

Start Here: How to Read an Industrial NNN Deal

If you are new to industrial NNN investing, use this manual as a guided path through the basics: what the property is, how the lease works, why tenant credit matters, what risks hide in the documents, and how investors turn evidence into decisions. Read it in order the first time, then return to individual chapters when you need a refresher.

Begin with the Big Picture

Start with the asset, the lease, the tenant, the building, and the location before judging price or yield.

Slow Down at the Lease

The lease explains who pays what, who is responsible for what, and where risk can shift back to the owner.

Use Evidence, Not Hype

The goal is to ask better questions, spot weak assumptions, and verify claims before capital is at risk.

Pair It with the Workbook

After reading a chapter, use the companion workbook to practice the checklists, knowledge tests, and deal decisions.

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Start Here: The Big Picture

— Why This Course Begins Before the First Deal

Many real estate courses begin as if the reader already knows the language of the field. They move quickly into specialized terms, deal math, legal documents, financing conversations, and sale decisions before explaining how the pieces fit together. That speed can make the material feel efficient, but it can also create a quiet problem: if the first concepts are not grounded, every later concept has to rest on assumptions the reader may not actually share.

This course takes a different path. Before asking whether a deal is attractive, it first asks what kind of investment is being considered. Before discussing a lease clause, it explains why the lease matters. Before using a return metric, it explains what that metric can and cannot tell you. The goal is not to simplify industrial NNN investing into something smaller than it is. The goal is to make the full complexity easier to enter, one layer at a time.

A strong investor does not need to sound sophisticated on day one. A strong investor needs to build judgment in the right order. That means learning what the property is, what the tenant is promising, what the lease actually says, what the building can do, what the market would support, what the debt can tolerate, and what a future buyer would believe. Those questions form the backbone of the course.

— What NNN Real Estate Means

NNN is shorthand for triple net. In a triple-net lease, the tenant usually pays base rent and also takes responsibility for three major categories of property expense: real estate taxes, insurance, and maintenance. Those three responsibilities are the origin of the three Ns. The appeal is easy to understand. If the tenant pays rent and also carries many of the operating expenses, the owner may have a cleaner and more predictable income stream than in a lease where the landlord pays most property costs directly.

That basic definition is only the starting point. In practice, not every NNN lease shifts the same obligations. One lease may require the tenant to pay taxes, insurance, utilities, routine repairs, and common maintenance, while another may leave the owner responsible for roof replacement, structural repairs, parking lot replacement, or other expensive items. A property can be marketed as NNN and still leave meaningful risk with the owner. This is why the course will repeat one idea many times: the lease label begins the conversation, but the lease language decides the investment.

It may help to picture two layers. The first layer is the income story: the tenant pays rent for the right to use the building. The second layer is the responsibility story: the lease says who pays the bills and who handles problems.

Industrial NNN investing becomes much clearer when those two stories are kept together. A high rent number is less impressive if the owner retains expensive obligations. A lower rent number may be more attractive if the lease is durable, the tenant is strong, and the building remains useful.

— What Absolute Net Means

Absolute net is often used to describe a lease structure that shifts even more responsibility to the tenant. In an absolute-net lease, the tenant may be responsible not only for taxes, insurance, and routine maintenance, but also for major capital obligations such as roof, structure, building systems, restoration, and sometimes other risks that would otherwise remain with the owner. At its strongest, an absolute-net lease can make ownership feel closer to holding a long-term contractual income stream than operating a traditional property.

That does not mean every lease called absolute net is identical. The actual document may contain exceptions, notice requirements, casualty rights, condemnation provisions, caps, exclusions, or obligations that change the economics. A careful investor therefore reads absolute net as a claim to verify, not a conclusion to accept. The phrase is useful because it points to a more tenant-responsible structure. It is not enough because investors are paid, or punished, by the words in the lease itself.

This distinction is central to trust in the course. The course will not ask the reader to memorize labels and stop there. It will teach the reader how to move from label to clause, from clause to obligation, from obligation to financial analysis, and from financial analysis to decision. That is how professional judgment is built.

— Why Industrial Real Estate Has Its Own Logic

Industrial real estate is not just real estate with fewer storefronts and larger buildings. It is the physical infrastructure of commerce. Industrial properties house distribution, manufacturing, assembly, storage, food processing, logistics, repair, service, and other operating uses. The tenant chooses the building because it helps the business function. Trucks need to move. Employees need to reach the site. Goods need to flow. Equipment needs power. The building needs to fit the operation.

That operating logic makes industrial NNN investing different from simply buying any leased building. A warehouse with poor truck access may struggle even if it is full today. A manufacturing facility with specialized improvements may be highly valuable to the current tenant and harder to lease to another user. A modest older building may be excellent if it fits local demand, zoning, labor, and transportation patterns. The value of the real estate depends on what businesses in that market need the building to do.

This course will therefore keep returning to one practical question: if the current tenant left, what would the building be worth to the next user? That question does not cancel the importance of the lease. It completes it. The lease explains current income. The building and market explain whether that income can be replaced, renewed, financed, or sold.

— What This Course Is Built to Do

This course is designed to build judgment, not just vocabulary. It does not treat industrial NNN investing as a passive-income slogan or a spreadsheet exercise. It treats it as a sequence of professional decisions. Each module adds one layer to that sequence: understanding the asset class, reading the lease, evaluating the tenant, judging the building, studying the location, sourcing opportunities, conducting diligence, underwriting returns, structuring debt, negotiating offers, managing ownership, planning renewal, and exiting with discipline.

The credibility of the course comes from its method. The material is document-first, evidence-first, and decision-oriented. It asks what the lease says, what the tenant can support, what the building can do, what the market would pay, what a lender will believe, what adverse scenarios reveal, and what a future buyer will see. Those are the questions that serious investors, lenders, attorneys, brokers, asset managers, and buyers return to again and again.

The course also respects the limits of education. It is not legal advice, tax advice, investment advice, or a substitute for professional counsel. Real transactions require qualified attorneys, tax advisors, lenders, inspectors, environmental consultants, insurance professionals, and market experts. What the course can do is prepare the reader to ask better questions, understand the answers, recognize weak assumptions, and participate intelligently in the investment process.

— How to Move Through the Course

The course is meant to build in order. Chapter 1 introduces the whole investment picture. Chapter 2 slows down inside the lease because the lease is where income and obligation become enforceable. Chapter 3 studies the tenant because a lease is only as strong as the party expected to perform it. Chapter 4 turns to the building because the physical asset remains after any lease ends. Chapter 5 studies location because industrial value depends on logistics, labor, land supply, and local demand.

From there, the course moves into the investment process itself. Acquisition strategy teaches how opportunities enter the pipeline. Due diligence teaches how assumptions become evidence. Underwriting turns evidence into numbers. Financing tests whether the capital structure can survive adversity. Negotiation, closing, ownership, renewal, vacancy, capital planning, tax strategy, sale-leasebacks, portfolio construction, and advanced topics all build from the same foundation.

If a concept feels unfamiliar, that is not a problem. The course is designed to return to important ideas more than once, each time at a deeper level. The first encounter gives the reader a working understanding. Later chapters add nuance, tradeoffs, and professional application. By the end, the reader should not merely know more terms. The reader should see industrial NNN investments more clearly.

— The Standard This Course Uses

Throughout the course, the reader will be asked to replace shortcuts with evidence. A strong tenant is not assumed because a brand is familiar. A lease is not accepted as protective because a brochure says NNN. A building is not treated as safe because it is occupied today. A yield is not persuasive until the income has been rebuilt from the documents. A downside case is not pessimism; it is respect for capital.

That standard may feel slower at first, but it is what makes the course valuable. Industrial NNN investing rewards patience before closing. Once an investor owns the property, many mistakes become expensive to fix. The time to understand the lease, tenant, building, market, financing, and exit is before the purchase is complete. This course begins there because that is where durable investing begins.

How This Course Is Organized

Every chapter has two parts. Core Concepts builds the conceptual foundation: how the subject works, why it matters, and how the idea connects to the lessons that came before it. The Masterclass Workbook then turns that concept into guided application: evidence to collect, questions to ask, judgments to make, and a practical case that shows how the lesson behaves in a real investment process. Read the Core Concepts to understand the logic; use the Workbook to practice the judgment.

Edition and Verification Note

All legal, tax, regulatory, technical, and market statements were verified against authoritative sources (IRS, EPA, ASTM/NFPA-related references, and major industry research) as of June 2026, and time-sensitive figures are date-attributed in the text.

Educational disclaimer: This course is general education about United States industrial net-lease real estate. It is not legal, tax, investment, or financial advice. Rules and market conditions change, and individual circumstances differ. Readers should engage qualified legal, tax, and investment professionals before acting on any concept in this course.



Foundations

The four-question framework, leases, tenants, buildings, and location. The bedrock every later decision rests on.

