First-time host checklist

13 steps to rent out a room in your house

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- [ ] **1. Decide whether shared living fits**
  Define your privacy needs, shared spaces and nonnegotiable boundaries.
- [ ] **2. Check rules, insurance and safety**
  Check local requirements, HOA terms, mortgage documents, insurance and room safety.
- [ ] **3. Build a realistic budget**
  Estimate added costs and decide how utilities and other expenses will be shared.
- [ ] **4. Set a fair asking rent**
  Compare similar nearby rooms and account for amenities, utilities and local restrictions.
- [ ] **5. Prepare the room and shared spaces**
  Repair and clean, assign storage, inventory furnishings and take dated photos.
- [ ] **6. Write criteria and house rules**
  Use consistent selection criteria and clear, behavior-based house rules.
- [ ] **7. Write an honest listing**
  Include costs, availability, room details, shared spaces, policies and current photos.
- [ ] **8. Pre-screen inquiries**
  Ask the same basic questions and arrange safe tours without collecting sensitive data by text or email.
- [ ] **9. Discuss compatibility**
  Ask neutral questions about schedules, cleaning, guests, noise and communication.
- [ ] **10. Screen finalists consistently**
  Obtain consent, verify information securely and follow applicable screening requirements.
- [ ] **11. Sign a written agreement**
  Use an agreement for your location and include house rules and required disclosures.
- [ ] **12. Document payments and move-in**
  Record cleared payments, condition, photos, keys, alarms and the move-in conversation.
- [ ] **13. Manage the arrangement and move-out**
  Keep records, handle repairs, check in and follow local notice and move-out requirements.

Educational information only, not legal, tax, insurance or financial advice. Requirements vary by location and living arrangement. Confirm the rules for your home with the appropriate agency or a qualified local professional.

Full explanations and tools: roomrental.com/guides/renting-a-room/