

OWNER'S PRE-APPROVAL TOOL

25 Dental Build-Out Red Flags

Use this before signing a lease, approving drawings, awarding construction, or ordering equipment. Every checked item is a question to resolve—not an automatic reason to abandon the project.

1. LEASE + SITE

☐	01 The lease is signed before dental use, utilities, permits, or landlord approvals are confirmed.
☐	02 The work letter says “as-is,” “existing,” or “by tenant” without a responsibility matrix.
☐	03 Tenant-improvement money, free rent, delivery condition, or reimbursement timing is unclear.
☐	04 Roof, shaft, exterior, signage, after-hours HVAC, or hazardous-material rights are missing.
☐	05 The schedule does not allow for design, landlord review, permitting, utility work, and inspections.

2. BASE BUILDING + UTILITIES

☐	06 HVAC capacity is assumed from square footage instead of a professional load analysis.
☐	07 Electrical service, phase, panel capacity, transformer, or dedicated circuits are unverified.
☐	08 Water, sewer, slab, post-tension, or core-drilling conditions are unknown.
☐	09 Compressor/vacuum location lacks ventilation, service clearance, noise control, or drainage.
☐	10 Sprinkler, fire alarm, backflow, medical gas, shielding, or accessibility scope is unpriced.

3. FLOOR PLAN + WORKFLOW

☐	11 The plan is optimized for appearance before dirty-to-clean, team, patient, and supply flow.
☐	12 Operatories are counted without testing clearances, handedness, equipment, and treatment mix.
☐	13 Sterilization capacity and heat/ventilation are not matched to expected instrument volume.
☐	14 Storage is designed as cabinets before actual inventory, replenishment, and bulk needs are mapped.
☐	15 Future rooms are neither properly roughed-in nor intentionally omitted from the growth plan.

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Continued

4. CONSTRUCTION + BUDGET

☐	16 Bids use different drawings, scopes, alternates, or owner-supplied assumptions.
☐	17 Large allowances appear without quantities, unit costs, basis, or overage handling.
☐	18 The general contractor, equipment vendor, and low-voltage team each assume another party connects items.
☐	19 Soft costs, utility fees, permits, landlord review, escalation, testing, and contingency are incomplete.
☐	20 A low initial bid contains exclusions likely to reappear as change orders.

5. EQUIPMENT + OPENING

☐	21 The equipment package is selected before the staffing, schedule, procedure mix, and cash plan are tested.
☐	22 Every planned operator is fully equipped on day one without a utilization reason.
☐	23 Bundled pricing hides room-level quantities, accessories, freight, installation, tax, and service terms.
☐	24 Long-lead items and latest safe decision dates are not tied to the construction schedule.
☐	25 Opening cash reserve is consumed by optional equipment or finishes that could be phased.

3+ checked in one category? Pause the approval and assign each question to the broker, attorney, architect, engineer, contractor, equipment team—or an independent owner-side reviewer.

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Advisory only. This checklist is not architectural, engineering, legal, code, permitting, or construction advice and does not replace qualified licensed professionals.