

Pre-Rental Property Prep Checklist

Before the photos, before the listing, before the showings — there's about 30 things every CSRA single-family rental needs to be ready for. This is the working list we walk through with new owners.

How long does this take? Plan 2 to 4 weeks between "I've decided to rent" and "I'm ready to list," more if the home has been lived in hard or needs paint and carpet. The owners who skip prep are the ones who later complain about quality of tenants. Tenants you'd want to rent to are looking at every listing in their price range; they pick the one that's been prepared.

PROPERTY & OWNER INFORMATION

PROPERTY ADDRESS (CITY, ZIP)

YEAR BUILT / SQ FT

OWNER NAME

BEST PHONE & EMAIL

TARGET MOVE-IN DATE

TARGET MONTHLY RENT

MORTGAGE SERVICER (IF ANY)

SAFETY & CODE COMPLIANCE

Non-negotiable. These are the items that, if missing or broken, expose you to liability and to Safe at Home Act habitability claims in Georgia. Walk every one of these even if you "just lived here."

- Smoke detector in every bedroom & one on each floor, tested and battery replaced (or hardwired confirmed working)
- Carbon monoxide detector on every level with fuel-burning appliance and outside each sleeping area
- Fire extinguisher in kitchen, ABC-rated, gauge in green
- All exterior doors have working deadbolts; locks re-keyed from prior occupants
- Windows on ground floor lock; window screens intact
- GFCI outlets in kitchen, bathrooms, garage, and exterior — tested working
- No exposed/dangling wiring; outlet covers in place; no over-fused circuits
- Handrails on every stairway with 4+ risers, secure and not loose
- No standing water in crawl space; no visible mold or active leaks
- Lead-based paint disclosure prepared if home was built before 1978 (federal requirement)
- Pool / spa / hot tub safety: fence height, self-closing gates, anti-entrapment drain covers
- Address numbers visible from the street for emergency response

MECHANICAL SYSTEMS

In Georgia, cooling is now a statutory habitability requirement. A summer HVAC failure on day 10 of a lease is not an inconvenience — it's a legal problem. Service everything before the listing.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> HVAC serviced within last 12 months; receipt on file | <input type="checkbox"/> HVAC air filter replaced; size noted on filter slot for tenant reference |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water heater age noted; serviced if >5 years; pressure relief valve tested | <input type="checkbox"/> All faucets run hot & cold; no slow drains; no leaks under sinks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> All toilets flush properly; no running fill valves; bolts caps in place | <input type="checkbox"/> Garbage disposal works (if equipped); no leaks under disposal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dishwasher cycles fully; door gasket intact | <input type="checkbox"/> Refrigerator cools to 38°F; ice maker working (if equipped) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Range / oven all burners and elements working | <input type="checkbox"/> Washer / dryer connections capped if not providing appliances |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dryer vent cleaned and unobstructed | <input type="checkbox"/> Garage door opener tested; both remotes working; auto-reverse functional |

COSMETIC PREP (WHAT TENANTS ACTUALLY NOTICE)

In the \$1,500–\$2,200 CSRA price band, the difference between 14 days on market and 45 days on market is usually paint and floors. Fresh paint is the highest-ROI prep you can do.

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|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walls painted (a neutral light color reads best in photos — warm white, agreeable gray) | <input type="checkbox"/> Trim and doors painted or touched up; scuffs and shoe marks gone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carpets professionally cleaned (or replaced if past their life) | <input type="checkbox"/> Hard floors deep cleaned; grout cleaned in tile areas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> All window blinds clean & functional; broken slats replaced | <input type="checkbox"/> All light fixtures dust-free; bulbs working & matching color temperature |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No nail holes or anchors left in walls (patch and paint) | <input type="checkbox"/> Cabinets cleaned inside & out, including drawer slides |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appliances cleaned inside & out (oven, fridge, microwave) | <input type="checkbox"/> Bathroom caulk fresh and white in tubs and showers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> All vents and registers clean and rust-free | <input type="checkbox"/> House professionally cleaned end-to-end the day before photos |

EXTERIOR & CURB APPEAL

First photo in the listing is the front of the house. It's also the first thing every drive-by sees during the showing window.

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|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lawn mowed, edged, weed-free | <input type="checkbox"/> Flower beds mulched; shrubs trimmed off the house |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pressure-wash siding, driveway, walkway, porch | <input type="checkbox"/> Front door clean / painted; door hardware tight and clean |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mailbox upright, numbers visible, paint or replace if rusted | <input type="checkbox"/> Gutters clean and downspouts directed away from foundation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trim and fascia paint touched up; no rotted wood | <input type="checkbox"/> Fence in good repair; gates open and latch |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patio / deck swept, stained or cleaned | <input type="checkbox"/> Trash and yard debris removed; bins out of view of street if possible |

DOCUMENTATION TO GATHER

Have these ready before you list. Missing documentation is the #1 reason new landlord setups take longer than they should.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Copy of deed or settlement statement | <input type="checkbox"/> Mortgage statement (verifies lender, escrow, taxes) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Homeowner's insurance switched to landlord (DP-3) policy | <input type="checkbox"/> HOA contact, dues amount, and rule book (if applicable) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utility company contact list for tenant transfer | <input type="checkbox"/> Appliance manuals (or note that they're available digitally) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Warranty info on HVAC, water heater, roof | <input type="checkbox"/> Service provider list (lawn, pest, HVAC, plumber) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Photos of every room before tenant move-in (date-stamped) | <input type="checkbox"/> Photos of exterior, all four sides, before move-in |

Lead-based paint disclosure and EPA pamphlet (if pre-1978)

For PCS owners: Power of Attorney or property management agreement signed before deployment

PRICING BENCHMARKS: CSRA SINGLE-FAMILY

These are typical ranges for well-maintained 3-bedroom single-family homes in 2026. Specific homes vary based on age, condition, schools, and lot. Use this as a sanity check, not a final price.

SUBMARKET	TYPICAL 3-BED RENT	NOTES
EVANS, GA	\$1,700–\$2,200	Columbia County schools drive demand; lake-adjacent commands premium
MARTINEZ, GA	\$1,500–\$1,900	Middle of the Columbia County range; established neighborhoods
GROVETOWN, GA	\$1,500–\$1,900	Newer builds command higher end; closest CC submarket to post
AUGUSTA / RICHMOND CO.	\$1,300–\$2,000	Wide variance — West Lake / Summerville premium, others lower
NORTH AUGUSTA, SC	\$1,500–\$2,000	Lower property tax draws SC-side renters; 13th Street bridge access
AIKEN, SC	\$1,600–\$2,200	SRS workforce demand; equestrian/historic premium in established Aiken

Source: McBride Property Management market observation, 2026. Pull a CMA against active and recently-leased comps before setting your asking rent. Over-pricing by even \$100 commonly adds 30+ days on market — you usually lose more in vacancy than you would have collected in higher rent.

MARKETING INFORMATION WE'LL NEED FROM YOU

If McBride PM is listing the home, fill this section in. If you're self-marketing, this is the same information any tenant prospect will look for.

BEDROOMS / BATHROOMS

HEATED SQ FT

YEAR BUILT

GARAGE (ATTACHED / DETACHED / SPACES)

LOT SIZE

HOA (YES / NO, MONTHLY)

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ZONE

MIDDLE SCHOOL ZONE

HIGH SCHOOL ZONE

HEATING (TYPE)

COOLING (TYPE)

WATER HEATER (GAS / ELECTRIC, GAL)

APPLIANCES INCLUDED

PET POLICY (YES / NO / BREED LIMIT)

SMOKING POLICY

PROPERTY HIGHLIGHTS AND SELLING POINTS (RECENT UPDATES, SPECIAL FEATURES, ANYTHING THAT MAKES THIS HOME DIFFERENT FROM COMPS)

OWNER SIGN-OFF

By signing below, I certify that I have walked the property against this checklist and that all items marked above are complete or will be complete before tenant move-in.

SIGNATURES

PROPERTY OWNER

SIGNATURE

DATE

PRINTED NAME

This checklist is general guidance for landlords preparing a single-family home for the residential rental market in the CSRA. It is not legal or building-code advice. Local code requirements may add items; jurisdiction-specific rental registration may also apply. Verify with the local code enforcement office for your county or municipality.