

Preparing Your Home to Sell



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Bruce Cockrell, Realtor



7985 S. 700 E. Sandy, UT



(801) 898-9820



Bruce@pearsonand



assoc.com

bruce.findhomesutah.com

Preparing Your Home to Sell

The condition of your home can either detract from, or enhance its appeal. This checklist is designed to provide you with an easy and systematic approach to improving your home's sales appeal. Five steps are outlined in the checklist. Please note:

- The checklist is most effective when you review the steps in order.
- Some items (e.g., lawn, kitchen, bath, etc.) appear in multiple categories. However, you will be checking for different things in each category.
- The first four areas involve removing distractions. These are must-do's, because they will catch the buyer's attention, and leave a negative impression if not corrected.
- The last area involves making enhancements. These are suggestions that may help your home shine and stand out from others on the market.

Good luck!

MAJOR REPAIRS

The items in this section may result in substantial expense, but if you have obvious problems, it's important to fix them, or they may prevent your home from selling.

The following are items buyers will perceive as "needing major repair." **Consider replacing, repairing, or repainting if they are damaged, defective, or worn out.**

EXTERIOR

- ☐ Sidewalks
- ☐ Steps
- ☐ Driveway
- ☐ Foundation
- ☐ Siding
- ☐ Roof
- ☐ Gutters/Downspouts
- ☐ Fencing

- ☐ Windows

- ☐ Screens

INTERIOR

- ☐ Flooring
- ☐ Ceilings/Walls
- ☐ Paint/Wallpaper
- ☐ Trim
- ☐ Countertops
- ☐ Appliances

- ☐ Water Heater

- ☐ Furnace

- ☐ Air Conditioner

- ☐ Basement (moisture)

- ☐ Electrical

- ☐ Septic Tank
(if applicable)

DE-PERSONALIZING

De-personalizing involves removing those items that reflect your family's personal tastes. It is an inexpensive process that will have a great impact on your home's appearance.

Remove and store the following—either out of sight, or neatly packed up and out of the way.

EXTERIOR

- ☐ Trailers
- ☐ Recreational Vehicles
- ☐ Lawn Equipment
- ☐ Gardening Tools
- ☐ Toys/Sports Equipment

INTERIOR

- ☐ Refrigerator Magnets
- ☐ Valuables
- ☐ Family Photos
- ☐ Magazines/Newspapers
- ☐ Personal Knick-Knacks
- ☐ Posters
- ☐ Awards/Trophies
- ☐ Collections
- ☐ Games
- ☐ Curios
- ☐ Paperwork
- ☐ Religious Items

MAINTENANCE

A house that is dirty and disorganized, will stop a buyer cold. Before putting your home on the market, perform a thorough cleaning and maintenance check.

Make certain each of the following are operable and in good condition (e.g., secure, not broken or damaged, etc.)

EXTERIOR

- ☐ Trees/Shrubs
- ☐ Windowpanes
- ☐ Windows (move freely)
- ☐ Chimney
- ☐ Outdoor Lights
- ☐ Garage Door Opener
- ☐ Doorbell
- ☐ Door Hinges
- ☐ Door Handles/Locks

INTERIOR

- ☐ Walls (spackle & paint)
- ☐ Handrails
- ☐ Light Switches/Plugs
- ☐ Light Fixtures
- ☐ Fireplace
- ☐ Tub/Shower Caulking
- ☐ Drains
- ☐ Faucets
- ☐ Toilets
- ☐ Air Conditioner
- ☐ Furnace Filters



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CLEANING

Perform a “cleaning overhaul” on your home. The items on the list should be cleaned from top to bottom, and neatly organized or manicured. You may even want to consider professional services.

EXTERIOR

- ☐ Lawn
- ☐ Shrubs/Trees
- ☐ Garage (grease spots)
- ☐ Front Entrance

INTERIOR

- ☐ Carpeting (steam clean)
- ☐ Wood Floors
- ☐ Tile Floors (wax)
- ☐ Drapes (steam clean)
- ☐ Closets
- ☐ Sinks (leak stains)
- ☐ Bathroom
 - (must be extra clean)
 - re-grout tile
 - caulk tub/shower
 - replace old, stained toilet (if necessary)
 - repair leaky faucet

- ☐ Window Sills
- ☐ Windows/Glass/Mirrors
- ☐ Baseboards
- ☐ Walls
- ☐ Ceilings
- ☐ Light Fixtures
- ☐ Ceiling Fans
- ☐ Electric Cords
 - (remove or hide)
- ☐ Kitchen
 - (must be extra clean)
 - cupboards
 - drawers
 - refrigerator
 - freezer (defrost)
 - oven
 - stove/vent fan
 - pantry
 - (cleaned & de-cluttered)

- ☐ Plants
 - (remove if unhealthy)
- ☐ Boxes
 - (store in organized piles)
- ☐ Furnace
- ☐ Air Conditioner
- ☐ Attic
- ☐ Basement
- ☐ Fireplace
 - (include chimney)
- ☐ Remove Evidence of Pets
 - (as much as possible)

(Continued...)

DETAILING

Detailing is the process of adding extra touches and accents that are subtle, but have a huge impact on a buyer's emotions. These extra touches will make it easier for buyers to see themselves living in the home.

Consider the following details:

EXTERIOR

- ☐ Sealcoat driveway
- ☐ Replace old storm doors with full-view doors
- ☐ Replace old house numbers
- ☐ Replace old mailbox & exterior light (front porch)
- ☐ Add potted or hanging flowers to the front entrance
- ☐ Clean downspouts/gutters

INTERIOR

- ☐ Display large, green plants throughout home (don't overdo it)
- ☐ Apply polyurethane to cabinets, woodwork & exposed brick
- ☐ Paint ceilings with pure white, flat paint
- ☐ Add trim moldings to enhance rooms with standard 8' ceilings
- ☐ Replace standard light fixtures with upgraded fixtures
- ☐ Install combination ceiling fan/light fixtures where appropriate
- ☐ Install a dimmer switch in the dining room
- ☐ Match all light switch and outlet covers
- ☐ Add matching towels to bathrooms
- ☐ Replace shower curtains
- ☐ Install bright lighting in basement
- ☐ Replace ordinary, slab doors with paneled or trimmed doors

In most cases, major improvements rarely result in a dollar-for-dollar return, but they might mean the difference between selling or not selling. Be careful not to over-improve by adding amenities that are uncommon in your neighborhood or price range.



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