

Preparing Your Home For Sale

A bright and spotless interior will reinforce your home's good first impression.

Interior dirt and clutter can obscure your home's good points, so start with a full house cleaning from top to bottom. Store unused or unnecessary items or hold a garage sale. Eliminate clutter and your home will appear more spacious – an important selling point.

Take an inspection tour of your home, be critical. Observe it as a potential buyer would, and use the following checklist to make sure it's ready to show.

- _____ Walls are clean and free of smudges, fingerprints, dents or holes.
- _____ Woodwork and wallpaper are inspected for problem areas.
- _____ Baseboards and moldings are clean and dust free.
- _____ Curtains and drapes are freshly laundered. Blinds and shutters are washed.
- _____ Rugs and carpets are shampooed, floors are waxed.
- _____ Crowded rooms are cleared; store worn and extra furniture.
- _____ Repair loose doorknobs, ghost doors, sticking or squeaking doors, windows, and warped doors.
- _____ Light fixtures and ceiling fans are in good working order and are clean and dusted. Lamp shades are in good condition. Replace any discolored / cracked face plates.
- _____ Mirrors, picture frames and glass covering picture frames are clean.
- _____ Repair leaky faucets and leaky toilets. Remove water discoloration in sinks, toilets, tubs and showers. Clean vanities and mirrors.
- _____ Bathrooms are sparkling clean. Tub and shower caulking is repaired.
- _____ Kitchen is clean and tidy, including cupboards, stove, oven, microwave, dishwasher and sinks. Counter appliances (coffee maker, electric can openers, toasters, etc.) are stored.
- _____ Loose stairway banisters are tightened and stairs are free of objects.
- _____ Bedrooms are neat, beds are made and the bedspreads and curtains are attractive.
- _____ Closets, shelves, drawers and are organized to display spaciousness.
- _____ Clothing is neatly hung and shoes and other objects are neatly arranged.
- _____ Remove pet bedding, feeding bowls and litter boxes from inside the home.
- _____ Ensure that your home has a pleasant smell.
- _____ Consider repainting walls or replacing carpeting if cleaning doesn't do the trick.

It is also important to keep lighting in mind when your home is being shown. Good lighting will make your home seem more cheery and spacious, even during the day.

Over-improving doesn't pay

Don't plan any major improvements on your home. Most home buyers want to make their own major changes. You are usually wiser to sell them the potential – at a price they can afford.