

Checklist for Preparing Your Home to Sell

Your home has just one chance to make a great impression with each potential buyer. And it can! The following "list" will help you keep track of what needs to be done. The whole idea is to present a clean, spacious clutter-free home—the kind of place you'd like to buy. Accomplish a little everyday, and before long your home will be ready to make the impression that can make the sale.

Your Home's Curb Appeal

- ✓ Mow lawn
- ✓ Trim shrubs
- ✓ Edge gardens and walkways
- ✓ Weed and mulch
- ✓ Sweep walkways and driveway, remove branches, litter or toys
- ✓ Add color and fill in bare spots with plantings
- ✓ Remove mildew or moss from walls or walks with bleach and water or other cleaner
- ✓ Take stains off your driveway with cleanser or kitty litter
- ✓ Stack woodpile neatly
- ✓ Clean and repair patio and deck area
- ✓ Remove any outdoor furniture which is not in good repair
- ✓ Make sure pool or spa sparkles
- ✓ Replace old storm doors
- ✓ Check for flat-fitting roof shingles
- ✓ Repair broken windows and shutters, replace torn screens, make sure frames and seams have solid caulking
- ✓ Hose off exterior wood and trim, replace damaged bricks or wood
- ✓ Touch up exterior paint, repair gutters and eaves
- ✓ Clean and remove rust from any window air conditioning units
- ✓ Paint the front door and mailbox

- ✓ Add a new front door mat and consider a seasonal door decoration
- ✓ Shine brass hardware on front door, outside lighting fixtures, etc.
- ✓ Make sure doorbell is in good working order

General Interior Tips

- ✓ Add a fresh coat of interior paint in light, neutral colors
- ✓ Shampoo carpeting, replace if necessary
- ✓ Clean and wax hardwood floors, refinish if necessary
- ✓ Clean and wash kitchen and bathroom floors
- ✓ Wash all windows, vacuum blinds, wash window sills
- ✓ Clean the fireplace
- ✓ Clean out and organize closets, add extra space by packing clothes and items you won't need again until after you've moved
- ✓ Remove extra furniture, worn rugs, and items you don't use; keep papers, toys, etc. picked up--especially on stairways
- ✓ Repair problems such as loose door knobs, cracked molding, leaking taps and toilets, squeaky doors, closets or screen doors which are off their tracks
- ✓ Add dishes of potpourri, or drop of vanilla or bath oil on light bulbs for scent
- ✓ Secure jewelry, cash and other valuables

The Living Room

- ✓ Make it cozy and inviting, discard chipped or worn furniture and frayed or worn rugs

The Dining Room

- ✓ Polish any visible silver and crystal
- ✓ Set the table for a formal dinner to help viewers imagine entertaining here

The Kitchen

- ✓ Make sure appliances are spotless inside and out (try baking soda for cleaning Formica stains)
- ✓ Make sure all appliances are in perfect working order
- ✓ Clean often forgotten spots on top of refrigerator and under sink
- ✓ Wax or sponge floor to brilliant shine, clean baseboards
- ✓ Unclutter all counter space, remove countertop appliances
- ✓ Organize items inside cabinets, pre-pack anything you won't be using before you move

The Bathrooms

- ✓ Remove all rust and mildew
- ✓ Make sure tile, fixtures, shower doors, etc. are immaculate and shining
- ✓ Make sure all fixtures are in good repair
- ✓ Replace loose caulking or grout
- ✓ Make sure lighting is bright, but soft

The Master Bedroom

- ✓ Organize furnishings to create a spacious look with well-defined sitting, sleeping, and dressing areas

The Garage

- ✓ Sell, give away, or throw out unnecessary items
- ✓ Clean oily cement floor
- ✓ Provide strong overhead light
- ✓ Tidy storage or work areas

The Attic

- ✓ Tidy up by discarding or pre-packing
- ✓ Make sure energy-saving insulation is apparent
- ✓ Make sure air vent is in working order
- ✓ Provide strong overhead lighting

When It's Time To Show

- ✓ Open all draperies and shades, turn on all lights
- ✓ Pick up toys and other clutter, check to make sure beds are made and clothes are put away
- ✓ Give the carpets a quick vacuuming
- ✓ Add some strategically placed fresh flowers
- ✓ Put pets in the backyard or arrange for a friend to keep them
- ✓ Make sure pet areas are clean and odor-free
- ✓ Make sure all trash is disposed of in neatly covered bins