

Seller Preparation Tips

Preparing Your Home for the Market

Selling your home doesn't always mean spending thousands of dollars on renovations. The goal is to determine which improvements are worth considering, which items may concern buyers, and where your time and money can have the greatest impact.

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Before making major changes, talk with your Realtor about your home's condition, local competition, and likely buyer expectations.

1. Start With the Repairs That Matter

Before worrying about cosmetic upgrades, address obvious maintenance or repair concerns.

- Roof leaks or visible water damage
- Plumbing leaks or dripping fixtures
- Electrical issues
- HVAC problems
- Broken windows or doors
- Damaged flooring
- Missing or damaged fixtures
- Signs of moisture or mold that require professional evaluation
- Safety concerns such as loose railings or damaged steps

Seller Tip: Don't automatically replace something simply because it's older. Age and condition aren't the same thing. Let's evaluate whether a repair or replacement makes sense before you spend the money.

2. Give Buyers a Great First Impression

Buyers begin forming an opinion before they walk through the front door.

- Mow and edge the lawn
- Trim shrubs and trees
- Remove weeds and debris
- Pressure wash when appropriate
- Clean the driveway and walkway
- Clean the front door and entry
- Replace burned-out exterior bulbs
- Add simple, welcoming landscaping if needed

Keep it simple: You don't need an expensive landscaping project. Clean, maintained and welcoming is the goal.

3. Declutter & Depersonalize

Buyers need to be able to imagine themselves living in the home.

- Clear unnecessary items from countertops
- Organize closets and storage areas
- Remove excess furniture
- Pack away some personal collections and photographs

- Organize the garage
- Remove unnecessary items from the yard
- Create clear walking paths through each room

You don't have to remove everything that makes the house feel like your home. The goal is to make the space feel open, organized and easy for buyers to visualize.

4. Deep Clean

A clean home can make a significant difference in how buyers perceive its condition.

- Kitchen: appliances, countertops, cabinets and floors
- Bathrooms: tubs, showers, toilets, mirrors and grout
- Floors: vacuum carpets and clean hard surfaces
- Windows: clean glass and window sills
- Baseboards & doors: remove dust, fingerprints and scuff marks
- Ceiling fans & fixtures: remove visible dust

Address noticeable odors from pets, smoke, cooking or moisture rather than simply trying to cover them with strong fragrances.

5. Consider Simple Cosmetic Improvements

You may not need a full remodel. Smaller improvements can sometimes make a home feel fresher.

- Touch up damaged paint
- Use neutral paint where appropriate
- Replace visibly damaged hardware
- Update inexpensive light fixtures when needed
- Replace worn caulk
- Repair damaged trim
- Update outdated switch or outlet covers
- Replace burned-out bulbs

Before remodeling a kitchen or bathroom just to sell, let's talk. The cost of the project may not necessarily be recovered in the sale.

6. Let in the Light

A bright home often feels larger and more inviting.

- Open blinds and curtains
- Clean windows

- Replace burned-out bulbs
- Use consistent light temperatures when possible
- Turn on lights before showings
- Avoid blocking windows with large furniture

7. Don't Forget the Small Details

Walk through the house as though you're seeing it for the first time.

- Loose door handles
- Squeaky doors
- Missing outlet covers
- Burned-out bulbs
- Dripping faucets
- Damaged blinds
- Loose cabinet hardware
- Scuffed walls
- Cluttered countertops
- Visible cords and unnecessary items
- Pet-related damage or odors

Small issues can sometimes make buyers wonder whether there are larger maintenance problems they can't see.

8. Prepare for Listing Photos

Your home's online presentation is extremely important because photographs are often a buyer's first introduction to the property.

- Make beds
- Clear kitchen and bathroom counters
- Remove trash cans where practical
- Put away pet bowls, beds and toys
- Remove magnets and papers from the refrigerator
- Open curtains and blinds
- Turn on lights
- Remove vehicles from the driveway when possible
- Straighten outdoor furniture
- Hide unnecessary cords and personal items

Before You Spend Money - Call Me

One of the biggest mistakes a seller can make is spending money on improvements **before determining whether those improvements are actually necessary for the sale.**

Every property is different.

Before you start replacing flooring, remodeling bathrooms, installing new countertops, or making other expensive improvements, let's look at your home together.

- ✓ What should be addressed before listing
- ✓ What could potentially be left as-is
- ✓ How your home compares with nearby competition
- ✓ Which improvements may matter most to buyers
- ✓ How condition may affect your pricing strategy

The goal isn't to make your home perfect.

The goal is to prepare it strategically for the market.

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