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## Tenant Management

Your tenant has moved in, and you're officially a landlord - congratulations! Now let's examine different ways to streamline your rental property management business.

# Managing the Day to Day

How regularly you interact with your tenant depends on your personality, theirs, and what issues pop up in the rental unit.

To that end, you're most likely to engage with your tenant to:

- Collect monthly rent
- Handle maintenance requests
- Mitigate other property issues, like noisy neighbors

Luckily, there are easy-to-use tools you can leverage for each of these touchpoints.



# Collecting Monthly Rent

Regular rent payments are the driving force behind most people becoming landlords - so how can you collect this money as easily as possible?

First, let's consider what tenants want. According to Zillow's 2023 Consumer Housing Trends Report, 69% of renters prefer to pay rent digitally - and that preference has been growing since 2018.

But not all digital payment methods are created equally. You may be tempted to allow Zelle, Cash App, or Venmo transactions, but these systems weren't built with rental property management in mind.

Plus, you'll face business fees and transactional limitations, making these seemingly simple tools a lot more complicated.

What should you use instead?

  
-=*turbotenant*



# TurboTenant Makes Rent Collection Easy

Our software was built by landlords for landlords, which means we have everything you need to make rent collection a breeze.

*What features make TurboTenant's rental payments portal second to none?*

- **Secure bank account connection:** TurboTenant leverages Stripe, a secure service, to connect to your bank account. Your login information is encrypted and can't be viewed by TurboTenant or your renters.
- **Automatic tenant reminders:** Stop stressing about whether your tenant will remember to make their payment on time! TurboTenant reminds them about upcoming due dates.
- **Autopay:** Enable your tenants to set up automatic payments, and watch as their rent payments come in on autopilot.
- **Payment notifications:** Get notified as soon as your tenant pays (or once their payment is past due).
- **Automatic late fees:** If they don't pay on time, let TurboTenant send late fees and communication to your tenant so you don't have to be the bad guy.
- **Most types of payments accepted:** Whether your tenant prefers to pay with a credit card, debit card, or through ACH, TurboTenant's system makes it easy for them to customize their payment type.
- **Automatic deposits:** No need to run out to the bank; your money will be deposited directly into your account.
- **Payment tracking:** Keep track of all your charges in one place, and your bookkeeping will be a breeze. Remember to thank yourself at tax time!

Best of all, collecting rent online with TurboTenant doesn't come with any additional fees for landlords.

# How to Start Collecting Rent With TurboTenant

Set up your first charge in five minutes or less:

- 1 If you haven't already created your TurboTenant account, that's a great place to start! Select "Payments" during onboarding, then follow the instructions below.
  - a If you're a TurboTenant account holder, **sign in and navigate to the Payments tab.**
- 2 Select or create a lease with an attached rental property and tenants. If you need to add any of these items, you can do so during the onboarding process. *Please note that tenants will not receive an invite to their tenant portal until this process is complete.*
- 3 Set up a recurring or one-time charge for your lease. You only need to create one charge to get started, so we recommend setting up rent and/or the security deposit first.
- 4 Create your business or individual account through our integration with Stripe. Then connect your bank account so you can receive payments.



## One-Time Charge

Your tenants are charged once. Great for fees, security deposits, or pro-rated rent.



## Monthly Charge

Your tenants are charged on the same day each month. Great for rent, utilities, parkings, etc.

- 5 Verify your information, including your **full legal name and phone number**, to set up payments successfully.
- 6 Enable **partial payments**, **automatic payments**, and **auto late fees** during the setup process, if you so desire.
- 7 Review the information you entered on the summary screen, then complete the rent payment setup. Doing so will invite your tenant to their portal and place you on the Payments tab of the Leases page, where you can view all of your created charges.
- 8 After submitting your account for approval, you'll see an "awaiting approval" banner while our team checks your information. Once your account has been approved, you'll receive an email from TurboTenant notifying you that you're ready to start collecting payments.

The screenshot displays the 'Payments' dashboard with the following data:

Category	Amount
PAST DUE	\$50
UNPAID	\$50
CHARGES	\$1,200
PAID	\$1,200
IN TRANSIT	\$600
DEPOSITED	\$600

Rentals	CHARGES	Leases	CHARGES	Tenants	DEPOSITS
155 Franklin Street - Apt A	\$1,200	155 Franklin Street - Apt A - Mo...	\$1,200	Aria Montgomery	\$600

**Pro Tip:** If you have multiple businesses that are all collecting rent payments, we recommend creating a separate entity for each business. [Learn More >>](#)



Real estate investing is the best thing that can happen to anyone in the world. With perseverance, you can reap the maximum benefits of your real estate investment."

- *Olawale Daniel, public speaker and personal development coach*



# What if Your Tenant Doesn't Pay Rent?

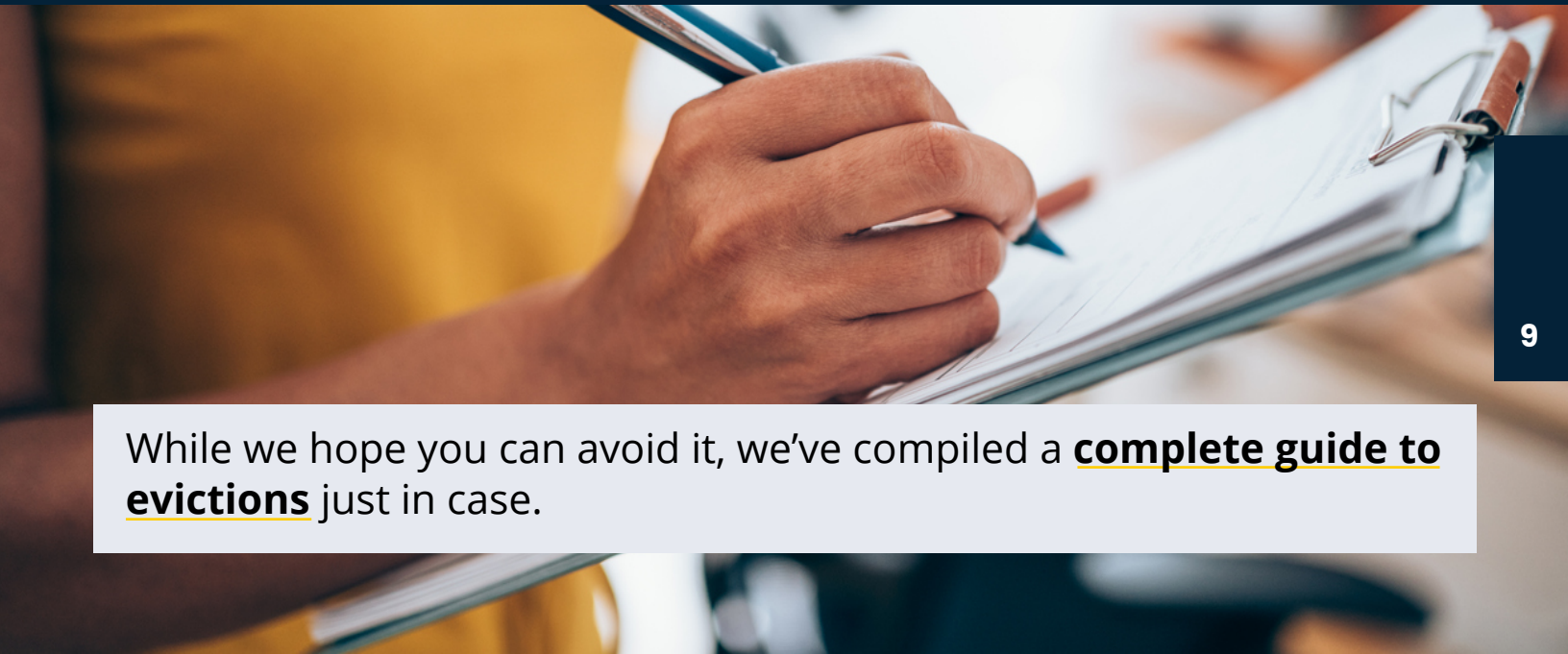
Many would-be landlords worry about what would happen if their tenant didn't pay rent. Beyond having at least three to six months' worth of expenses saved up, there are steps you can take to mitigate this anxiety:

- 1 Lean on your lease.** Your lease should outline the consequences of missed rent, including what kind of grace period your tenant has to make the payment.
- 2 Evaluate the situation.** Is this the first time your tenant missed rent, or has it become a habit? If it's the first time, reach out with an informal notice. If you're tired of doing the late payment dance, send them a formal pay or quit notice, but first ensure it's compliant with your local laws.
- 3 Send your notice.** Your document should include:
  - a** The original rent due date
  - b** How much is owed
  - c** The grace period to make a payment without penalty
  - d** Your late fee policy
  - e** Your contact information for questions and concerns





- 4 **Consider if you'd like to create a repayment agreement.** The Consumer Financial Bureau recommends having a conversation with your first-time late payer about adjusting the due dates, allowing multiple payments in smaller amounts each month, or waiving late fees to make repayment easier. *If you go this route, ensure that you and your tenant sign off on the agreement - put it in writing!*
- 5 **Share rent relief resources.** Several organizations, from [Catholic Charities USA](#) to the [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development](#), offer support for tenants struggling to pay rent. Your locality may have its own program, so encourage them to research nearby options.
- 6 **Seek eviction alternatives.** If your tenant doesn't or can't utilize the rent relief options above and you're still missing out on rent, it's time to consider a more permanent solution. Book an appointment with a real estate attorney to go over the best solutions for your area based on [local landlord-tenant laws](#).
- 7 **Send a formal notice.** If the situation hasn't improved, it's time to start the eviction process. However, be sure that you've exhausted all of your options before reaching this step - evictions are expensive, draining, and traumatic, particularly when children are involved.



While we hope you can avoid it, we've compiled a [complete guide to evictions](#) just in case.

# Maintenance Matters

You've squared away rent collection, so now it's time to tackle maintenance requests. Landlords are legally obligated to fix critical issues quickly - usually within three to seven days of the original complaint. You typically have 30 days for non-critical repairs, depending on your local laws.

But what makes a request critical vs. non-critical?

**Critical repairs make the unit unlivable.** As a landlord, you're bound to uphold the warranty of habitability - meaning that your rental must be safe and sanitary. **Common critical issues include:**

- Lack of hot water
- Lack of potable water
- Lack of heat during the winter
- Lack of electricity
- Lack of functioning plumbing and waste removal
- A broken refrigerator (if originally supplied by the landlord)
- Broken or absent smoke and carbon monoxide detectors
- Severe pest infestations such as cockroaches, mice, or bedbugs

All other maintenance issues are likely to be non-critical.



# Managing Maintenance With TurboTenant

Whether the request is big or small, you need a trustworthy system wherein your tenant can share maintenance requests - so TurboTenant built one.

Your tenant can easily log into their TurboTenant account and fill out a simple maintenance request form. We'll ask them to provide as much detail as possible, including pictures and preferred entry times. Then, we send an email to alert you to the issue. If you need to send a work order to your contractor, **we make it simple.**

You can also opt to add maintenance issues yourself. Maybe it's time to replace the filters, or maybe your tenant called you to report a leaking toilet. Either way, document the request so you never have to wonder what was done within a property.



**Pro Tip:** You should always follow up with your tenants after a maintenance request has been completed. That way, you'll know if there are any lingering issues.

# Tenant Complaints

Beyond paying rent and requesting maintenance support, most tenants won't reach out to their landlords. However, it's possible you may need to solve interpersonal situations, like a noisy neighbor or parking rules being ignored.

## In these cases, you should reach out to the offending party in a letter that includes:

- ✓ The complaint received in detail (e.g., the type of behavior in question, its frequency, and the times it's occurred)
- ✓ How that complaint ties back to the lease with a reminder that the tenant is obligated to adhere to the provisions of the rental agreement
- ✓ Potential solutions (e.g., using headphones for a complaint about music playing too loudly or parking around the block if they're stealing someone's paid space)
- ✓ A deadline to fix the behavior, which may vary based on your local laws
- ✓ Consequences if they fail to rectify the issue
- ✓ A reminder that you're more than willing to work with them to find a solution
- ✓ Your contact information

## The letter should not include:

- ✗ Avoid accusatory or confrontational phrases
- ✗ Who made the complaint

**Pro Tip:** We recommend sending this message through TurboTenant so you have time-stamped proof of your communication - *but again, check your local laws to determine if there's a specific procedure you must follow.*



The key to successful property management is to treat each property as if it were your own and to treat each tenant as if they were your only tenant."

- Michael Owino Homes, property manager

# Expense Tracking

So now you know how to collect rent, handle maintenance requests, and mitigate other tenant issues - but that doesn't mean you can skimp on expense tracking. As a small business owner, you get to deduct business expenses come tax season.

*But you can only take advantage of this perk if you're properly tracking your expenses day by day, month by month.*

**To track your expenses, you have two options:**



**Do it manually.** This often looks like making your own spreadsheet in Excel or Google Sheets, having a physical folder for receipts, and having the patience of a saint.



**Go digital.** Online expense tracking tools were built to be fast, secure, and help you prepare for tax season. Your hand won't cramp from writing in expenses, and you won't have to worry about stapling receipts anywhere. Plus, if you manage other aspects of your property online like tenant screening or rent payments, tracking your expenses in the same place will be convenient.



**Pro Tip:** TurboTenant's mobile app allows you to snap pictures of receipts on the go. Your expense tracking just got easier. **Download it today using the QR code!**



# What Landlords Should Track

When considering what expenses you should track, it pays to be familiar with the **Schedule E form**. This form is used to report income or losses from rentals, and you'll need to file a separate Schedule E for each property.



## You should be tracking your:

**Advertising** – All your marketing costs (including for rent yard signs, advertising on certain websites, or sending out mailers) fall into this category.

**Auto and Travel** – Driving, along with other necessary and ordinary auto and travel costs needed to maintain your rentals, would qualify in this category.

**Cleaning and Maintenance** – This section includes all the cleaning expenses incurred after a tenant moves out, as well as common maintenance expenses like yard work, painting, and other upkeep or maintenance requests you tend to.

**Commissions** – This refers to the real estate agent or property management commissions you paid to help find a tenant. If you use free online rental property marketing, you'll have less to add in this section!

**Insurance** – You should have landlord insurance along with any other policies your unique rentals require, like hazard or flood policies. Remember that this is the amount you actually paid to your insurance company (not what you pay in escrow).

**Management Fees** – If you have a property manager or agent helping manage the property, their 8-12% of your monthly rental income charge would be included in this category.

**Legal and Professional Fees** – Any expenses related to accounting, attorney fees, or other business costs related to your tenants qualify for this category.

**Utilities** – This includes utility expenses you have incurred, even if your tenant reimbursed you for them. Do not include utilities that the tenant paid for themselves.

**Taxes** – All of the tax expenses you have accrued from owning and operating your rental property such as property taxes, land taxes, school district taxes, or special easements can be included in this category. This does not include income taxes.

**Repairs** – Tracking repairs made to the property that were not considered “capital improvements” would be in this category. For example, fixing a broken window is a repair – but replacing floors or the roof would be a renovation, which would have to be taken as a deduction over time.



**Learn more about tax strategies** you can use to make the most of your deductions in our online course.



# About Us

Built by landlords for landlords, TurboTenant's intuitive platform helps half a million landlords streamline their entire rental process for free – whether they have one door or 1,000. More than **600,000** independent landlords nationwide enjoy TurboTenant's free, all-in-one online property management software.

Features offered by TurboTenant include rental applications, tenant screening, property marketing, rent payments, lease agreements, and maintenance management.

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The best landlords know the value of community - that's why TurboTenant rewards you AND your friends with each referral! When you refer landlords to our site, we'll pay you and your friend \$25 each.

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