

Investment Guide

Your First Investment Property – Everything You Need to Know



This guide is general in nature and does not account for your specific situation. Always seek professional advice, such as from a financial adviser, before making investment decisions.

LeahJay



01 Introduction

How to use this guide

Welcome to your go-to guide for first-time property investors. If you've been thinking about investing in property but feel overwhelmed by where to start, you're not alone.

At Leah Jay, we've helped thousands of first-time investors turn their property goals into a reality. With decades of experience in the Newcastle and Hunter region, our team specialises in investment property management. More than that, we offer complete investment support — from pre-purchase insights to long-term portfolio management.

This guide is designed to give you the clarity and confidence to take your first step — minus the jargon and guesswork.



“Every property investor has different ambitions, let us help you realise yours. Our team deliver independent, specialist advice and complete confidence every step of the way, from the time you consider buying your first property to the moment you decide to sell your final property.”

- Pippa Rose, Lead Investment Services Manager

01 Why Invest in Property?

Wealth-building strategies

Property investment continues to be one of Australia's most popular wealth-building strategies. Here's why:

- **Tangible Asset**
You can see it, touch it, and insure it. It's a physical investment with real-world value.
- **Rental Income**
Tenants help service your loan and provide a consistent cash flow.
- **Capital Growth**
Over time, well-located property generally increases in value, growing your equity.
- **Tax Benefits**
Investors can access deductions on interest, depreciation, and maintenance costs.

At Leah Jay, we help investors navigate both the advantages and risks. Smart property investment requires planning, patience, and the right professional support.

02 Understanding Your Personal Investment Goals

Defining your goals

Before you start searching for properties, define your personal and financial goals. Ask yourself:

- **Goal Term**
Are you focused on long-term capital growth or immediate rental income?
- **Involvement**
Do you want a hands-on or hands-off investment experience?
- **Rubric for Success**
What does financial success look like to you in 5, 10, or 20 years?

03 Investor Profiles



Emma, 32 **Focused on long term capital growth**

Emma is a marketing professional in her early 30s with a stable income and a long investment horizon. She's less concerned with immediate rental returns and more focused on building equity and achieving significant long term capital gains.

After assessing her goals with a property advisor, Emma purchases a freestanding house in a city-fringe suburb undergoing gentrification. The area is experiencing infrastructure upgrades, population growth, and increased demand from young families and professionals.

While the rental yield is moderate, the property's value steadily increases year on year. Emma plans to leverage this equity to purchase a second property in the future. She's hands-off day to day, using a professional property manager to oversee the tenancy and maintenance.

Key Traits

- Prioritises capital growth over immediate income
- Long-term goal setting with a 10-15 year plan in mind
- Minimal involvement in property management
- Invests in a high-growth potential location

03 Investor Profiles



John, 40 & Sarah, 37 **Focused on Cash Flow and Stability**

John and Sarah are a couple in their mid-40s with two teenagers and a clear goal of supplementing their income as they approach retirement. They want to invest in property that provides reliable rental income with minimal disruption or vacancy.

They choose a modern apartment in a well-established, high-demand metro suburb near public transport and amenities. The apartment is low-maintenance and consistently tenanted due to strong demand from professionals and downsizers.

Their priority is financial stability and predictable returns. They're actively involved in reviewing financial reports and liaise regularly with their property manager but prefer not to handle any tenant issues directly.

Key Traits

- Prioritises cash flow and low vacancy
- Short to medium term returns
- Interested in financial security before retirement
- Low-risk, low-maintenance investment

04 Financing Your First Investment Property

Bathrooms

Understanding your finance options is critical. Property investment loans differ from standard home loans in several ways, and getting it right from the start can save you thousands over the life of your loan.

Investment vs Owner-Occupier Loans

- Interest rates on investment loans are often slightly higher.
- Lenders assess repayments based on your income & the expected rental income.
- Investment loans may require a larger deposit and some may involve higher fees.

Loan Structures

- Principal & Interest: Steady debt reduction and equity growth.
- Interest-Only: Lower repayments in the short term, often used to maximise rental return early on.
- Offset Accounts: Help reduce interest payable while keeping funds accessible.

Lender Requirements

- Expect stricter serviceability checks.
- Your personal debts, income, and living expenses will be assessed.
- Some lenders specialise in investment lending and offer more flexible terms.

Why use a mortgage broker?

A mortgage broker can assess your borrowing power and find products that support your investment goals. They can:

- Compare loan options across lenders
- Help you structure your loan for future investments
- Offer guidance on using equity from an existing property

Leah Jay Tip

We work closely with investment-savvy brokers and can refer you to trusted experts who align with your strategy. Talk to us before you lock in your financing to ensure your setup supports long-term growth.

05 The Investment Process

Step-by-step

The path to successful property investment involves several stages. Here's how it usually unfolds:

1. **Clarify** your goals and create a finance-ready budget.
2. **Engage** a broker to get pre-approved and assess your borrowing power.
3. **Research** suburbs based on growth potential, vacancy rates, rental yields, and local infrastructure.
4. **Build** your property team — buyer's agent, solicitor, property manager.
5. **Inspect** properties and assess based on both emotional detachment and data.
6. **Conduct** due diligence, including building inspections, strata reports, and rental appraisals.
7. **Make an offer** and progress to settlement.
8. **Prepare** your property for tenants with the help of a leasing specialist.

Leah Jay Advantage: Our investor services include detailed rental appraisals, suburb data insights, and property leasing expertise to support you throughout this process.





06 Your Investment Team

Choose your team

Property investment is rarely a solo venture. Your success relies on the quality of your team.

- **Mortgage Broker:** Finance guidance and loan structuring.
- **Buyer's Agent:** Helps you source, evaluate, and negotiate properties.
- **Conveyancer/Solicitor:** Handles the legal side of the purchase.
- **Property Manager:** Manages tenants, repairs, and compliance.
- **Accountant:** Advises on ownership structure and tax implications.

Leah Jay's Role

We don't just manage your property—we connect you with the right people at every stage. Whether it's before you buy or after you lease, we stay involved to help you make smart decisions.

07 Property Management Essentials

After your purchase

You've secured the property—now comes the most important phase: protecting and growing your investment.

What great property managers do:

- Align property management with investment goals
- Minimise and mitigate potential investment risks
- Collect rent, manage arrears and handle tenant disputes
- Ensure compliance with tenancy laws & regulations
- Identify opportunities for cash flow & capital growth
- Find and screen reliable tenants to lease your property
- Organise onsite maintenance and manage repairs & service providers
- Understand what you're trying to achieve with your property goals

Why choose Leah Jay

Leah Jay is New South Wales' most awarded property management agency, known for our holistic approach and commitment to your long-term success.

With over 30 years of experience, we go beyond routine management—our dedicated team is here to help grow your investment with expert advice and local market insight. Whether you're starting out or managing a portfolio, we deliver the care and strategy that set us apart.

- Over 30 years of local property management experience
- Proactive maintenance strategies
- 100% focused on property management, not sales
- Investor focused, data driven reporting and insights

We manage every property as if it were our own. Your success is our priority.



08 Tax & Legal Basics

Key areas to consider

Smart investors understand their legal and financial obligations.

Tax Deductions You May Be Eligible For:

- Loan interest
- Property management fees
- Repairs and maintenance
- Council rates and insurance
- Depreciation of building and fittings

Ownership Structures:

- Individual ownership
- Joint ownership
- Trust or company structures

Leah Jay Insight

Your choice of structure impacts tax, liability, and future planning. Always seek advice from a qualified accountant. We work with your accountant to provide rental income reports, maintenance histories, and data to make tax time easy.

Smart property investment goes beyond finding the right property—it means understanding the financial and legal responsibilities that come with it.

From maximising tax deductions like loan interest and maintenance costs, to choosing the right ownership structure for your goals, informed decisions can make a significant difference over time.

Whether you invest as an individual, jointly, or through a trust or company, your structure will influence everything from tax outcomes to long-term planning. That's why we collaborate closely with your accountant, ensuring you have clear reports, accurate records, and the right support to make tax time simple and stress-free.

09 Common First Time Mistakes

Things to avoid

Avoiding costly mistakes early can set you up for long-term success. Here are some common traps

- **Buying with emotion**
Choose investment-grade property, not a dream home.
- **Overstretching finances**
Always factor in unexpected costs.
- **Choosing the wrong location**
Use up to date and accurate data, not personal assumptions.
- **Poor property management**
Low fees often come with hidden costs.

Leah Jay Advantage

Our team supports first-time investors with insights, suburb trends, and leasing strategies to reduce risk and maximise return.

10 Leah Jay's Investor Support Services

Personalised support for your property

Investing is about more than buying and holding. You need a team that supports your goals across the entire lifecycle of your investment.

Our Services Include:

- Pre-purchase rental appraisals
- Leasing and tenant screening
- Annual performance reporting
- Location and suburb insights
- Ongoing property management
- Strategic advice for future investments

Whether you're buying your first property or planning a portfolio, we're with you from start to finish. Next step? Book a free 15-minute strategy call with our team.

Bonus Resource

First-Time Investor Checklist

Navigate your first investment property with a quick pulse check to see what stage you're at and what steps you need to take next.

Checklist

- Clarify your investment goals
- Speak to a mortgage broker
- Get pre-approved
- Research growth suburbs
- Build your property team
- Conduct due diligence
- Organise insurance
- Choose a property manager
- Monitor performance annually

Need help managing your first investment property?

Let Leah Jay guide you every step of the way — from first-time investor to seasoned landlord.



How Leah Jay Can Help

By focusing on high-impact areas like bathrooms and kitchens, sticking to a realistic budget, and ensuring compliance with NSW regulations, you can maximise the ROI on your rental property renovations. Strategic improvements not only enhance tenant satisfaction but also contribute to long-term capital growth.

Let Leah Jay help guide your property renovation decisions with our expert advice tailored to your investment goals. Contact us today to learn more.

Contact us to get started

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