



Pre-Marketing Checklist

First impressions last! Prospective buyers start forming opinions about your house before they even step inside. As they approach your front door, they're reacting to the way the exterior and yard look, deciding just how interested they are — and even how much they might be willing to pay.

A clean, well-maintained home simply is more appealing. This checklist pinpoints specific items around the home that are, or can be, the key to a successful sale. The most salable properties usually reflect attention to each of these areas. So invest time to make your home sparkle.

Use this checklist as a guide to a faster, more profitable sale.

Spruce up the yard

- Paint — wood, trim work, gutters, downspouts and wrought iron should receive primary attention
- Front entry — all woodwork should be fresh and neatly painted, including the door if necessary. Put out a new door mat. Do a thorough weeding the pruning on any flower beds near the entry
- Yard — mow and trim the yard. Weed flower beds. Remove or replace dead plants or trees. Water regularly during the growing season
- Driveway, garage, carport — clean up grease or oil spots. See that the garage door opens freely and that they automatic door opener is in good working order
- Fence — repair, paint or stain as necessary
- Roof — remove visible debris and any tree branches bearing on the roof
- Swimming pool — adjust chemicals until the pool sparkles. Store chemicals and tools neatly

Basics around the house

- Windows — repair or replace torn or bent screens. Replace any cracked or broken panes
- Doors — check to see that all doors open and close freely, including closet doors and patio or sliding doors
- Walls — neutral paint will pay dividends because prospective buyers will be able to envision the home as theirs...and it could be! Patch wallboard and plaster. Clean or replace air-vent covers
- Floors — make sure vinyl, tile and wood floors sparkle
- Carpet — keep them clean and vacuumed. If pet odors are present, clean the carpet some time before the home is placed on the market to be sure the odors have been eliminate
- Decorative items — take an objective look around. Things that suit your unique taste might not appeal to others
- Space — open up as much space as possible. Overcrowded countertops, cabinets and closets give the impression of inadequate storage. Get rid of items you aren't using

Hints on housekeeping

- Bathrooms** — vanity, sink, faucet hardware, and mirror are focal points. So are soap residue in a shower, a moldy shower curtain, accumulated dirt in the track of a sliding shower door, soiled or missing grout
- Kitchen** — most buyers will inspect this area carefully. Clean the stove inside and out. Replace reflector plates on electric range tops. Don't neglect the kitchen exhaust hood
- Windows** — clean windows are an absolute necessity if a house is to look its best

Check mechanical and electrical features

- Lights** — every light socket in and around the house should have a good bulb of adequate wattage
- Switches and fixtures** — repair or replace wall switches, outlets, and light fixtures that don't work. Replace broken switch plates
- Appliances** — those that will be sold with the home should be in good working condition
- Plumbing** — fixtures should be clean and in good repair
- Sprinkler system** — should be working properly with no defective heads

Tips for showings

- Light** — open all draperies. Turn on lights for a bright and cheerful look
- Light switches** — if some wall switches operate wall outlets, plug in a lamp to demonstrate that the switch works. When a buyer flips a switch and nothing happens he or she instinctively suspects a problem
- Aromas** — set out some fresh flowers, both for their appearance and fragrance. Be cautious of cook odors. Don't overdo air fresheners or essential oil diffusers. They can make buyers suspicious of what they are covering up
- Closets** — keep doors closed expect for walk-in closets
- Posters and signs** — remove any signs or posters that might be considered offensive
- Ashtrays** — remove! Do not allow smoking in your home while it is on the market
- Utility bills** — have copies of the past 12 months' bills available, or at least a written summary
- Pets** — if possible, have them out of the house during showings
- Music** — do not have the TV or music on when the house is being shown
- Your presence** — most buyers will not relax and closely inspect a home if the owners are present, so try to arrange to turn the home over to the salesperson



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