



Six Tips For Landlords.....

A Bees Nees Checklist On Maximising Your Rental Income

1. What are tenants' wants and needs?

As a property investor we recommend you consider yourself a small business person. So have a hard look at what you're selling and who's buying. Have you thought about your target market for your property?

With more than a third of Brisbanites now renting there's naturally a broad range of tenants looking for accommodation. But better identifying their needs will create an opportunity to attract better tenants, longer leases and ultimately higher returns. It doesn't have to mean spending thousands of dollars on your property. So here's a snapshot of what some of the major tenant markets often look for in a rental home:

Overseas students are now one of the largest rental groups in Brisbane's inner city and while they have varying budgets they will pay a premium for:

- Proximity to transport and facilities – shops, entertainment etc
- Good Security – deadlocks, screens, security card access (apartments)
- Properties that are presented as clean and well maintained
- Good sized bedrooms for double bed and study desk
- Foxtel pre-wired
- Phone and/or computer ports in each bedroom
- Air-conditioning
- Storage space
- Local students will have similar preferences and today, despite many people's preconceptions, we often find students to be good tenants who look after their rental homes and are often better payers.



Professionals and the executive markets are generally looking for quality premises, fit-out, features and facilities. Often these tenants own their own homes in other locations and expect a high standard of rental property.

- Pools and gym in complex
- Spacious rooms
- Higher quality fittings
- Good parking
- High standard of security
- Larger balconies or outdoor entertainment areas with views
- Foxtel pre-wired
- Reverse cycle air-conditioning
- Ample cupboard space
- Less student accommodation close-by

All tenants, regardless of budget, look for:

- Clean and well maintained properties with good quality window furnishings and floor coverings, and with all fittings in good working order.
- Professionally cleaned carpets (on commencement of tenancy)
- Cleaned throughout comprehensively (if it remains vacant for a time it will need a refresher clean prior to tenancy)
- Paintwork in good condition
- Houses and apartments (on lower levels) – insect screens and, at a minimum, security screened windows and doors
- If a house, lawn and gardens tended during vacancy can be a strong incentive
- If a pool – regularly serviced
- Maintenance up to date such as having all the following in good working order:
 - lights
 - doors
 - insect screens
 - hot water service and plumbing
 - electrical appliances
 - air-conditioning



- Smoke alarms in place and checked
- Electrical safety switch installed
- Fencing (pools' self closing gate) in place
- All locks working and deadlock on the front door
- External washdown for houses

Some of the list above might seem obvious but many landlords and their agents fail to deliver the basics and, despite it being a strong market, tenants will choose another home.

2. Get started!

Don't wait until the property's vacant. Your agent needs to list the home for rent as soon as the current tenant gives a vacate notice, and liaise with them to show prospective tenants through. Often property managers prefer not to have to negotiate this early access but most tenants are okay with it and that few weeks of lead time can make a huge difference to your net returns. If you're buying an investment add a clause to your contract to allow tenants to be shown through prior to settlement.

3. Remember to ensure:

- There's a key supplied for every lock
- Pest inspections and annual treatments are current
- Building inspection has been carried out to ensure the property's safe and fit to occupy (particularly for houses) including a safety audit of loose or uneven flooring, pavers, handrails etc, along with compliance with all government building regulations
- Insurances – contents, building, public liability and landlord protection up to date. We require you to have \$10m public liability insurance before we can start working for you.
- A minimum of one phone line must be installed
- Well presented properties will generally achieve higher rents, attract a better tenant and they rent quicker. An unkept property, particularly a house, may fail the tenants' initial 'drive-by' and not get an internal inspection.
- If you're in an apartment complex ensure your committee maintains the front gardens, has the area around letterboxes cleared of junk mail and the bins put away after collection!



4. Good marketing makes a difference...

First impressions are very important when showing to a prospective tenant.

- When conducting inspections or open houses for rental homes we open the curtains and blinds to let the sun and the view inside. Don't have a dark home if possible, and the outlook or view will make the rooms feel bigger.
- Owners need to have their property listed with a professional and innovative agency, one that obtains the quickest letting and best rental results possible. An agency (like Bees Needs!) that includes, at no charge to the owner, a package of comprehensive interactive floor plans and photos on the internet that'll attract more enquiries.
- Do ensure your property is listed on the major internet sites. They now account for up to 90% of tenant enquiry.
- Your agent should give you constant feedback from prospective tenants and make suggestions regarding presentation and the listed rent.
- **All prospective tenants need to deal with someone who is interested in them** – our staff are employed and trained on that basis. Try calling a couple of agents and posing as a prospective tenant to judge their service for yourself.....

5. Keep an eye on the market

Use an agent that keeps you in touch with rental trends so together you can review the rent at every opportunity and each time the lease comes up for renewal. It's good to keep a long term tenant if they're maintaining the home but even they expect rental increases on a regular basis. Ensure the agent involves you in each review process so you can balance the length of the lease and potential rent.



6. Extra Tips:

- What condition is your property really in? Ask your agent to supply photos of the interior of the home after each routine inspection so you can see for yourself. Maintenance concerns will drive a good tenant away.
- Have a fitout which is lower maintenance for your tenants. They don't want to lose their bond so carpets preferably a darker shade, low maintenance window furnishings, more floor tiles and stain and scratch resistant stone benches all appeal to tenants and ensure better presentation in the long run.
- Reduce your future repair costs by doing a maintenance audit, noting things like whether door stops are installed throughout the property, and exhaust fans or good ventilation in all bathrooms

If you have further questions call the Bees Needs Property Management Team on 07 3214 6899 or email us at: info@beesneeds.com.au

Visit our website at www.beesneeds.com.au