research Resources

Identify the resources you'll use to find and research rental properties.

- ☐ Rental apps/websites (Zillow, Apartments.com, etc.)
- ☐ Social media groups
- ☐ Word of mouth/personal connections
- ☐ Rental agencies
- ☐ Newspaper/local listings
- ☐ Driving around preferred neighborhoods
- ☐ School/work housing resources
- ☐ Other:

Search Timeline

Create a timeline for your rental search based on your planned move date.

Target move-in date:

Time Before Move-In	Actions to Complete
3-4 months before	<div>Research areas, set budget, start saving, check credit...</div>

2 months before

Begin serious property search,
schedule viewings...

1 month before

Submit applications, secure property,
arrange utilities...

2 weeks before

Confirm move-in details, schedule
moving logistics...

Move-in day

Conduct move-in inspection, document
condition, set up utilities...

4. Move-In Preparation Checklist

Application Documents

Prepare documents you'll need when applying for rental properties.

- ☐ Government-issued photo ID
- ☐ Proof of income (pay stubs, offer letter, tax returns)
- ☐ Reference contact information (previous landlords, employers)
- ☐ Credit report (optional, but helpful)
- ☐ Bank statements
- ☐ Vehicle information (if parking needed)
- ☐ Pet records (vaccine records, photos, etc.)
- ☐ Cosigner information (if needed)
- ☐ Completed application forms
- ☐ Other:

Questions to Ask Before Signing

Prepare a list of questions to ask landlords before signing a lease.

List specific questions about the property, policies, lease terms, maintenance procedures, etc.

Move-In Inspection Process

Plan how you'll document the property condition at move-in.

- ☐ Use/request a detailed move-in inspection form
- ☐ Take date-stamped photos of all rooms and existing damage
- ☐ Record video walkthrough of the entire property
- ☐ Request joint inspection with landlord
- ☐ Take detailed notes of any issues

- ☐ Get written confirmation of existing issues
- ☐ Save all documentation in multiple locations

Essential Items Checklist

Create a list of essential items needed for your new rental.

- ☐ Cleaning supplies
- ☐ Bathroom essentials
- ☐ Basic kitchen items
- ☐ Bedroom essentials
- ☐ Basic furniture
- ☐ Basic tools and emergency supplies
- ☐ First aid kit
- ☐ Other:

Utility Setup Checklist

List the utilities you'll need to set up before move-in.

- ☐ Electricity
- ☐ Gas/heating
- ☐ Water/sewer
- ☐ Internet
- ☐ Cable/satellite TV
- ☐ Trash/recycling
- ☐ Renter's insurance
- ☐ Other:

Reflection and Action Plan

Areas of Strength

What aspects of rental readiness do you feel most prepared for?

Areas for Improvement

What aspects require the most preparation or work?

Key Action Steps

List your top 3-5 priority action items to prepare for renting.

Example: 1. Save \$X for security deposit by [date]...