

Ready, Set, Stage! Use this handy checklist to prepare your home for potential buyers.

1. Plan Ahead

- Walk through each room and critique the home from a buyer's perspective.
- Consider getting a professional home inspection to see if any repairs are needed.
- Hire a contractor to handle any major projects.
- Hold a yard sale. Sell, donate or trash anything you don't need.

2. Clean, Declutter and Depersonalize

- Thoroughly clean the entire home.
- Scrub tile in kitchen and bathrooms.
- Clean hardwood floors.
- Steam clean carpets and drapes. Consider replacing carpet if stains are prominent.
- Get rid of dust bunnies.
- Repair cracks and holes in walls.
- Paint interior walls with neutral colors, like beige, cream or light pastels.
Tip: pale blues and greens are good for bathrooms.
- Remove excess and oversized furniture.
- Rearrange furniture to maximize space.
- Organize room closets and store out-of-season clothes.
- Remove all small appliances, toys, magazines and pet items.
- Remove family photos, personal collections and medications.
- Declutter garage and store unnecessary items off site.
- Secure valuable items, including cash and jewelry.

3. Show Off Your Home's Best Features

- Remove rugs to show off hardwood floors.
- Pull back drapes to showcase nice views.
- Stage the front porch or deck with furniture and potted plants.
- Make sure fireplaces are in working condition.
- Clean backyard and pool area.



4. Pay Attention to Kitchens and Bathrooms

- Mop and wax/polish the floors.
- Clear all countertops.
- Replace outdated hardware.
- Clean appliances and fixtures.
- Clean and organize the pantry, cabinets and drawers.
- Replace old caulking around sinks and bathtubs.
- Remove stains from sinks, toilets and bathtubs.
- Keep all toilet seat lids closed.
- Hang fresh towels.

5. Appeal to the Senses

- Bake cookies or burn scented candles.
- Offer light refreshments.
- Install higher wattage incandescent light bulbs to brighten rooms.
- Turn on all the lights.
- Open windows to let in fresh air.
- Open curtains or blinds to let in natural light and show off views.
- Turn off TVs.
- Relocate pets on the day of the open house.
- Refrain from smoking in the home.

6. Maximize Curb Appeal

- Paint the home's exterior, including trim, doors and shutters.
- Check front door, doorbell, address number and welcome mat.
- Power wash siding and windows.
- Inspect the roof and make repairs as needed.
- Repair cracks in driveway and sidewalks.
- Sweep entryway and walkways.
- Mow, water and fertilize the lawn.
- Trim shrubs and trees and rake the leaves.
- Plant colorful flowers and shrubs.
- Store toys or equipment lying on the yard.
- Clean gutters and downspouts.

