

**PLANNING
TO SELL**

A HOMEOWNER'S CHECKLIST

How to Prepare Your Home for Buyers

Clean your home

Cleanliness signals to a buyer that the home has been well cared for and is most likely in good repair. A messy or dirty home may deter prospective buyers from making an offer.

Remove the clutter

Before you list your home, empty closets and drawers, have a garage sale and donate what you can't sell. The less "stuff" visible in and around a house, the roomier it will seem.

Let the light in

Raise the shades. Open the blinds. Pull back the curtains. Put brighter bulbs in all the lamps (but not bright enough to cause a glare). Bright, open rooms feel larger and more inviting. Dark rooms appear small and gloomy.

Freshen up your space

Get rid of odors that may be unfamiliar or unpleasant. People are most often offended by odors from tobacco, pets, cooking and musty or sour laundry. Fresh flowers and potpourri can be used to your advantage. Other smells that attract positive attention include fresh baked bread, vanilla and cinnamon.

Repair broken items

This includes plumbing, electrical systems and switches, windows, squeaky floorboards, TV antennas, screens, doors and fences. If it can't be fixed, replace it or get rid of it. A buyer might make a much lower offer if your house is in disrepair, or they may insist that everything be fixed before taking occupancy.

Secure pets

If possible, it's wise to move pets away from the house when prospective buyers are coming. Unfamiliar visitors might be fearful of or allergic to a pet. And your cat or dog might be frightened by newcomers and even try to escape.

Make good use of scheduled viewings

Serious buyers may want to spend a fair amount of time looking at your home, so be sure to find suitable all-ages activities to occupy your household during showings.

Paint

A fresh coat of neutral paint can be a gamechanger for a property, potentially making it appear more valuable.

Noise

Silence is a soothing sound that offends no one. Turn off the TV and radio. Soft instrumental music is fine, but avoid vocals.

Remember:

A clean, neat, quiet and uncluttered home will show well.



Get your home ready to show with this checklist.

EXTERIOR

Replace, repair and/or paint any damaged:

- Plaster
- Window frames
- Wood siding
- Glazing
- Trim
- Screens
- Rain gutters
- Hardware
- Shutters
- Fences/gates
- Doors
- Outdoor lighting

Clean:

- Siding
- AC unit
- Windows
- Pool/spa
- Screens
- Trash cans

Remember to:

- Haul away rubbish
- Clean up pet droppings
- Make sure the doorbell works
- Ensure septic tank is odor free
- Clean oil stains from driveway/street
- Patch and reseal driveway

LANDSCAPING

- Mow and edge lawn regularly
- Water lawn appropriately
- Remove dead plants
- Prune overgrown/diseased shrubs
- Stake any sagging trees
- Weed flowerbeds
- Repair or remove damaged landscape features such as:
 - Fences
 - Walls
 - Gazebos
 - Fountains
 - Trellises or planters
 - Sprinkler system

CLEAN ALL ROOMS

Wipe down or dust:

- Doors
- Windows
- Light switches
- Baseboards
- Chair rails
- Wash curtains and drapes
- Clean and lubricate window slides
- Lubricate door hinges
- Clean ceiling light fixtures
- Clear cobwebs
- Buff out scratches on walls and floors
- Replace worn carpeting or area rugs
- Empty wastebaskets
- Make beds
- Fluff pillows

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KITCHEN

- Clean appliances
- Keep floors and counters clean
- Dust light fixtures
- Make sure all electrical outlets work
- Eliminate cooking odors
- Deodorize garbage disposal, dishwasher and refrigerator
- Clean and organize cabinets and drawers

BATHROOMS

- Shine mirrors
- Empty wastebaskets
- Clean out cabinets and drawers
- Place fresh, clean towels on towel racks
- Clean shower door and lubricate track if necessary
- Remove soap residue, stains, mildew and mold from sink/tub/shower/toilet
- Scrub tile grout
- Ensure toilet flushes properly; replace mechanism if necessary
- Clean exhaust fan and heater; replace if broken or noisy

LAUNDRY AREA

- Clean area behind washer/dryer
- Eliminate mildew odors

BASEMENT

- Address any signs of dampness
- Check for and eliminate cracks

GARAGE/CARPORT/SHED

- Install 100-watt light bulbs
- Keep area clean/uncluttered
- Clear cobwebs
- Adjust tension rod to eliminate sag from overhead garage door
- Lubricate/adjust/repair garage door
- Paint walls if needed



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