

# Planning to sell...

Get Your Home in Tip-Top Shape



a homeowners  
checklist 

  
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## How to Prepare Your Home

**S**o you're planning to sell your home. You and your real estate broker have decided on a price, based on current market values, but your home will sell faster, and bring a higher price, if it shows well. Potential buyers will get the best impression if your home is clean, neat, uncluttered, in good repair, light, airy, fragrant, and quiet. This checklist will help you get your home ready to show. **Here are a few general guidelines:**

**CLEAN EVERYTHING.** 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 will cause prospective buyers to notice every flaw.

**UNCLUTTER YOUR HOME BEFORE YOU SHOW IT.** Have a garage sale. Empty closets. Throw away what you can't sell. The less stuff in and around a home, 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 feel small and gloomy.

**LET FRESH AIR IN.** 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 and cinnamon.

**FIX ANYTHING THAT IS BROKEN.** This includes plumbing, electrical systems, and switches, windows, TV antennas, screens, doors, and fences; if it can't be fixed, replace it or get rid of it (no window screens are better than broken ones).

A buyer will make a much lower offer if your house is in disrepair and will probably still insist that everything be fixed before taking occupancy. You're better off if you leave potential buyers no reason to offer less than you are asking.

**PAINT.** There's nothing that improves the value of a home for a lower cost than a fresh coat of paint. And it's so often easier to paint a room than it is to scrub it. Stick with neutral colors - off-white is the safest. Be sure to avoid black, violet, and pink.

“You never get a second chance to make a first impression”

# This checklist will help you get your home ready to show



✓	<b>EXTERIOR</b> , Replace, repair, and/or paint any damages:
	Plaster
	Wood siding
	Trim
	Rain gutters
	Shutters
	Doors
	Window frames
	Glazing
	Screens
	Hardware
	Fences/gates
	Outdoor lighting
✓	<b>CLEAN/WASH</b>
	Siding
	Windows
	Screen
	Outdoor BBQ
	AC unit
	Pool/Spa
✓	<b>PUT 100-WATT LIGHT BULBS IN:</b>
	Porch Lights
	Carport
	Garage
	Clean around service areas/trash cans
	Haul away rubbish
	Straighten woodpile
	Repair leaky faucets
	Clean up pet droppings
	Paint or varnish doors
	Polish door hardware
	Make sure doorbell/knocker works
	Paint or replace street numbers on house
	Make sure septic tank is odor free
	Clean oil stains from driveway/street
	Patch/reseal driveway if necessary
✓	<b>CLOSETS</b>
	Keep closets clean and free of clutter
	Throw out or pack away nonessentials
	Adjust/repair sliding doors
	Lubricate sliding door hardware
	Paint, if needed

✓	<b>LANDSCAPING</b>
	Mow/edge lawn regularly
	Aerate/feed lawn
	Overseed bare spots in lawn
	Water lawn regularly
	Remove/replace dead plants
	Prune overgrown/diseased/damaged shrubs
	Prune or remove shrubs/trees blocking view from windows (unless view is undesirable)
	Stake up any sagging trees/shrubs
	Keep flower beds free of weeds
	Trim around base of trees/walls/fences
✓	<b>Repair or remove any broken or damaged landscape accessories such as:</b>
	Fences
	Walls Gazebos
	Fountains
	Trellises
	Planters
	Other
	Replace any broken stepping stones
	Adjust any sprinkler system; repair any broken/leaky heads
	Install fences or shrubs to hide any unsightly views
✓	<b>ALL ROOMS</b> , Clean especially around:
	Doors
	Windows
	Light switches
	Baseboards
	Chair rails
	Wash lace curtains and have draperies cleaned if necessary
	Remove or pull back dark curtains
	Lubricate window slides (soap for wood silicon or a candle stump for metal)
	Make sure doors open smoothly
	Clean ceiling light fixtures
	Check for cobwebs in all corners
	Fix any scratches in wooden floors
	Replace worn/broken flooring
	Remove or replace worn carpet
	Use area rugs where needed
	Empty wastebaskets
	Make the beds
	Fluff the pillows

✓	<b>KITCHEN</b>
	Keep dishes and food out of sight
	Clean appliances
	Clean range hood, including light bulbs
	Clean behind appliances
	Keep floor clean
	Clean light fixture
	Make sure all electrical outlets work
	Eliminate cooking odors
	Deodorize garbage disposal, dishwasher, and refrigerator
	Repair faucets
	Put fresh shelf paper in cabinets
	Organize cupboards
	Clean out under sink
	Replace garbage disposal gasket to reduce noise
✓	<b>BATHROOMS</b> , Keep them spotlessly clean:
	Shine mirrors
	Keep wastebaskets empty and clean
	Clean out cabinets and remove nonessentials
	Keep fresh, clean towels on towel racks
	Clean shower door if sliding door, keep track well lubricated
	Remove soap residue, mildew and mold from sink/tub/shower
	Remove stains from porcelain sink tub toilet
	Replace torn/moldy shower curtain
	Clean tile grout
	Make sure toilet flushes properly replace mechanism if necessary
	Clean exhaust fan/heater replace if broken or noisy
✓	<b>GARAGE/CARPORT/SHED</b>
	Install 100-watt light bulb
	Keep area clean/uncluttered
	Hang up/put away tools
	Clear away any cobwebs
	Remove oil/paint stains from floor
	Lubricate all rollers/hinges/latches
	Inspect and repair your garage door if needed
	Paint if needed

✓	<b>LAUNDRY AREA</b>
	Clean out area behind washer/dryer
	Eliminate any mildew odors
✓	<b>BASEMENT</b>
	Eliminate any signs of dampness
	Check for and eliminate cracks
✓	<b>HEATING/AIR CONDITIONING UNIT</b>
	Vacuum
	Replace filter
	Clean intake vent
	Remove any stored items

Make sure the temperature in your home is comfortable keep it cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter. If it's cooler outside and you have a fireplace, a nice fire will make your home seem cozy and inviting.

Be available in case prospective buyers have questions, but don't crowd them.

Provide an exhaustive written list of the features of your home.

Answer questions professionally and truthfully, but don't volunteer information.

Know the distance to schools and shopping centers.

Let the home and the Real Estate Agent do most of the selling.

Refer any prospect that calls or comes by to your broker for pre-screening and pre-qualification as well as for your own safety.

Tell your real estate agent all about the home-good and bad. Let the professional decide how to handle negatives and features or highlight the positives.

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