Strategies by market

Which approach fits which part of the Upstate, from Greenville to the outlying counties.

The Upstate sits on the I-85 corridor between Atlanta and Charlotte, with a manufacturing base anchored by BMW's plant in Greer and an inland port tied to the Port of Charleston. Investors can choose between Greenville for long-term growth, Spartanburg and Anderson where rents and prices are closer together, and land and mobile home opportunities in the outlying counties.

Long-term rentals

Where to look: Spartanburg, Duncan, Boiling Springs, Anderson, Greenwood
What to look for: Steady employers nearby, rents that cover the full payment plus reserves, and a quick screen like the 1% rule (monthly rent at or near 1% of the price) before you dig in.

BRRRR (buy, rehab, rent, refinance)

Where to look: Taylors, Northside Spartanburg, the City of Anderson, Gaffney
What to look for: Distressed homes with real after-repair value, solid comparable rents, and a lender who will refinance on the new value.

Short-term rentals

Where to look: Travelers Rest, Lake Hartwell, Lake Keowee, and the parts of Greenville zoned for it
What to look for: Local short-term rental rules first, then HOA restrictions and seasonal demand. In the City of Greenville, rentals under 30 days are limited to certain zoning districts.

Buy and hold for appreciation

Where to look: City of Greenville, Simpsonville, Mauldin, Greer, Fountain Inn, Easley
What to look for: Population growth, new employer announcements and infrastructure projects. Expect thinner cash flow in exchange for long-term growth.

Land and subdivision

Where to look: Rural Laurens, Greenwood, Anderson, Cherokee, Pickens and Abbeville counties
What to look for: Perc tests for septic, road frontage, zoning and lot yield. See localrealtorian.com/land-investors.

Mobile homes and parks

Where to look: Spartanburg County, Laurens, Cherokee, rural Anderson
What to look for: Zoning, utilities, lot rent and the home's title status, plus South Carolina's dealer license rule. See localrealtorian.com/mobile-home-investing.

House hacking and small multifamily

Where to look: Spartanburg, Anderson, Greenwood
What to look for: Duplex to fourplex inventory, owner-occupant financing, and whether you want to live on site and manage it yourself.

For current prices, rents and inventory, see the monthly market update at localrealtorian.com/market-update.

South Carolina landlord quick reference

The basics of the Residential Landlord and Tenant Act and the tax rules that affect rentals.

Rent control	Not allowed. Counties and cities can't regulate rent on privately owned rental property. SC Code 27-39-60
Security deposit amount	No state cap. SC Code 27-40-410
Returning the deposit	Within 30 days after the tenancy ends, the tenant moves out and asks for it, whichever is later, with an itemized list of deductions. Wrongfully keeping it can cost up to three times the amount withheld plus attorney fees. SC Code 27-40-410
Entering the unit	At least 24 hours notice, at reasonable times, except emergencies and certain scheduled or tenant-requested services announced in advance. SC Code 27-40-530
Ending a month-to-month lease	30 days written notice (7 days for week-to-week). SC Code 27-40-770
Late rent	If rent isn't paid within 5 days of the due date, the landlord can end the lease after written notice. Conspicuous lease language can serve as that notice. SC Code 27-40-710
Evictions	Filed in magistrate court. The tenant has 10 days after service to respond. After a writ of ejectment is served, occupants get 24 hours to leave. SC Code 27-37
Repairs and habitability	Landlords must follow housing codes and keep the unit fit and habitable, including electrical, plumbing, heat, running water and supplied appliances. SC Code 27-40-440
Retaliation	A landlord can't raise rent, cut services or file for possession because a tenant complained to the landlord or a government agency. SC Code 27-40-910
Property tax	Rentals are assessed at 6%. The 4% rate is only for an owner's legal residence, requires an application, and is lost if the home is rented more than 72 days a year. SC Code 12-43-220
State income tax	Net rental income is taxed at your regular state rate, and South Carolina changed its rate structure starting in tax year 2026. Net capital gains get a 44% deduction. SC Code 12-6-1150, SCDOR
Short-term rentals	Rules are local. The City of Greenville limits rentals under 30 days to certain zoning districts and requires an occupancy permit, business license and accommodations tax. Check every city, county and HOA. City of Greenville

Laws and tax rates change. Confirm the details with a South Carolina attorney or CPA. Statutes: scstatehouse.gov/code. Tax: dor.sc.gov.

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Due diligence checklist

Work through this before you close on any investment property.

Run the numbers

- [ ] Gross rent yield: annual rent divided by purchase price
- [ ] Net operating income after vacancy, maintenance, management, taxes and insurance
- [ ] DSCR if you're financing: net operating income divided by annual debt service (many lenders look for about 1.2 or higher)
- [ ] A best case, a base case and a stress case
- [ ] The current tax bill, figured at the 6% rental assessment, not the seller's 4%
- [ ] Rent comps close to the property from more than one source

Title and legal

- [ ] A title search and an owner's title insurance policy
- [ ] HOA rules on rentals and short-term rentals
- [ ] Short-term rental rules with the city or county, if that's the plan
- [ ] Existing leases and tenant estoppels if the property is occupied
- [ ] Liens, encumbrances and the chain of ownership

Management

- [ ] A licensed property manager, unless you'll self-manage
- [ ] Management and leasing fee quotes from more than one company
- [ ] A local plumber, HVAC company, electrician and handyman
- [ ] A separate bank account for the property
- [ ] A local real estate attorney for leases and landlord questions

Inspect the property

- [ ] A full inspection by a licensed South Carolina home inspector
- [ ] Age and condition of the roof, HVAC, water heater and electrical panel
- [ ] Open permits or code violations with the county or city
- [ ] Flood zone status on the FEMA flood map
- [ ] Public water and sewer, or well and septic, and whether the septic works
- [ ] For land: a perc test if you need septic, and the zoning for your plan

Location and use

- [ ] Distance to major employers and the roads tenants will use
- [ ] Vacancy and days on market in the immediate area
- [ ] Zoning that fits your strategy

How we'd work together

1. Define the buy box. Your strategy, target areas, budget, financing and timeline.

2. Vet the deals. Comps and rent data, zoning, title and HOA issues, and the numbers, before you're committed.

3. Close and keep going. I coordinate the closing and connect you with lenders, inspectors, property managers and contractors.

Counties served: Greenville, Spartanburg, Laurens, Anderson, Greenwood, Cherokee, Pickens and Abbeville.

Ready to find your next deal?

Send me your buy box and I'll send deals that fit.

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General information, not legal, tax, financial or investment advice. Laws, tax rates and local rules change, and every property is different. Confirm the details with a South Carolina attorney, CPA and lender before you buy.