

Get more for your rental



she says. "Plus they tend to return their applications faster so they don't miss out, and they may even offer you a little more rent per week."

Muirhead says first impressions count for renters just like they do for buyers, so make sure the lawn is mowed and the house is presented nicely.

Another great way to maximise rental returns is to allow pets in your property. Muirhead says it won't cost you any money and opens up your market.

We once allowed a tenant to have a German Shepherd, which decided to start a mining operation in the backyard.

However, because the tenant was grateful we allowed pets, they were happy to pay for the garden repairs. In any case, there's always a rental bond to fall back on.

Raising rents with existing tenants, particularly long-term ones, can be tricky.

Some property experts say you should lift rents by at least



\$5 every year, while others wonder why you should give a good tenant any reason to move if it's not going to hurt your finances to keep the rent the same.

Many landlords hate this part of investing so much that they will pay a property manager to look after it.

If you take the DIY

approach, remember you must give written notice, and it's always a good idea to have an explanation for the rise – an increase in interest rates, some improvements you are making, or even allowing a pet.

Some landlords will use a blunt "take it or leave it" approach. However, finding new tenants can be frustrating

and expensive. Always remember you have the right to remain silent on rents. Any rise you make can be used against you in the court of public (er, tenant) opinion.

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