cashflow rentals

AN INVESTOR'S GUIDE

Managing Your U.S. Property From Overseas

How foreign investors keep a U.S. rental profitable and stress-free from thousands of miles away, by getting the right tenant, the right manager, and the right oversight in place.

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A plain-English guide to managing a U.S. rental property from overseas, built on what actually protects your cash flow.

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INTRODUCTION

A Note from David

Once investors realise they really can buy and finance a U.S. property from overseas, the next worry is usually: "How on earth do I manage a property I will never stand in front of, in a country I don't live in?" It's a fair question, and it's one I'll put to rest for you here today.

Here is what I can tell you, having done it myself. At one point we owned and ran a portfolio of as many as 124 rental properties. We learned what works the way most people do, through trial and error, and along the way we discovered the handful of things that quietly destroy rental property returns, and the handful of things that keep it profitable and as low-stress as possible. Almost all of it comes down to one idea.

Good tenants who pay their rent and stay for years are what make a rental property work. Everything else in this guide, the neighbourhood you buy in, the way you screen a tenant, the manager you put in place, exists to give you the best possible chance of exactly that. Get those things right, and managing from overseas becomes so much easier.

The whole game is simple to say and worth everything to get right: good tenants who pay, and stay. A property that keeps a great tenant for years quietly makes you money. One that loses a tenant every year does the opposite.

We are not a property manager ourselves, although I have also self-managed some of my properties from time to time.

What we do is connect you with the same local management teams that run our own properties, and then work alongside you as experienced owners, helping you make the calls that protect your cash flow. In this guide I'll show you exactly how we do that.

Best regards,

David Garner

GENERAL MANAGER

The One Thing That Kills Cash Flow

Before we talk about doing property management well, you should understand what you are protecting against.

Ask most experienced landlords what damages a rental's returns and they won't say interest rates or repairs. They'll say one word: **turnover**. Every time a tenant leaves, it costs you real money, and it's the single biggest threat to your cash flow.

01 What a Turnover Actually Costs

When a tenant moves out, the property usually needs repainting and repairs before it can be re-let, commonly $3,500 to $5,000, and often more. On top of that you pay a leasing agent a lease-up fee of one month's rent to find the next tenant. Before a single new dollar comes in, that turnover has already cost you thousands.

02 The Hidden Cost Is the Empty Months

Here is the part that catches people out. A tenant may simply leave without telling you - it happens more often than you think - so the property can sit empty for a month before you even know. Turning it over takes another month; marketing and re-letting it, another. That can be 3 to 4 months vacant while you keep paying the mortgage, the insurance, and the property taxes, with no rent coming in to cover any of it.

03 Why This Changes Everything

Add it all up and a single turnover can run to $5,000–$10,000. That can swallow an entire year's cash flow from the property. If you have to replace your tenant every year, your rental simply won't be profitable, no matter how good it looked on paper. This is why everything we do is designed around one goal: keeping a good tenant for the long term.

PAY AND STAY IS THE WHOLE STRATEGY

A tenant who stays three, four, five years or longer is what turns a rental into a genuinely profitable investment. The three pillars on the next pages: the right property, the right tenant, and a responsive local manager, are exactly how you make that happen.

It Starts Before You Even Buy

The right property in the right neighbourhood makes everything after it easier.

Good management begins before the tenant moves in. This guide is about running your rental well, but the truth we learned the hard way is that the biggest management decisions are made at the moment you buy. Two choices matter most.

01

The Neighbourhood Sets Your Tenant Base

Tenant quality varies enormously, not just city to city, but street to street. You can own the finest house on the block, but if it sits in an area where the tenant base is weak, you inherit those problems for as long as you own it.

Buying where better tenants want to live is the single most powerful thing you can do to give yourself good, long-staying renters from the start.

02

Buy Turnkey, With the Big Systems Already Done

The other half is the property itself. Deep, deferred maintenance is what generates the constant repair calls that drive tenants away and drain your cash flow.

That is why we focus purely on well-renovated properties with updated plumbing, electrics, furnace, roof, sewer line, and HVAC.

A well-maintained home keeps a good tenant comfortable, and a comfortable tenant stays.

THE CONNECTION TO EVERYTHING ELSE

A great tenant in a poor-quality property will still leave when the roof leaks and the heating fails. A well-kept home in a strong neighbourhood does the opposite work for you every single day. Get this pillar right and you have removed most of the reasons a good tenant ever leaves, which is exactly the outcome the other two pillars build on.

This is why our purchase process and our management approach are two halves of the same idea. For how we select and buy these properties, see our companion guide, **The U.S. Property Purchase Process for Foreign Investors**.

Choosing the Right Tenant

A rigorous screening process is your best protection against turnover and trouble.

Once you own the right property in the right neighborhood, the next decision is who lives in it. A solid screening process is what separates a tenant who pays and stays from one who costs you time, money, and stress. Here is exactly what a good manager checks, and why...

01

Can They Comfortably Afford It?

This matters more than any other. We want household net income of at least three times the rent, so for $2,000 rent, at least $6,000 a month coming in, and comfortably, not a stretch. A tenant who can only just afford $1,900 on a $2,000 rental won't quietly pay short, they'll fall behind and stop paying. To confirm the income is real and consistent, we ask for three months of pay stubs and three months of bank statements, which also show the wages landing as direct deposits.

02

Do They Pay On Time?

Those same bank statements tell a second story: how the applicant pays their current rent. We can see whether it goes out on time, late, or missed, a clear, factual picture of the habits you're about to inherit. Consistent, on-time payments are exactly what we're looking for, and a pattern of late or missed ones tells us to look harder before we commit.

03

Background, Evictions & Credit

A proper background check: criminal history, prior evictions, and a credit check. A reasonable credit score and a clean record are what we want to see. Someone in collections across multiple accounts, or with an eviction on file, is a serious red flag, strong signals of how they'll treat their obligations to you.

04

Solid References

We back the numbers up with two references, made directly by your local manager. From their employer, to confirm the job is genuine, stable, and on a permanent rather than temporary contract. From their current landlord, to hear how they treated the property, whether they paid rent on time, and whether they would happily rent to them again.

SCREENING IS CHEAPER THAN TURNOVER, EVERY TIME

It can be tempting to accept the first applicant to end a vacancy. Resist it. A few days of careful screening is nothing next to the $5,000–$10,000 a bad tenant can cost you in missed rent, damage, and an eviction. The right tenant, chosen carefully, is what makes the years that follow effortless.

A Responsive Local Manager

Local expertise on the ground, with your oversight from anywhere in the world.

The right property and the right tenant give you the best possible start. Keeping that tenant for years comes down to the third pillar: a local property manager who is responsive, and who genuinely knows the ground they operate on. Sadly, our experience has found that to be the exception rather than the rule.

01 Why "Responsive" Keeps Tenants

A good tenant stays when their home is looked after. When something breaks, it gets fixed quickly and properly. That responsiveness is not just good service, it is cash-flow protection, because a tenant whose repairs are handled well has little reason to leave. A slow or absent manager, by contrast, is how you lose a good tenant and trigger the very turnover you worked so hard to avoid.

02 Why Local Knowledge Matters — Especially at Eviction

Local managers understand the neighbourhoods, the streets, and the tenant base, because these things differ from one area to the next. Nowhere does local knowledge matter more than eviction. Should it ever come to that, you need a manager who understands your county's specific eviction process: how to serve notice, exactly what that notice must say, the correct timeframe, and how to record that it was served. These are precisely the things an eviction-court judge looks for, and a manager who gets this wrong can lose an otherwise clear-cut case and cost your thousands.

LOCAL EXPERTISE, WHERE IT COUNTS

Serving an eviction notice correctly, with the right wording, timeframe, and properly documented, is what wins in eviction court. It is a local process, and it needs a local expert.

PILLAR THREE, CONTINUED

Prevention & Global Oversight

Heading off small problems early, and keeping watch on it all from overseas.

03 Catch Small Problems Before They Get Big

A good manager doesn't just wait for the phone to ring. Most tenants under-report issues. A small water stain on the ceiling feels like "not my problem," so they leave it, and months later it is a collapsed ceiling and $20,000 of water damage. The best managers head this off in two ways. First, they set the tone at move-in: they tell the tenant plainly that reporting a problem is welcome, not a nuisance, so small things surface early. Second, they carry out regular walk-throughs, every three to six months, to catch the unreported and to handle the cheap, routine upkeep that quietly prevents big bills: changing HVAC filters, servicing the furnace annually, draining the water heater once a year.

> Skimping on maintenance is like stepping over $100 bills to pick up pennies, and preventive upkeep is the highest ROI investment you can make. A serviced furnace and a fresh filter cost a little; a mid-winter furnace failure and a vacant property cost a lot more. Catching that small water stain early will save you a $20,000 repair bill a year down the line.

04 Manage Locally, Oversee Globally

Here is how it works in practice. A local team manages your property day to day, while you maintain oversight from anywhere in the world through your online portal. You can see when rent is paid, when a tenant logs a maintenance request, and whether it has been resolved. You own locally, you're managed locally, and you keep clear global oversight of it all.

What It Costs & How Your Month Looks

Clear numbers, and a realistic picture of a normal month as an overseas owner.

Good management is one of the best-value costs in your whole investment, because it protects everything else. Here is what to expect, and what a typical month actually looks like from overseas.

01 Management Fees

Local property management typically costs between 8% and 10% of the rent collected. For that, the manager handles the day-to-day: rent collection, maintenance coordination, inspections, and tenant communication. It is a small share of the rent to keep the other 90%-plus flowing reliably.

TYPICAL MANAGEMENT FEE

8%–10%

of monthly rent collected

02 The Cost of Re-Letting

If a tenant does leave, expect a lease-up fee of about one month's rent to find and place the next one, on top of any repairs and repainting. This is the real cost of turnover, and the clearest reason the whole system should be focussed on keeping the tenant you already have.

03 What a Normal Month Looks Like

For most of the year, very little lands on your desk. Rent is collected and paid to you around the middel or end of the month. Expenses are handled, and you receive a monthly statement showing exactly what came in and went out. You check it, see the rent arrived, and get on with your life. That is the goal: a property that runs quietly in the background.

04 Where We Come In

We've used all the major management portals — RentVine, TenantCloud, AppFolio and others — across our own portfolio, so we know how to get the most from whichever one your manager uses: pulling the right reports and staying on top of things, and helping you do the same. Beyond the portal, we provide ongoing advice and support: helping you weigh up repairs, get alternative quotes so you aren't overpaying, and make the bigger calls, including an eviction, should it ever come to that.

HOW WE HELP

We connect you with the same local management teams that run our own properties, then continue to work alongside you as experienced owners, so you always have someone in your corner who has faced the same decisions and knows what protects your return.

READY TO BUILD YOUR PORTFOLIO?

Why Investors Choose Cashflow Rentals

We work alongside you from your very first decision through to a growing portfolio: structure, financing, purchase, and management.

120+

Properties Purchased & Managed

Direct experience purchasing and managing over 120 U.S. rental properties for international investors since 2016.

✓

Bilingual Support

Fully bilingual support available in English and Spanish throughout the entire process.

✓

The Right Local Teams

Direct introductions to the same local management teams that run our own properties, active in the neighbourhoods where we invest.

✓

Owner-to-Owner Guidance

Ongoing advice from people who have managed 120+ rentals themselves: repair decisions, alternative quotes, evictions, and portal oversight.

✓

Ongoing Support

Continued guidance as your portfolio grows: additional properties, refinancing, and long-term strategy.

CONTACT

Schedule a Free Consultation

The next step is a free consultation with our team. We'll talk through your goals, explain how management and oversight work from overseas, answer your questions, and help you decide whether investing in U.S. real estate is the right fit for you.

Book Your Free Strategy Call

A relaxed, no-pressure conversation about your goals, and a clear picture of how to keep your U.S. investment profitable from anywhere in the world.

BOOK MY FREE CALL

OR BOOK ONLINE
calendly.com/davidgarner/enquiry

30 minutes · No obligation · English & Spanish available

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We look forward to helping you build a successful U.S. real estate portfolio.