



PLANNING TO SELL

A Homeowner's Checklist

So, you're planning to sell your home. As you prepare to begin showing your home to prospective buyers, you might consider taking some of the steps listed here.

Potential buyers often prefer a home that is clean, uncluttered, in good repair, light, and quiet.

HERE ARE A FEW TIPS THAT CAN HELP YOU GET YOUR HOME READY TO SHOW

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

Have a garage sale. Empty closets. Donate 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, and/or 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, where 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 or cinnamon.

FIX ANYTHING THAT IS BROKEN

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 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.

SEND PETS AWAY

Secure pets away from the house when prospective buyers are coming. You never know if people will be annoyed, intimidated, or even allergic to them.

SEND THE KIDS TO GRANDMA'S

Children can be noisy and distracting to someone interested in looking at a home. Get them out of the house and take them on a walk around the block or send them to a relative's house.

PAINT

There is nothing that improves the value of a home more than a few cans of paint. And it's so often easier to paint a room than it is to scrub it. Stick with neutral colors.

KEEP THE NOISE DOWN

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

GET YOUR HOME READY TO SELL

Check out the checklist on the following pages.

THIS CHECKLIST WILL HELP YOU GET YOUR HOME READY TO SHOW

EXTERIOR

Replace, repair, and/or paint any damaged:

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

Clean/wash:

- Siding
- Windows
- Screen
- Outdoor BBQ
- AC unit
- Pool/spa
- Clean around service areas/trash cans
- Haul away trash
- Straighten woodpile
- Repair leaky faucets
- Clean up pet droppings
- Paint or varnish doors

- 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

Put 100-watt light bulbs in:

- Porch lights
- Carport
- Garage

LANDSCAPING

- Mow/edge lawn regularly
- Aerate/feed lawn
- Water lawn regularly
- Remove/replace dead plants
- Prune overgrown/diseased/damaged shrubs
- Prune or remove shrubs/trees blocking window view
- Stake up any sagging trees
- Keep flower beds free of weeds
- Trim around base of wall & fence
- Replace any broken stepping stones
- Adjust any sprinkler system
- Install fences or shrubs to hide any unsightly views

Repair or remove any broken or damaged landscape accessories such as:

- Fences
- Walls
- Gazebos
- Fountains
- Trellises or planters

LAUNDRY AREA

- Clean out behind washer/dryer
- Eliminate any mildew odors

BASEMENT

- Eliminate any dampness
- Check for & eliminate cracks

CLOSETS

- Keep closets clean & free of clutter
- Throw out or pack away nonessentials
- Adjust/repair sliding doors
- Lubricate sliding door hardware
- Paint



ALL ROOMS

Clean especially around:

- Door
- Windows
- Light switches
- Baseboards
- Chair rails
- Wash curtains & have draperies cleaned
- Remove or pull back dark curtains
- Lubricate window slides
- Lubricate doors
- 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 all beds
- Fluff the pillows

BATHROOM

- Shine mirrors
- Keep wastebaskets empty/clean
- Clean out cabinets & remove nonessentials
- Keep fresh, clean towels on towel racks
- Clean shower door – if sliding door, keep the track well lubricated
- Remove soap residue, mildew & mold from the sink/tub/shower
- Remove stains from porcelain sink/tub/toilet
- Replace shower curtain
- Clean tile grout
- Make sure toilet flushes properly; replace mechanism if necessary
- Clean exhaust fan; replace if broken or noisy

KITCHEN

Clean/wash:

- Keep dishes & food out of sight
- Clean appliances
- Clean range hood, including light bulbs
- Clean behind appliances
- Keep floor clean
- Clean light fixtures
- Make sure all electrical outlets work
- Eliminate cooking odors
- Deodorize garbage disposal, dish washer, & refrigerator
- Repair faucets
- Put fresh shelf paper in cabinets
- Organize cupboards
- Clean under the sink
- Replace garbage disposal gasket to reduce noise

HEATING/AIR CONDITIONING UNIT

- Replace filter
- Clean intake vent

GARAGE/CARPORT/SHED

- Install 100-watt light bulbs
- Keep area clean/uncluttered
- Hang up/put away tools
- Clear away any cobwebs
- Remove oil/paint stains from floor
- Lubricate/adjust/repair garage door opener
- Paint



PHOTO GUIDE

For Real Estate

CLEAR OFF KITCHEN COUNTER TOPS

Less is more in this case. Also make sure the counter tops are wiped down.

STAGE THE PLANNING DESK IN THE KITCHEN

This spot is always a “catch all” place for most families and it will show in the photos. Get bills, kid’s items, chargers and anything else put away and make sure it is free of clutter.

PULL UP ALL TEMPORARY THROW RUGS

We want to showcase the flooring in your listing. The rugs will go with the owner and don’t add to the photography. They can be placed back for showings following the photo appointment.

CLEAN UP AFTER YOUR PETS INSIDE AND OUT

Put up all pet dishes and clean up the yard during the photo appointment. Nobody likes stepping in a dirty yard.

STAGE THE BATHROOMS

Put away all toiletries and have counter tops and shower cleared. Hide the shampoo, soap bottles, wash cloths, tooth brush, perfume, make-up etc.

PUT AWAY ANY THROW BLANKETS

Throw blankets never look good in photos



TURN OFF THE TV

A blank television screen is neutral and looks better than a freeze-frame of whatever was playing.

HIDE REMOTES

We want the rooms as clutter free as possible. We’re trying to get the new buyer to visualize themselves in the home.

MAKE THE BEDS

Double check to make sure the box spring is not showing and look under the beds to make sure clutter isn’t showing.

STAGE THE STUDY

The study is most often a home office, but it needs to look neat and tidy in photos. Put away all paperwork and bills, and try to hide any visible cords.

PUT AWAY PERSONAL PHOTOS

It’s always recommended you remove personal photos because they cause distraction when a potential buyer looks at your home.

OUTSIDE

In the summer, put up the umbrellas and take out the cushions. Make sure your yard is nicely maintained. Put away all the kid toys, hoses and yard equipment.

