

Below is a handy, step-by-step checklist to accompany our “Beginner’s Guide to Property Investing” video. Use it while you work through your own property purchases - simply tick items off as you complete them.

Define Your Goal

Specify a clear target (e.g. “£2,000 per month net rental income by 2030” or “£500,000 in equity by retirement”).

Check timescales: is it 5, 10, or 20 years away?

Align with life plans: consider how property fits into your long-term financial picture.

Assess Your Capital, Skills, and Time

Capital

- How much have you got for deposits and costs?
- Can you reliably save more each year.

Skills

- Are you experienced with refurbishments? Comfortable dealing with trades?
- Or do you need a straightforward approach with minimal labour?

Time

- Do you work full-time and need a hands-off approach?
- Or can you handle a demanding refurb project?

Select Your Investment Structure

Individual vs Limited Company

- Check current tax laws for each route.
- If uncertain, speak to a property tax adviser first.

Plan for the future

- If your aim is to build a portfolio and keep profits in the business, a company might be beneficial.
- If you prefer immediate personal income, buying as an individual could be simpler.

Plan Your Financing

Work with a specialist mortgage broker

- Discuss your circumstances, e.g. first-time investor, non-standard construction, etc.
- Ask them to confirm which lenders and rates are viable.

Decide on Repayment vs Interest-Only

- Consider interest-only to maximise cash flow—just be sure you’re prepared to handle the final loan amount at term-end.

Arrange a ‘decision in principle’

- So you can move quickly when you find a suitable property.

Choose a Suitable Location

Local vs Out-of-Area

- If you're hands-on or doing flips, staying local can help.
- If you only need minimal property visits, look nationwide for better returns.

City Centre vs Suburban vs Rural

- City-centre properties often have stronger growth potential, but might come with lower yields and more turnover.
- Suburban/commuter zones can offer balanced yields and stable tenancies.

Research Micro-Locations

Online Recon

- Check local forums (e.g., Reddit, Mumsnet) to pinpoint preferred streets/areas.
- Use Google Street View to virtually 'walk around.'

Rank by yield vs potential growth

- Good yields often found in mid-range suburbs or slightly cheaper postcodes.
- High growth often found in up-and-coming areas near transport/amenities.

Find Potential Properties

Use the Portals

- Rightmove, Zoopla, OnTheMarket – set up alerts.

Consider Auctions

- Potential bargains, but typically come with issues (short lease, structural problems, etc).

Direct-to-Vendor (Optional)

- Leaflets, local ads - requires more time/effort.

Analyse the Deals

Ignore asking price; focus on actual market value.

Check recent sold comparables

- Rightmove's 'Sold Prices' or Land Registry data for nearby properties.

Estimate Rent

- Review similar rentals on Rightmove/Zoopla, phone local letting agents for realistic figures.

Calculate Returns

- Gross yield = Annual rent/Purchase price.
- Net yield = (Annual rent – Annual expenses)/Purchase price.
- ROI = (Annual profit) / (Your cash invested).
- Don't forget capital growth potential.

Conduct Viewings & Due Diligence

Spot Red Flags

- Short leases (<80 years), non-standard construction, “cash buyers only,” major structural issues.

Check Mortgage Viability

- Run it past your broker to confirm finance is available.

Take Photos & Notes

- Summarise property condition, local area, likely refurb costs.

Make Offers & Negotiate

Confirm your ‘max’ figure

- Base it on your deal analysis (value, rental prospects, refurb costs).

Avoid emotional overbidding

- Stick to your numbers; if it’s not accepted, move on.

Demonstrate You’re Proceedable

- Have a broker agreement in principle and a solicitor lined up.

Conveyancing & Mortgage Process

Instruct Solicitors

- Provide them with all details promptly.

Apply for Mortgage

- Your broker will guide you; aim to keep each stage moving.

Stay On Top of Admin

- Regularly chase solicitors and agents to avoid needless delays.

Plan Refurb (If Applicable)

Confirm Scope & Budget

- Kitchens, bathrooms, flooring - no over-spec.

Get Contractors Booked

- Compare quotes and schedule work to start ASAP.

Monitor Timelines

- Projects often run behind if not chased regularly.

Prepare to Let

Decide on Self-Management vs Agent

- Tenant-find only vs full management.

Prepare to Let (Cont)

Know Legal Requirements

- Gas safety certificate, EPC, 'How to Rent' guide (for England), deposit protection, etc.

Draft Your Tenancy Agreement

- If using an agent, ensure they know the legislation thoroughly.

Reference & Onboard Tenants

Referencing

- Always verify employment, credit history, previous landlord references.

No Shortcuts

- Don't skip referencing or rely on sob stories; it usually ends badly.

Compile Move-in Docs

- Right-to-Rent checks, deposit protection certificate, any relevant licences.

Ongoing Management & Monitoring

Routine Inspections

- Check condition every 6–12 months.

Track Income & Costs

- Keep receipts and records for tax.

Keep Tenants Happy

- Prompt repairs avoid bigger bills later.

Scaling Up

Reassess Your Goals

- Has your target changed? New timeline or new financial situation?

Build on Experience

- Apply lessons from your first purchase(s).

Check Equity & Refinance

- Periodically see if you can pull out equity to fund the next property.

Good luck putting these steps into practice. Property investing is a journey - follow the checklist, keep learning, and refine your approach as you go!