



## The Tax Deed Playbook:

## HOW TO BUILD REAL WEALTH IN AN AI-DRIVEN WORLD

How the Smartest Investors Are Claiming Ownership in the Age of Automation – and How You Can Too

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#### INTRODUCTION

## The Robots Are Coming—and Land Is Limited

Let's be honest—everything is changing.

From self-checkout lanes at the grocery store to cars that drive themselves, it's becoming clear: **technology is replacing jobs** faster than most people expected. And it's not just factory work or delivery drivers anymore. All is starting to write code, draft legal documents, and even help diagnose medical conditions. No career is completely safe.

In fact, many companies are already cutting back on human workers—not because they want to, but because robots are faster, cheaper, and don't take sick days.

That's the future we're stepping into—a world where machines do more, and people earn less unless they own something that keeps making money.

That "something" is called passive income—money that shows up whether you clock in or not. For most people, this used to mean stocks, rental property, or maybe a side hustle. But here's the hard truth: most of those paths are **crowded**, **expensive**, **or slow to grow**.

That's where Tax Deed Investing comes in.

It's one of the last remaining places where regular people (not just hedge funds or billionaires) can still **build wealth by owning real assets**—like land and property—without needing a huge budget or years of experience.

And if that sounds too good to be true, don't worry—we're going to show you exactly how it works.

But here's what we want you to remember as you read:

The future doesn't belong to the hardest workers. It belongs to the smartest owners.

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#### INTRODUCTION

Land is limited. Al isn't slowing down. And the early movers in this space? They're already claiming their share.

By the end of this eBook, you'll know:

- Why tax deeds are so powerful
- How to find them (yourself or with our help)
- And how to take your first steps toward real ownership in a world that's moving fast

Let's dive in.

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#### CHAPTER ONE

## Why Tax Deeds Are the Ultimate Wealth Strategy (That No One Talks About)

Let's start with the obvious question:

#### What the heck is a tax deed?

In simple terms, a **tax deed** is a legal document that gives you ownership of a property because the original owner didn't pay their property taxes.

Every year, thousands of property owners across the U.S. fall behind on taxes. When that happens, the local government steps in and takes action. Why? Because counties rely on property taxes to pay for schools, roads, fire departments—you name it.

If the taxes don't get paid, the government puts the property up for sale through a **tax deed auction.** These auctions allow people like you to buy the full rights to a property—sometimes for **just a few thousand dollars**—to help the county recover the unpaid taxes.

And here's the best part: you're not just buying paper—you're buying real land, real homes, or real buildings.

#### Why This Strategy Works

Tax deed investing is one of the most underrated ways to build wealth in America today. It's not new. It's not flashy. But it's **real**, and it's **effective**. You can invest in tax deeds from anywhere in the world

#### Let's break it down:

#### Distressed Properties at Huge Discounts

Imagine getting a house worth \$120,000 for \$9,000. It happens all the time. These aren't junk properties—they're just owned by people who didn't pay taxes, and the government wants to move on.

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#### You Own the Property Outright

Unlike some investment methods where you're a "shareholder" or "noteholder," tax deeds usually give you full ownership. That means you can live in it, rent it out, sell it, or hold it.

#### Real Asset = Real Options

This isn't digital currency or a volatile stock. It's land. It's a building. It has value no matter what happens to the economy or the internet.

#### ✓ Low Competition (for Now)

Most people have never even heard of tax deed investing. That means less bidding wars, fewer eyes on the deals, and better chances for you to scoop up great properties quietly.

#### Potential for Big Returns

Whether you flip the property, rent it out, or just hold it as it appreciates, the numbers often speak for themselves. Many investors see returns of 3x, 5x, or more—and in a fraction of the time it would take in stocks or savings accounts.

#### **How It Compares to Other Investments**

Investment Type	Entry Cost	Risk Level	Real Asset?	Potential Return	Passive?
Tax Deeds	Low	Moderate	✓ Yes	High	<b>✓</b> Yes
Stocks	Medium	High	× No	Unpredictable	✓ Yes
Crypto	Medium	Very High	× No	Unpredictable	× No
Traditional Real Estate	High	Moderate	<b>✓</b> Yes	Moderate	<b>✓</b> Yes
Savings Account	Very Low	Very Low	× No	Very Low	<b>✓</b> Yes

#### Why You Haven't Heard More About This

Tax deed investing isn't sexy. There's no flashy app. No hype. No Twitter threads going viral.

But that's also why it's such a golden opportunity. The people who know about it are quietly stacking properties, building cash flow, and growing their net worth—before the masses catch on.

You don't need a finance degree. You don't need to be a millionaire. You just need access to the right auctions, the right data, and a little guidance on how to get started.

That's exactly what this eBook (and **TD Hunter**) is here to give you.



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#### Tax Deeds vs. Tax Liens: Why Deeds Deliver Ownership and Simplicity

A **tax lien** is a legal claim placed by the government on a property when the owner fails to pay their property taxes.

When you invest in a tax lien, you're not buying the property—you're buying the **debt** the owner owes in unpaid taxes. In return, the property owner must **pay you back**, usually with interest (set by state law). If they fail to do so within a certain time (called the **redemption period**), you may have the legal right to **foreclose and take ownership**—but that process can be costly and time-consuming.

**In short:** A tax lien is a way to earn interest on unpaid property taxes—not a way to instantly own real estate.

Before we dive into why tax deeds are such a powerful strategy, let's clear up a common question:

What's the difference between a tax deed and a tax lien—and why focus on deeds?

Here's the simple breakdown:

Feature	Tax Deeds	Tax Liens
What You Buy	The actual property	A claim against the property (a debt)
Goal	Immediate or eventual ownership	Collect interest payments
Timeframe	Own the property within weeks	Wait 1–3 years for redemption
Control	You own and control the asset	You rely on the delinquent taxpayer
Risk	Cleanup, resale, or title clearing	Non-redemption or legal foreclosure cost
Exit Options	Flip, rent, finance, hold	Wait or foreclose (more complex)

#### Why We Focus on Tax Deeds

- You get the property—not just the paper. That means real estate you can flip, finance, or use.
- Quicker timelines. In most cases, you take ownership within weeks, not years.
- More control. You decide the exit strategy, not the delinquent property owner.
- Bigger upside. With proper research, it's possible to buy at 10¢–30¢ on the dollar and sell fast.

#### The Problem with Tax Liens (for Most Beginners)

Tax liens sound great on paper—guaranteed interest rates, passive income, etc. But here's the truth:

- You're betting on someone else paying you back
- If they don't, you're forced to initiate foreclosure (which can cost thousands)
- You have zero use of the property unless/until that long process plays out
- Many counties offer liens with very low competition and even lower quality

In short: Tax liens are like being the bank. Tax deeds are like being the owner.

#### **Bottom Line:**

If you want cash flow, control, and real assets— tax deeds give you the keys.



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#### **CHAPTER TWO**

## Meet TD Hunter: Your Al-Powered Advantage

Let's face it—trying to break into tax deed investing on your own can be confusing, time-consuming, and often overwhelming. There are thousands of counties across the U.S., each with their own rules, websites (if they even have one), and auction methods. The information is scattered, outdated, and sometimes downright wrong.

That's where TD Hunter comes in.

We created TD Hunter to be your smart, reliable partner in this journey—especially when it comes to **Step 1: Discovery** (finding the right deals). If you're serious about building wealth through tax deed investing but don't want to spend hours every day digging through obscure county websites and PDF lists... we've got your back.

#### What TD Hunter Is (and Why It Exists)

TD Hunter is not just another property list.

We're a research-driven, investor-focused service with a dedicated team that reviews hundreds of U.S. counties to uncover the best tax deed opportunities—so you don't have to. Our goal is to make real property ownership accessible to more people, without requiring them to become full-time researchers or experts in municipal records.

We're here to cut through the noise, clean up the mess, and help you focus only on the most promising deals.

#### The Problem: Why Most People Give Up

If you've ever tried to research tax deed properties yourself, you know how painful it can be. Here are the common complaints:

- "Every county uses a different website."
- "I can't even tell if these properties are still available."
- "These lists are hard to read and half the links are broken."
- "There are thousands of entries. How do I know which ones are good?"

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Even seasoned investors get tired of it. Newcomers get lost before they ever place a bid. That's why **Discovery**—just the first step of the tax deed process—is where most people fall off.

#### **The TD Hunter Solution**

Most people get overwhelmed trying to research tax deed properties. We simplify the process.

At **TD Hunter**, our expert research team scans hundreds of counties every week to find only the strongest investment opportunities. We focus on properties in growing areas—places where home values are rising, populations are increasing, and most homes are owner-occupied.

We apply strict economic filters like:

- Population Growth above 5%
- Owner-Occupied Housing Rates above 70%
- Job Growth and Market Trends based on U.S. Census and local data

These are the hidden indicators that smart investors look for—but they take a lot of time and know-how to dig up. TD Hunter does this for you, every day, across hundreds of counties.

Then, we handpick the best of what we find and send it to your inbox. Each week, you'll receive <u>3 curated tax deed picks</u>—with links, data, auction deadlines, and quick-glance stats.

No noise. No junk lists. Just real opportunities, vetted by real people.

Want access to every vetted deal we uncover each week? Our <u>Premium users</u> see it all.

#### How We Find the Right Opportunities (and Why It Matters)

At TD Hunter, we don't rely on guesswork or gimmicks. Behind every tax deed pick we send is a **real team of experienced researchers** who sift through mountains of county data to find what really matters: **properties with potential.** 

Every day, we scan through hundreds of county auctions, lists, and public records. But we don't just look at the property—we look at the bigger picture:

- Is the county experiencing strong population growth?
- Are most homes owner-occupied rather than rented?
- What's the median home value compared to the starting bid?
- Is the area on an upward economic trend?

These aren't just nice-to-know stats. They're signals that help identify areas where investment is more likely to pay off. We use tools like the U.S. Census, county assessor sites, and regional reports to verify every opportunity before it makes the cut.

This level of research takes time, but it's what separates **lucky guesses** from **smart investing.** When you get a list from TD Hunter, you can trust that it's not just another dump of random auction properties—it's the result of hours of focused, human-powered research.

If you're ready to invest in real estate but don't want to spend your life buried in spreadsheets and county websites, TD Hunter is your shortcut to the starting line.

#### CHAPTER THREE

## Behind the Machine: How TD Hunter Finds Gold in a Data Mine

Let's pull back the curtain and show you how the deals we send are actually found.

There are over 3,000 counties and parishes in the U.S., each with their own rules, websites, deadlines, and auction styles. Most people have no idea where to start—let alone how to make sense of what they're looking at.

At TD Hunter, we take care of the most time-consuming (and often confusing) part of tax deed investing: finding and qualifying the right properties. Here's how we do it:

#### Step 1: We Search 100s of Counties... Manually

Every week, our trained research team checks tax sale lists and auction calendars from counties all across the country. This isn't some automated scrape job—we go to the actual county websites, look at actual upcoming auctions, and confirm whether the properties are:

- Available and scheduled for auction
- Listed with proper parcel numbers and legal descriptions
- Updated recently by the county (not old PDFs or broken links)

This helps us avoid the outdated or "dead" listings you'll often find on free forums or junk email lists.

#### **Step 2: We Apply Strict Economic Filters**

We don't just grab any property—we focus only on counties that show real growth potential. These filters come from a mix of U.S. Census data, local economic reports, and years of investor experience.

Here's what we look for:

- Population Growth > 5% More people = more demand
- Owner-Occupied Housing Rate > 70% Stability, not speculation
- Job Growth and Nearby Development New jobs drive new housing needs
   Counties that don't meet these standards? We skip them.

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#### Step 3: We Curate the Best Picks—Just for You

After filtering down hundreds (sometimes thousands) of properties, we hand-select **only the most promising tax deed opportunities** each week.

#### These picks are:

- Ready to be auctioned
- Located in areas with economic upside
- Pre-checked for common red flags (like landlocked parcels or clear title issues)

#### You'll get 3 picks in your inbox every week, along with:

- · Direct links to the auction
- · Auction deadlines and starting bid info
- · Quick-glance stats like lot size, zoning, and assessed value
- A short summary of why it made the cut

Want more than just 3 picks a week? Our <u>Premium Plan</u> gives you full access to every vetted property our team uncovers—not just the highlights. With Premium, you'll see the entire list of verified, growth-focused tax deed opportunities across the counties we research. It's ideal for serious investors who want a larger deal pipeline without doing the legwork. Choose full nationwide access for \$999/month, or subscribe to one of our four U.S. regions—Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, or West—for just \$249/month per region.

#### What We Don't Do

We don't dump giant spreadsheets in your lap. We don't sell bulk lists of random parcels. We don't waste your time.

Instead, we do what most investors wish they had time for: consistent, reliable discovery work that puts **quality over quantity.** 

#### **Why This Matters**

The tax deed space is full of noise—outdated sites, bad advice, and scattered records. It's easy to get lost, misled, or frustrated.

By the time you manually check 15 counties, you've already lost hours of your life—and still might not have anything worth bidding on.

#### That's the gap TD Hunter fills.

We do the heavy lifting upfront, so you can spend your time on what really matters: due diligence, bidding, and building your portfolio.

#### CHAPTER FOUR

# The 4-Stage Tax Deed System: From Discovery to Sold

Tax deed investing has the potential to change your financial future—but only if you know how to navigate the process from start to finish. This isn't just about buying property for cheap—it's about knowing how to find the right properties, verify the details, win the auction, and turn that deal into real profit.

The problem? Most people only learn part of the process—and that's why they struggle.

In this chapter, you'll learn the full tax deed investing system we've taught to thousands of people, broken into **four clear, practical stages**:



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Each stage builds on the last. You'll learn how to avoid costly mistakes, move confidently through auctions, and exit your investments with clarity and strategy.

This is your full roadmap—from searching to sold.

## Stage 1: Discovery — Finding, Filtering & Targeting Properties That Make Sense

The first step to successful tax deed investing is learning **how to find the right properties**. This is called the **Discovery stage**, and it's where most people get lost—or give up entirely.

The good news? Once you understand how to approach this process strategically, it becomes a repeatable system. Whether you're working with just a few hundred dollars or ready to go all-in, anyone can learn how to find promising tax deed opportunities.

In this section, you'll learn:

- Two smart ways to approach discovery
- Why land is a smart entry point for beginners
- How tax deed sales follow a seasonal rhythm
- Where to find county lists and what to look for
- How to filter out bad deals quickly
- Why long-term focus makes discovery easier over time

Let's break it down.

#### Two Discovery Paths: Location-Based vs. Opportunity-Based

There's no single way to approach this—but successful investors generally use one of two methods:

**1. Location-Based Approach** - Start by picking a specific state or county to focus on.

This approach is ideal if:

- You live in (or near) the area
- You plan to visit properties in person
- You want to learn one market deeply over time
- You're thinking long-term and want consistent local returns

If you choose this method, your job is to create a county-by-county calendar. That means:

- Making a list of 5–10 counties you want to follow
- Visiting their tax collector or clerk of court websites
- Recording upcoming auction dates in a spreadsheet or calendar
- Monitoring when each county "comes into season" (more on that below)

#### Example:

You decide to focus on **Central Florida**. Brevard, Orange, Polk, and Hillsborough Counties are your core focus. You track their upcoming auctions, visit their websites monthly, and slowly build expertise. Over time, you'll learn the pricing, neighborhoods, and risks in that region better than most investors.

This is how many long-term investors operate. The more familiar you are with one area, the less time it takes to evaluate deals—and the more accurate your instincts become.

**2. Opportunity-Based Approach** - With this method, you go where the action is now. Instead of waiting for your favorite counties to hold sales, you target states or counties with active auctions this month.

This is ideal if:

- You're open to remote investing
- You want consistent deal flow year-round
- You're building volume or flipping strategy
- You want to start fast, even if your home state isn't holding auctions

This approach relies on understanding the seasonality of tax deed investing.

#### Why Beginners Should Start with Land

One of the smartest moves for new tax deed investors is to start with land. Here's why:

- No structures = fewer surprises (no broken pipes, squatters, or code violations)
- Lower starting bids Some land auctions start under \$500
- No evictions required You're not dealing with occupants
- Simpler research Easier to understand ownership, taxes, and resale

#### Realistic Example:

- County: Sharp County, Arkansas
- Opening Bid: \$841
- Lot Type: 0.25 acres in a rural subdivision
- Assessed Value: \$3,000
- Market Value: \$6,000 \$8,000 (based on comps)
- Strategy: Buy for \$841, list on Facebook Marketplace or with a local agent for \$5,000-\$6,000
- Target Profit: \$3,500–\$4,500 after closing costs

Even with a few hundred dollars in holding and resale costs, the **ROI is 300–400%**, with minimal risk.

This kind of deal builds confidence and teaches the process without the stress of managing a house flip or eviction.

#### Where to Find Auction Lists

Once you decide how you want to approach discovery, the next step is actually finding the properties.

Here are a few starting points:

#### 1. County Websites

Start by searching "[County Name] + tax deed sale" or "[County Name] + tax collector." You're looking for the **official government** site, not a third-party platform.

#### Look for:

- · Upcoming auctions
- Delinquent property lists
- · Tax sale calendars
- · Instructions on how to register and bid

Pro Tip: Some counties post their auctions with live links and parcel maps; others upload simple PDFs. Save and study both.

#### 2. State Land Offices

Some states, like Florida, Texas, or Arkansas, have centralized portals where multiple counties list properties in one place.

#### **Examples:**

- Arkansas Commissioner of State Lands: cosl.org
- Florida Tax Deeds (Grant Street Group): floridataxdeeds.com
- Texas Tax Sales: Varies by county, but many are posted on sheriff or constable websites

#### **Understanding the Tax Sale Calendar**

Tax deed sales are seasonal. Each state—and often each county—holds auctions at specific times of year.

#### For example:

- Florida: Heavy auction activity from May through August
- Arkansas: Most sales happen between May and October
- Mississippi: Usually around August
- Texas: Monthly sales, but some counties more active than others
- Indiana: Typically has a major auction season in fall

If you're using the opportunity-based method, your calendar becomes a targeting tool. You don't wait for your local area—you move with the national cycle.

#### Example:

In February, Florida counties may have nothing scheduled. But Arkansas has dozens of upcoming auctions. You shift your focus there, find land for under \$1,000, and research the market. By the time Florida is active again, you've already closed a deal.

This allows you to stay in motion all year instead of waiting months for your local county's next auction.

#### How to Read and Use a Tax Sale List

Once you've selected a county and found their auction list (usually posted as a PDF or Excel file), your next job is to filter for good deals.

Here's what to look for on a list:

- Parcel number or address
- Property type (vacant land, residential, commercial, etc.)
- Starting bid or delinquent tax amount
- Assessed value or market value (if listed)
- Auction date and registration deadline

#### Online Auctions vs. Over-the-Counter (OTC) Opportunities

As you start looking at county sites, you'll notice two main types of opportunities:

#### **Online Auctions**

Many counties now host their tax deed sales online—using platforms like:

- · RealAuction.com
- GrantStreet.com
- CivicSource.com
- GovEase.com
- Bid4Assets.com

These platforms allow you to **register**, **browse listings**, **and place bids** from your computer.

Most counties require:

- Advance registration
- A deposit (often 5–10% of your expected bid amount)
- · Agreement to the rules and terms of sale

Online auctions are great for out-of-state buyers or those who want flexibility.

#### Over-the-Counter (OTC) & In-Person Auctions

Some counties still host in-person tax sales at a courthouse or government building. Others offer OTC properties—unsold parcels that didn't get any bids at auction and can now be purchased directly.

- These are often lower-priced
- May require visiting the county or mailing in paperwork
- Sometimes overlooked = more opportunity

#### Example:

In Arkansas, the **Commissioner of State Lands** sells OTC properties year-round. You can browse parcels by county, review the details, and purchase directly without bidding.

#### **How to Disqualify Properties Quickly**

Not every deal is a good deal. In fact, most aren't. Use these filters to quickly eliminate problem properties:

- No road access (landlocked)
- Very small lot size (less than 0.1 acre)
- Unbuildable zoning (check with planning office)
- · No resale comps in the area
- Weird parcel shapes or swampy terrain
- Starting bid is too close to retail value

#### Example:

If a property is a 0.06-acre triangle with no road, no comps, and a \$2,000 starting bid, skip it. Even if it seems cheap, it may be worthless.

#### Focus on:

- Square or rectangular lots
- Minimum 0.25 acre (or more if rural)
- Street access visible on satellite maps
- Active land comps nearby (Zillow, Lands of America, etc.)

#### **Build Your Own Discovery System**

Here's what your personal discovery workflow might look like:

- 1. Pick 2–3 counties (or states) to start with
- 2. Visit their official tax deed auction websites
- 3. Download and study the upcoming sale list

- 4. Cross-reference property details using:
- · The county assessor's office
- · Online GIS mapping tools
- · Google Maps and satellite view
- 5. Disqualify red flags
- 6. Save strong candidates for deeper research

#### Long-Term Strategy: Familiarity = Speed

The more you study one area, the faster and smarter your decisions become.

Many successful investors eventually stick to one state or cluster of counties because:

- They learn which neighborhoods hold value
- · They recognize red flags instantly
- They know how auctions are structured and what to expect

They build local contacts, agents, and even buyers

If you plan to invest seriously, the long-term goal is to systematize discovery—so you're spending less time hunting and more time acquiring.

#### Stage 1 Summary: Discovery Checklist

- Choose your approach: location-based or opportunity-based
- Understand seasonal patterns and build a sale calendar
- Visit county sites to find real auction lists
- Learn to read, filter, and qualify properties
- Start with land to build confidence and reduce risk
- Track your work and build systems to repeat the process

By the end of the Discovery stage, you should have a shortlist of properties that meet your goals—whether it's a \$1,000 parcel of land in rural Arkansas or a buildable lot in central Florida. But don't place a bid just yet.

Before you invest a single dollar, you need to dig deeper: check for liens, understand title status, verify property condition, and confirm the deal is as good as it looks. That's what we'll cover next in **Stage 2: Investor Research.** 

#### Stage 2: Investor Research — Investigating Liens, Ownership & Risk

If Discovery is about finding **what looks good**, then Investor Research is about proving **what actually is good**.

This stage is where tax deed investors win—or lose. Why? Because you're not buying brand-new homes from a clean MLS. You're buying **distressed properties with unknown histories**, often "as-is, where-is," and without warranties.

Fail to research, and you might inherit:

- Surprise liens or unpaid utility bills
- Landlocked lots (with no road access)
- Properties in flood zones or unbuildable terrain
- · Clouded title that makes resale difficult
- Structures occupied by people you have to evict

This section will teach you exactly how to research a tax deed property like a pro—even if you've never done it before.

#### Step 1: Understand What You're Actually Buying

When you win a tax deed auction, you're not just buying a property—you're buying a **legal interest** in that property.

This usually means:

- The county is granting you ownership because the previous owner didn't pay their property taxes
- You may receive a tax deed, not a warranty deed—this can affect how easily you
  resell the property
- Some liens may remain, especially from government agencies (IRS, municipalities, HOAs)
- You're responsible for fixing title issues if you want to resell with title insurance

Knowing how to identify risks ahead of time will save you thousands.

#### Step 2: Run a Basic Title Search

This is how you uncover any baggage attached to the property—especially other liens or ownership issues that don't disappear with the tax deed.

Here's how to do it:

#### 1. Start with the County Assessor or Property Appraiser Site

This is where you'll find the property's official record: its size, zoning, structure type (if any), and tax status. Look up the parcel number or address from the auction list. You'll usually find:

- Owner name and mailing address
- Parcel size and legal description
- Tax status (how much is owed)
- Assessed and market value
- Last sale date and value
- Property use code (residential, vacant, commercial, etc.)
- Structure info (bedrooms, bathrooms, year built)

Tip: Compare assessed value with recent sales in the area. A low assessed value doesn't always mean it's a bad deal—it may just be behind on reassessment.

#### 2. Use the County Recorder or Clerk of Court

This is where legal documents are filed—like deeds, mortgages, liens, and judgments. Search public records for the property's chain of title, which shows all past transactions and documents.

#### Look for:

- Mortgages or liens (especially IRS, HOA or code enforcement liens)
- Judgments or court cases attached to the owner
- Notices of default or previous tax sales
- Special assessments (like sewer hookups or paving fees)

Some counties offer online search tools; others may require an in-person visit or a phone call. You can also search "[County Name] + deed search" or "[County Name] + public records."

Red Flag: A long list of judgments and code violations may indicate chronic issues—and potential liability for you.

#### 3. Use Free Tools Like:

- NETROnline.com For accessing assessor and recorder data
- Parcel Fact For owner, APN, and boundary insights
- Google Earth/Maps For location, terrain, and access
- County GIS For parcel shapes, zoning, and flood zones

#### County GIS Mapping System

Many counties offer a Geographic Information System (GIS) that lets you view parcel boundaries over satellite maps.

Here's what to look for:

- Shape and size of the lot
- Surrounding roads (public access)
- Zoning layers (residential, commercial, floodplain)
- Utility lines, easements, or right-of-ways
- Environmental overlays (wetlands, slope)

#### How to access it:

Search "[County Name] GIS map" or check the Assessor's or Planning Department site.

Tip: Use the "layers" or "legend" tab to toggle zoning, flood zones, and topography on or off. This reveals hidden risks—like whether your parcel sits on a steep hill, in a protected wetland, or can't legally be developed.

#### Step 3: Assess the Property with Public Records

Once you've gathered the legal and location info, it's time to analyze the physical and market realities of the property.

Use the Assessor's Data to Answer:

- Is it a vacant lot or does it have a structure?
- Is it zoned for residential use or something else?
- How does the assessed value compare to current market values nearby?
- What was the last sale price and how long ago?
- Combine this with satellite images from Google Maps to confirm:
- Presence of a structure (if any)
- · Condition of the land
- Proximity to neighbors, roads, power lines
- Signs of dumping or illegal use

Pro Tip: If a property's assessed value is \$2,000, but similar nearby land is selling for \$8,000–\$10,000, it could be under-assessed. That's a signal of potential value—but only if everything else checks out.

#### Step 4: Know What Liens Survive the Sale

In most states, tax deed sales wipe out mortgages and junior liens—but some obligations may still attach to the property.

Here's what can survive the tax sale:

Type of Lien	Survives Sale?	Notes
Mortgage	X Usually removed	Unless it's a land contract or special case
HOA Dues	✓ Often survive	Especially in Florida, Arizona, Nevada
IRS Liens	✓ May remain	IRS has 120-day redemption period
Municipal Liens	✓ Often survive	Code violations, trash cleanup, etc.
Utility Bills	✓ Sometimes	Especially in older cities or special utility districts

Pro Tip: Search the owner's name—not just the parcel—to find personal judgments, federal liens, or open lawsuits.

#### Step 5: Spot Physical & Legal Red Flags

You need to understand what the property actually is—not just what it looks like on paper.

Here's what to look out for:

#### Access Issues

- Is it landlocked (surrounded by other lots with no road)?
- Does it border a public road?
- Can you see a driveway or entrance from Google Maps or the GIS system?
- If there's no visible access, it's a big red flag unless you know how to secure easements.

#### Structure Status

- Is it a vacant lot or does it have a building?
- If a structure exists, is it occupied?
- Look for boarded windows, debris, or fire damage on street view
- Occupied homes = eviction risk. Fire-damaged homes = big rehab bills.

#### **Environmental & Legal Restrictions**

- Check if it's in a floodplain (FEMA maps or county GIS)
- Look for wetlands, slope, or rocky terrain
- Check for zoning restrictions (e.g. can't build, can't park RVs)

#### Step 6: Eliminate Unusable Properties Early

Use your research to quickly filter out:

- Landlocked lots (no public access)
- Too-small parcels (under 0.1 acre, odd shapes)
- **Zoning mismatches** (residential lot in industrial zone)
- Floodplain or wetlands (check FEMA and GIS overlays)
- Dangerous structures (condemned, burned, boarded up)
- HOA properties (extra fees, restrictions, resale limitations)

#### **Example: DIY Research in Action**

Let's say you find a parcel listed for \$1,200 in Craighead County, AR.

#### Step-by-step:

- 1. Go to the [Craighead County Assessor site] find parcel details
- 2. Check Clerk of Court for liens against the owner
- 3. Use the GIS map confirm parcel shape and access to public roads
- 4. Use FEMA map not in flood zone
- 5. Compare comps similar lots sold for \$5K-\$7K on Zillow
- 6. Google Street View lot is in a developed area with paved road
- 7. Property use: Residential lot, no HOA, 0.35 acres

Result: Passes all checks. A strong candidate for a beginner land flip.

#### **Final Thought**

This stage is what separates speculators from smart investors.

Yes, it takes effort to review records, dig through maps, and verify liens. But that effort pays off when your first deal turns into a profitable sale—not an expensive surprise.

The more you practice, the faster you'll get—and the more confident you'll feel bidding on great properties.

#### **Build a Simple Research System**

To stay consistent, create a checklist like this:

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Research Task	Complete
CONFIRM PARCEL ON ASSESSOR'S SITE	
CHECK ZONING AND USE RESTRICTIONS	
RUN OWNER NAME THROUGH RECORDER'S SITE	
SCAN FOR LIENS, JUDGMENTS, OR CODE ISSUES	
REVIEW GIS MAP AND ROAD ACCESS	
CHECK FEMA FLOOD ZONE MAP	
PULL COMPS ON ZILLOW OR REDFIN	
ESTIMATE YOUR EXIT STRATEGY (SELL, HOLD, RENT?)	

#### Understanding Title Risks Before You Bid

Before moving into **Stage 3: On-Site Review & Bidding**, it's important to have a foundational understanding of property title issues and legal risks that come with tax deed investing. This knowledge is essential before placing a bid or taking ownership of any property.

Tax deed investing is powerful because it gives you access to deeply discounted properties—but it also comes with unique legal risks that most beginners don't know about. The most important of these are title issues and the type of deed you'll receive.

#### What Is "Title" in Real Estate?

When we talk about title, we're not referring to a document. Title means the legal right to own, use, and transfer a piece of property. It's not a paper certificate—it's the legal chain of ownership that proves you're the rightful owner.

#### If a property has **clean title**, it means:

- No one else can claim it
- There are no unpaid liens or legal disputes
- You can resell it easily (and buyers can get title insurance)

#### If a property has clouded title, it may:

- Still have unpaid liens (HOA, IRS, city, utility, etc.)
- Be in dispute due to an error, fraud, or missing heirs
- Be impossible to insure (meaning harder to sell)

Tax deed sales often come with clouded or incomplete title, which is why understanding the deed type and history is so important.

#### Types of Property Deeds (What You Might Receive)

Here are the most common deed types you'll encounter:

Type of Deed	What It Does	Risk to You
Warranty Deed	Seller guarantees full, clean title	Lowest risk. Traditional sales.
Special Warranty Deed	Seller only guarantees title during their ownership	Moderate risk.

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Quitclaim Deed	Transfers whatever ownership exists—no promises	High risk. Often used in fast cash sales.
Tax Deed	Issued by county after foreclosure for unpaid taxes	No guarantees. May have title issues.
Grant Deed	Guarantees the seller hasn't sold to anyone else and no liens during their ownership	Stronger than quitclaim but less than warranty. Common in CA.
Probate Deed	Used when transferring property through a will or estate court	Can be safe if processed correctly, but still worth verifying for title defects.

**Important:** In a tax deed sale, you're usually getting a **Tax Deed** or **Quitclaim Deed**—which offers no title insurance and no guarantees.

This means you'll likely need to clear the title yourself if you plan to **resell** the property, especially through the MLS or to a financed buyer.

#### **Common Risks with Tax Deed Properties**

Let's walk through the biggest risks tax deed investors face—and how to avoid them:

#### 1. Buying Worthless Land

Not all cheap land is a good deal. Some counties auction off land that is:

- Unbuildable due to zoning or wetlands
- Too small to legally develop (e.g., under .1 acre)
- · Landlocked with no road or legal access
- · Located in undeveloped areas with no demand
- Easement restricted, meaning utility or access rights eat into usable space

These parcels may look like deals at \$300–\$2,000—but they could be impossible to resell.

#### How to Avoid It:

- · Use GIS maps and satellite view to check access and surroundings
- Review zoning with the Planning Office
- Check lot dimensions—many counties require minimum sizes to build
- Look up nearby comps on Zillow or Lands of America
- Avoid areas where no nearby sales have occurred in the past 12 months

#### 2. Roll-Up Taxes & Excessive Delinquencies

This is one of the most dangerous financial risks in tax deed investing—buying a property with years of unpaid taxes beyond what's listed.

Many counties only show the **current year's minimum bid**, but prior years may be **hidden in the background**—waiting for you to pay them once you take ownership. This is called **roll-up**, and it can destroy your profit margin.

#### Example from the Field:

You bid \$2,400 on a vacant lot. County only shows the 2023 tax sale amount. After you win, you discover unpaid back taxes from 2018–2022 totaling \$6,800. Now you're \$9,200 in, not \$2,400—and the land is only worth \$6,000.

#### How to Identify and Calculate Roll-Up

- 1. Visit the county tax collector's website
- 2. Look up the parcel by APN or address
- 3. Check the full tax history, including:
- Prior vears' unpaid taxes
- Penalties and interest
- Unpaid special assessments
- 4. Add up everything that would be your responsibility as the new owner

Pro Tip: Some counties "bundle" roll-up into the tax deed bid price, others don't. If it's not clear, call the treasurer or tax collector and ask:

"Will I owe any taxes from previous years beyond the sale price?"

#### 3. Surviving Liens

While tax deeds often wipe out mortgages, some liens can survive the sale and remain attached to the property.

Type of Lien	Survives?	What To Do
IRS Liens	✓ Yes	IRS has a 120-day redemption window post-sale
HOA Liens	✓ Often	Especially in Florida, Nevada, Arizona
Municipal Liens	<b>✓</b> Yes	Code enforcement, demolition, nuisance, grass cutting
Utility Liens	✓ Sometimes	Call utility provider to check balances

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Check for these in public records under the owner's name and property address via the Clerk of Court or Recorder's website.

#### 4. Unknown Heirs or Ownership Disputes

If the property was inherited, or the owner died without a clear will, it may be subject to:

- · Probate disputes
- Unrecorded claims
- Heirs challenging the sale after the auction

These can result in legal disputes, title issues, or even lawsuits to reverse the sale.

**Tip:** Avoid buying "heir property" unless the title is quieted or you're working with legal guidance.

#### When to Get a Title Search

If the property has:

- A structure.
- A value over \$5,000, or
- Multiple years of unpaid taxes,

...it's wise to run a title search before bidding.

#### You can:

- Hire a local title company or real estate attorney
- · Use online services like:
  - ProTitleUSA
  - PropStream
  - DataTree
  - DataTrace
- Or run a DIY title chain via the Clerk of Court

#### Look for:

- Ownership history
- · Liens, judgments, and encumbrances
- Potential title defects (e.g. quitclaim chains, missing heirs, etc.)

#### What About Quiet Title?

After you win a tax deed, you may need to file a quiet title action to:

- Clear ownership for resale
- Obtain title insurance
- Sell through traditional channels (MLS, Realtors, or financed buyers)

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#### Expect:

Legal fees: \$1,500-\$3,500Timeline: 2-6 months

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• Process: hire an attorney, file court action, wait for no-contest period to pass

Some investors skip this step and sell on land sites, or via seller financing. But if you want top dollar, clear title is usually required.

#### **Summary: Know What You're Taking On**

Risk	What To Watch For
Worthless or unusable land	Zoning, lot size, GIS view, comps
Roll-up taxes	Tax history, call treasurer
Surviving liens	Clerk search, title reports
Clouded title	Multiple quitclaims, unknown heirs
Delayed resale	Quiet title needed to insure or sell

This isn't meant to scare you—it's meant to protect you.

Tax deed investing is incredibly powerful when done right.

Understanding title and risk gives you an edge most people don't have.

## Stage 3: On-Site Review & Bidding — Verifying the Property & Making Your Move

At this point, you've:

- Found promising tax deed properties (Stage 1: Discovery)
- Investigated the legal side—liens, title, and risk (Stage 2: Investor Research)
- Understood what kind of deed you'll get, and the risks involved

Now it's time to **look at the property itself**—not on a map, but in the real world—and then confidently place your bid.

This stage focuses on two critical steps:

- Verifying the property in real life (or remotely)
- Registering, preparing, and bidding at the auction

This is the final checkpoint before you win a tax deed—and officially become a property owner.

#### Step 1: On-Site Property Review — What Does It Actually Look Like?

Tax deed sales are "as-is, where-is" deals. The county won't tell you if the house burned down, if the lot is full of trash, or if the parcel is landlocked. You must find that out for yourself.

#### Why On-Site Review Matters

You've seen the property on GIS or Google Maps—but images can be outdated or misleading. A house that looked decent two years ago could be:

- Condemned
- · Occupied by squatters
- · Full of black mold
- · Partially demolished

That's why this step is essential—especially for improved lots and structures.

### How to View the Property — In Person or Remotely Option A: View It Yourself (If Local)

Do a drive-by. Don't enter the property or knock on the door. Look for:

- Is the structure still there?
- Is it boarded up or burned?
- Is the lot cleared or overgrown?
- · Are there signs of dumping or illegal use?
- Do nearby properties look lived-in or abandoned?

Tip: You don't need an inspector's eye. You just need to verify the property's real condition and surroundings.

#### Option B: Send Someone (If Investing Out of State)

Use someone you trust or hire a local gig worker.

Great platforms for this:

- TaskRabbit
- Thumbtack
- Facebook Marketplace
- Craigslist "Gigs" section

#### Ask them to take:

- Clear photos of the front, back, and sides
- A video walkaround if possible
- Notes on the neighborhood quality and any red flags

Pay \$30–\$100 depending on complexity. This small cost can prevent a multi-thousand-dollar mistake.

#### What to Look For (Checklist)

Area	What to Check
Structures	Still standing? Damaged? Occupied?
Lot Condition	Cleared or overgrown? Trash or tires?
Surroundings	Vacant lots nearby? Active neighborhood?
Access	Paved or gravel road? Public road access?
Utilities	Power lines nearby? Signs of hookups?
Drainage/Flood Risk	Signs of water pooling, poor slope?

**Pro Tip:** "If you're seeing broken windows, boarded doors, or overgrown grass—assume there's going to be cleanup costs."

#### Where to Find Comparables

You don't need a fancy appraisal tool. Start with:

#### 1. Zillow.com

- Type in the address or zip code
- Use filters: recently sold, lot size, number of beds/baths
- Click "Sold" listings only

#### 2. Redfin.com

- Better for urban and suburban comps
- Shows price per square foot and more detailed data

#### 3. Realtor.com

- · Useful for rural or small-town areas
- Includes price history and lot dimensions

#### 4. LandsOfAmerica.com / LandWatch.com

- Great for land comps, especially in rural states
- Use for both active and recently sold listings

Pro Tip: Build a Quick Value Range

Check at least 3-5 comps. Then calculate your range:

- Low-end value (fast flip)
- High-end value (if the lot or home is pristine)

This gives you an **expected resale window**, helping you decide:

- · How much to bid
- Whether the deal has profit potential
- What exit strategy makes sense (flip vs. finance vs. hold)

#### Example:

You're looking at a 0.25-acre residential lot in Georgia.

Recent sales of similar lots nearby: \$5,000, \$5,500, \$6,100

Your resale range: \$4,800-\$6,000

You decide to cap your bid at \$1,800 (to leave room for profit after taxes and fees).

Now that you've confirmed the property is real and calculated its potential value, you're ready for the final step: **bidding at the auction.** 

#### **Red Flags That Should Pause Your Bidding**

- Property no longer exists (demolished)
- Occupied by tenant or squatter (you'll have to evict)
- Structure appears dangerous (roof collapse, burned interior)
- Lot has no visible road access
- Dumping ground, junkyard, or serious cleanup needed

If any of these are present, recalculate your bid or walk away.

#### Valuing Your Property: How to Use Comparables (Comps)

Before you place your bid, you need to know what the property is actually worth—not just what it's assessed at or what you hope it'll sell for.

This is where comparables, or "comps," come in.

#### What Are Comps?

Comps are recent sales of similar properties in the same area.

They help you estimate a property's fair market value so you don't overpay—or underbid and miss out.

Whether you're buying a house or a vacant lot, this quick analysis gives you a realistic resale number to work with.

#### **How to Choose Good Comparables**

Here's what to look for:

Factor	Ideal Range
Location	Same neighborhood or zip code
Lot Size	Within ±20% of your property size
Zoning/Use	Same type: residential, commercial, vacant, etc.
Time of Sale	Sold within the last 6–12 months
Condition	Similar condition (structure vs. land)

For land: Focus on lots with similar access, zoning, and surroundings.

For houses: Look for same style, bed/bath count, and build era.

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#### Step 2: Bidding at the Tax Deed Auction

Once you've confirmed the property is real and viable, you're ready to bid.

#### **Every County Is Different**

Some counties use live courthouse auctions. Others use online platforms like:

- RealAuction.com
- Bid4Assets.com
- GrantStreet Group
- CivicSource

Check your specific county's tax collector or treasurer site for:

- Auction platform
- · Registration deadlines
- Deposit requirements
- Accepted payment types

#### How to Register for a Tax Sale

- 1. Go to the county's auction platform or official site
- 2. Create an account
- 3. Upload or wire a refundable deposit (often 5–10% of your max bid)
- 4. Read and accept the auction terms
- 5. Monitor auction start and end dates

**Tip:** Don't wait until the day before. Some counties require deposits 3–5 days in advance.

#### **Understand the Auction Type**

Auction Type	Description
Premium Bid	Highest bidder wins (most common)
Bid Down Ownership	You bid to own a percentage (rare)
Bid Down Interest	Seen in lien sales, not tax deeds
Live Auction	In-person bidding at the courthouse
Online Auction	Digital bidding with closing timers

Most tax deed sales are Premium Bid. Know your max bid, and stick to it.

#### Important Pre-Bid Factors: Property Class, Foreclosure Type & Hidden Costs

Before you place your bid, it's essential to understand how the property's classification and foreclosure process affect the true cost and risk of winning.

These three factors—though not always visible—can drastically impact your bottom line.

#### 1. How Property Class Affects Maximum Bids

Every property falls into a "class" based on how it's used.

Counties may assign different assessment rules, penalties, or restrictions based on these classes.

Common Property Classes:

- Residential (Vacant or Improved)
- Commercial
- Agricultural
- Industrial
- Government or Utility Parcels

#### Why it matters:

- Residential land usually carries lower annual taxes
- Commercial properties may have heavier code enforcement or zoning requirements
- Agricultural land may be subject to use restrictions or tax rollback penalties

**Example:** You win a 5-acre lot zoned agricultural. But when you try to flip it, you're told it can't be subdivided, or you'll owe back taxes for "misuse." This is common in Greenbelt zones.

**Solution:** Always check the property class on the assessor's site and call zoning/planning to clarify development restrictions before bidding.

#### 2. Understanding Foreclosure Processes: Self-Executing vs. Manual

Tax deed auctions result from tax foreclosures—but how the foreclosure happens affects title quality and resale.

Foreclosure Type	What It Means	Risk Level
Self-Executing	State law says the tax deed is final, no court confirmation needed	Lower risk
Manual (Judicial)	County must file court action to complete the foreclosure	Medium–High risk

In some states, like **Florida and Texas**, the foreclosure is **non-judicial (self-executing)**, meaning the tax deed **automatically conveys ownership** when issued.

In others, like **Georgia or Alabama**, the process may require a **court order or quiet title** to fully clear ownership—even after the sale.

Why it matters: If a foreclosure is not judicially confirmed, you may have trouble getting title insurance—or your ownership could be challenged.

#### 3. The Cost of Foreclosure (and How It Can Fall on You)

In some counties, the foreclosure process isn't finished at the time of the sale—or they may shift costs to the buyer through fees, attorney charges, or roll-up amounts.

These can include:

- · Legal fees from the foreclosure
- Notice and publication costs
- Redemption-related expenses (if the redemption period hasn't expired)
- Back fees owed to county vendors or trustees

"You're buying the result of a legal process. If that process is incomplete, sloppy, or contested—you may inherit the mess."

**Example:** One investor won a tax deed in Alabama only to learn the foreclosure was improperly executed and had to pay legal fees to re-file the entire case.

#### **How to Protect Yourself**

- Read the auction terms & disclaimers closely
- Ask: "Does this sale finalize ownership, or is additional court action required?"
- Check the property class on the county's Assessor or GIS website
- Contact the Tax Collector or County Attorney if you're unsure about foreclosure stage or potential costs
- · Adjust your maximum bid to reflect those risks

This deeper layer of due diligence ensures you're **bidding with clarity**, not just confidence.

Now, let's talk about how to actually place your bid like a professional.

#### How to Bid Like a Pro

- 1. Set your maximum bid ahead of time based on:
- · Property value
- · Liens or taxes you'll owe after
- Cleanup or rehab costs
- Your exit strategy (flip, wholesale, hold)
- 2. Avoid bidding wars—emotional decisions are expensive
- 3. Watch how others bid to get a feel for pacing

"Our rule is simple—know your number before you log in. That's how you stop bad deals before they start."

#### What Happens If You Win?

- 1. You'll receive a payment deadline (often 24–72 hours)
- 2. You'll pay the balance by wire, cashier's check, or certified funds
- 3. The county records the tax deed in your name
- 4. You are now the legal owner
- 5. You are responsible for:
- Future property taxes
- · Securing and maintaining the property
- · Clearing title if needed
- · Selling, renting, or holding

#### If You Don't Win...

That's okay. Most successful investors lose more auctions than they win.

- Use the experience to practice bidding
- · Watch how others behave
- Add the county to your calendar for the next sale
- · Keep building your deal pipeline

This is a volume game. Keep showing up, and the wins will come.

#### Real-World Example

Property: 0.25-acre vacant lot in Mississippi

Assessed value: \$5,000 Auction bid: Won at \$1,450

Roll-up taxes: \$600

Drive-by review: Lot was cleared, with public road access

GIS: Zoned residential, not in floodplain

Exit: Resold on Facebook Marketplace in 3 weeks for \$4,800

Profit: ~\$2,500 after expenses

Why it worked: Research + verification + simple auction prep

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#### Stage 3 Summary Checklist

Task	Done
CONFIRMED PROPERTY STILL EXISTS AND IS ACCESSIBLE	
SENT SOMEONE (OR VISITED) TO VIEW PROPERTY	
CHECKED CONDITION, SURROUNDINGS, AND RED FLAGS	
REGISTERED ON COUNTY AUCTION SITE	
SUBMITTED DEPOSIT AND REVIEWED RULES	
SET MAX BID BASED ON RESEARCH	
MONITORED AUCTION AND PLACED BID	
WON? PREPARE FOR PAYMENT. LOST? TRY AGAIN.	

### Stage 4: Disposition — Selling, Flipping, or Holding Your Tax Deed Property

Congratulations—if you've made it this far, you now own your first tax deed property. But ownership is just the beginning.

The real goal is **turning that ownership into wealth**, whether through:

- A quick cash resale
- · Seller-financed cash flow
- Long-term appreciation
- Creative passive income plays

In this final stage, we'll walk you through your key exit strategies and help you avoid common post-auction mistakes.

#### Option 1: Sell to the Neighbor (One of the Fastest Flips)

If you bought vacant land, your best buyer might live next door.

#### Why It Works:

- Neighbors already have a vested interest in the property
- They may want to expand, protect their view, or prevent new development
- Vacant infill lots often add instant value to adjacent properties

#### The "Neighbor Discount" Pitch

Keep it simple: "Hi, I just picked up the vacant lot next to you at auction. I don't plan to build on it—would you be interested in buying it at a discount before I list it?"

This creates urgency without pressure.

**Tip:** Offer a clean deal—cheap, quick, and with no closing costs if possible. You can often sell for 2–5x your cost within a few weeks.

#### Seller Financing for Neighbors

Some neighbors want the land—but can't pay all at once.

**Solution:** offer owner financing on simple terms:

- \$1,000-\$2,000 down
- \$150-\$200/month
- 8%-12% interest
- 3-5 year term

This lets you collect monthly cash flow with no maintenance or management.

Use simple one-page promissory notes or online services like LandContracts.com or Note & Mortgage Templates.

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#### Option 2: List It Yourself (Online Sale)

For vacant land or low-cost properties, you can skip the Realtor and list it yourself.

#### Where to List:

- Craigslist (free, high traffic in most cities)
- Zillow.com (list as "for sale by owner")
- Facebook Marketplace (great for rural and local land buyers)
- LandWatch.com / LandCentury.com (land-focused marketplaces)

#### **Listing Strategy**

Component	Tips
Photos	Use on-site or satellite images, parcel lines from GIS
Headline	Keep it simple and benefit-driven: "Buildable Lot in Growing Area"
Description	Mention road access, zoning, utilities, and what it's good for
Price	Base on comps—but leave room for negotiation or seller financing

#### Add phrases like:

- "Owner will finance!"
- "Easy terms, no credit check"
- "Only \$\_\_\_ down"

This attracts cash buyers and flippers alike.

#### Option 3: Work With a Realtor (for Structures or Higher Value Deals)

If the property has a home or building, or you want top dollar, consider hiring a real estate agent.

#### What they offer:

- MLS exposure
- Buyer screening
- · Contract management
- Higher perceived value

Choose an agent who **specializes in land or distressed properties**—not just residential homes.

#### **Pricing Based on Realistic Comps**

Just like when you were preparing to bid, you'll want to re-check your comps before listing.

- Look at recent sales of similar lots or homes in the area
- Filter by size, location, access, and zoning
- Adjust for property condition or required cleanup
- Price slightly below market to attract cash buyers fast

Example: Your lot cost \$2,000, comps show sales at \$6,000. List at \$5,500 OBO and accept \$4,800. You still more than double your money.

#### **Creative Strategies for Holding Property**

Sometimes the best move isn't to sell—especially with land.

Here's how some tax deed investors are turning small lots into long-term income:

**Hold & Flip Later (Appreciation):** Buy in growing areas. As development increases, your lot becomes more valuable.

**Recreational or Off-Grid Use:** Market to RV owners, campers, or tiny home fans. Use terms like:

- · "Off-grid retreat"
- · "RV getaway"
- · "Weekend camping lot"

Rent Out the Land: Yes, you can rent land. People lease it for:

- Storage
- Parking
- Events or temporary housing. Use platforms like Neighbor.com or local FB groups.

#### Create Notes (Owner Financing)

Sell on payments and create passive cash flow without management.

Great for buyers with poor credit or investors looking for cash-on-cash ROI.

#### You're Now a Tax Deed Investor

You've just learned the full system—from finding properties to selling them for profit.

The truth is, ownership is the future—and most people will never get there.

But you have. With every auction, every comp, and every deal, you're stacking real, long-term value. And you don't have to do it alone.

"If you want to do this at scale, or just skip the hardest part—finding the right deals—let TD Hunter do the digging for you."

#### CHAPTER FIVE

# How to Bid: From Auction Rules to Maximum Bids

By now, you've already:

- · Researched properties
- Verified condition
- · Checked title and legal risks
- Built your list of top picks

Now comes the final step before ownership: placing your bid.

But bidding isn't just clicking buttons or raising a paddle. It's about **strategy, discipline,** and understanding auction mechanics.

Here's what you need to know:

#### **Know the Auction Format**

Most counties use one of the following formats:

Auction Type	Description
Live	In-person at the courthouse or government center
Online	Digital platforms like Bid4Assets, RealAuction, CivicSource
Over-the-Counter (OTC)	Leftover properties you can purchase directly (no auction)

Reminder: We covered how to register, submit deposits, and navigate these platforms in Stage 3 – Step 2: Bidding at the Tax Deed Auction.

If you skipped that section, go back and review for details.

#### Your Bid Strategy = Profit or Pain

Most new investors bid emotionally—and lose money.

Smart investors use pre-set formulas based on:

- Realistic property comps (see Stage 3)
- Outstanding taxes or liens (Stage 2)
- Cleanup or resale cost estimates
- Resale strategy (flip, finance, or hold)

#### Use This Simple Formula:

Max Bid = (Estimated Resale Value – Total Costs – Profit Margin)

Stay disciplined. If the bid goes above your number—walk away.

#### When to Walk Away

Not every deal is a deal.

#### Walk if:

- Bidding passes your profit range
- Another bidder seems irrational
- You've uncovered a red flag (title, access, value)
- · The auction rules aren't clear or trustworthy

#### Pro Insight:

"Professionals lose more auctions than they win. That's not failure—that's strategy."

#### The Best Bidders Are Boring

They're not chasing dreams—they're executing systems.

- They know their max bid before the auction starts
- · They ignore hype
- They win deals by letting others overpay

And when they lose? They open their calendar, prep for the next sale, and move on.

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#### CHAPTER SIX

# Case Study – \$861 into \$5K: The Power of Simple Execution

One of the biggest misconceptions about tax deed investing is that it takes a ton of money or a mountain of experience to succeed.

This case study proves otherwise.

Here's how one new investor—armed only with the process in this book—turned **\$861** into **\$5,000**, with no background in real estate, no special tools, and no insider help.

#### The Setup

Investor: James, 34, warehouse worker from Texas

Goal: Flip one vacant lot to test the waters

**Budget:** \$1,000 max

Time Spent: About 6 hours total

#### Stage 1: Discovery (Where It All Started)

James used a mix of opportunity-based searching and seasonal timing. He focused on **Mississippi,** where sales were happening that month. Through the county site, he found a **vacant 0.15-acre residential lot** in a small but growing area.

The opening bid? \$463.23

Using public GIS, he confirmed:

- Public road access
- Residential zoning
- No nearby dumps or red flags

#### Stage 2: Investor Research

- Found the assessor's record: confirmed ownership history and lot dimensions
- Checked the clerk of court: no obvious liens, no IRS or HOA claims

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- Called the treasurer's office: confirmed only \$278 in roll-up taxes
- Ran comps on Zillow and Redfin: nearby lots sold between \$4,800-\$6,000

His all-in budget (max bid + roll-up) stayed under \$800.

#### Stage 3: On-Site Review

James couldn't travel, so he hired a local TaskRabbit for \$45. The gig worker took 6 photos and a short video.

- ✓ The lot was clear, grassy, and had no structures or visible dumping.
- Neighboring homes looked decent, well-kept.
- Confirmed electric poles nearby and city water access.

He decided to bid up to \$500, keeping some room for profit.

#### The Auction

The property came up on RealAuction.com. James placed a bid at **\$500**—no one else jumped in. He won.

#### **Final Costs:**

Winning bid: \$500Roll-up taxes: \$278Title recording fee: \$38TaskRabbit photos: \$45

Total investment: \$861

#### The Exit Strategy

Instead of listing publicly, James followed the "neighbor flip" strategy from Stage 4. He pulled up the adjacent property owner on the assessor's map, found their mailing address, and sent a short handwritten note:

"Hi! I just picked up the lot next to yours in last week's auction. I'm not planning to build —would you be interested in buying it at a discount?"

The neighbor called him within 3 days. They agreed on \$5,000 cash.

James paid \$50 for a mobile notary and used a basic deed transfer form (recorded with the county).

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#### **Final Outcome**

Total time invested: ~6 hours
Total cash invested: \$861

Gross resale: \$5,000 Net profit: ~\$4,100

ROI: ~476%

#### What Made It Work?

- He followed the exact process from this eBook
- Chose vacant land (less risk, easier research)
- Used free public tools and one paid gig
- Focused on resale from day one
- Took action without waiting for perfection

"This was my first deal. I thought I'd mess it up—but when you follow the steps, it's honestly hard to." — James

#### **Why This Case Study Matters**

This wasn't luck. It was execution.

James didn't have special skills or thousands of dollars. He used a **repeatable system**— one that you now have access to.

The best part? You can do this too.



#### **CHAPTER SEVEN**

## Why Smart Investors Still Use TD Hunter

By now, you've seen the full blueprint—from searching counties to selling properties. You know what it takes:

- Researching dozens of counties
- · Navigating government sites
- · Sifting through outdated PDFs
- · Investigating title and lien records
- · Finding the diamond in the rough

And you've also seen the upside: big returns for those willing to do the work.

So here's the question: If you can do it yourself... why use TD Hunter at all?

Smart investors know the answer:

Because it saves time, increases deal flow, and cuts out 80% of the grind.

#### You've Learned the Process. We Help You Scale It.

Learning the tax deed system is like learning to fish. TD Hunter just gives you access to better waters—and more fish.

We're not here to replace your knowledge—we exist to make it easier to act on.

#### The Real Bottleneck: Discovery at Scale

The hardest and most time-consuming part of tax deed investing is still the **Discovery phase.** Most investors:

- Check 2-3 counties manually
- · Scan lists that are weeks out of date
- Miss entire sales due to poor access
- · Don't have time to track seasonal state cycles

Our team solves that.

TD Hunter scrapes and monitors hundreds of counties daily. We filter based on hard economic data:

• Population growth > 5%

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- Owner-occupied housing > 70%
- Auction deadlines, bidding rules, GIS access, and more

95% of properties never make our list—only the most promising do.

#### What You Get (Basic Plan)

Every week, you'll receive:

- 3 handpicked tax deed properties
- · Direct links to the auction or sale site
- Key property stats: size, zoning, access, estimated resale value
- Important dates and deadlines
- Bonus data: comps, county notes, restrictions

Think of it as your "opportunity shortcut."

#### Want More Than 3 Picks?

We also offer a Premium Plan for serious investors.

Plan	Price	Coverage
Regional Access	\$249/month	One U.S. region (NE, SE, Midwest, West)
Full National Access	\$999/month	All 4 regions. Full access to every pick.

#### With Premium, you get:

- Every single deal we uncover
- Access to a wide variety of counties and property types
- More volume = more wins

This is how full-time investors build a reliable pipeline of deals—without burning out.

#### Time Is Your Most Valuable Asset

You've seen how much work this takes. Most investors give up—not because it doesn't work, but because they run out of time.

That's where we come in.

#### With TD Hunter, you:

- Focus on research and resale—not on scraping county PDFs
- Stay ahead of auction dates
- · Save hours every week
- Avoid burnout

And most importantly: You stay consistent—which is how wealth is built.



#### You're in Control. We're Just Your First Partner.

Tax deed investing is a powerful tool—but it's even better with a partner who handles the heavy lifting.

- You make the decisions
- You control your risk
- You keep 100% of your profits
- We just bring you better options, faster

You've learned how to do it.

TD Hunter just helps you do more of it—with less effort, more accuracy, and better results.

#### CHAPTER EIGHT

# **Get Started: Your First Step Toward Ownership**

You've just learned a system that very few people in America know exists—and even fewer understand how to use. You now have the knowledge to:

- Find tax deed opportunities
- · Research them for legal and financial safety
- Bid with confidence
- · Exit with profit

#### That alone puts you miles ahead of the average investor.

But now it's time to take the most important step of all: Action.

#### The Wealth Shift Has Already Started

As Al reshapes the global economy, one thing is becoming clear: **Jobs will come and go. Ownership will last.** 

This is your chance to build something no algorithm can take away:

- · A land portfolio
- · Cash flow through seller financing
- A path to financial independence

And with the barriers lower than ever, the only thing left to do is start.

#### Join TD Hunter Today

Whether you want to do one deal a year or five deals a month, TD Hunter helps you:

- Skip the noise and get straight to real opportunities
- Focus on research and resale, not hunting and filtering
- · Stay consistent by working smarter, not harder

#### Every week, we'll send you:

- 3 vetted property picks (or full access with Premium)
- · Auction links, deadlines, comps, and deal stats
- Properties you can act on now—not "theoretical" leads

#### Don't Wait. Ownership Rewards the Early Movers.

Every month you wait, someone else is winning the properties you could've owned. And once this strategy becomes mainstream, those easy wins will be long gone.

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### Tax Deed Investor Master Checklist

Stage 1: Discovery — Finding the Right Opportunities

	Understand your approach: <i>Opportunity</i> or <i>Location-based</i>
	Create and use a <b>Tax Sale Calendar</b> to track auction dates by state
	Identify sales currently open or coming up soon (online or in-person)
	Visit county websites to access tax deed or surplus property lists
	Note the <b>auction type</b> (Live, Online, OTC) and registration requirements
	Pre-filter properties using public lists
	Run property through GIS or map tool to confirm location & access
	Create a shortlist of properties with potential
Stage	e 2: Investor Research — Verifying the Deal
	Pull up the <b>Assessor's Record</b> for parcel details (zoning, value, ownership)
	Use County Clerk or Recorder's Office to search for: Liens, Mortgages, etc
	Understand the <b>property class</b> (residential, commercial, ag, etc.)
	Identify roll-up taxes or delinquent fees that may increase costs
	Review title history (chain of title) for red flags
	Note foreclosure method (judicial vs. non-judicial) and cost exposure
П	Mark risk properties for deeper legal research or disqualification

Stage 3: On-Site Review — Physical Property Verification	
	Perform virtual review with satellite maps (Google, GIS imagery)  For serious picks: arrange boots-on-the-ground review  Use TaskRabbit, Craigslist, or local contacts  Take clear photos of land/home condition and surroundings
	Complete the Physical Property Checklist:  Road access?  Dumping or structures?  Buildable? Zoning verified?  Nearby development or value indicators?  Find and analyze comps (comparables) for resale estimates
	Set your <b>maximum bid</b> based on resale potential and risk
Stage	e 4: Disposition — Turning Ownership Into Profit
	Record your deed with the county after winning the auction  Pay any roll-up taxes or title transfer fees  Choose your exit strategy:  Sell to neighbor?  List on Zillow, Craigslist etc.,  Work with a local realtor  Hold for long-term appreciation or off-grid use
	If reselling:  Pull new comps for pricing  Prepare photos and property description  Draft clear terms (cash price or financing terms)
	Market the property and respond to buyer leads
	Close via notary, title company, or attorney (as needed)
	Transfer title using Quitclaim, Warranty, or Grant Deed (as applicable)
	Log profit, learn from the deal, and prepare for the next!



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