

Homeowner's Pre-Sale Readiness Checklist

What to do before you sell.

If you've decided to list your property for sale, you're most likely considering what areas of the home and property warrant your attention and require some time, energy, and resource investments to maximize its sale value. *We're excited to help you get your home ready to list for sale.* This comprehensive guide will help you, as a homeowner, to prepare to list your home for sale and share a few suggestions that could increase your sale price by thousands.

Should we collaborate on selling your home, my market expertise will ensure your home shines in its best light for prospective buyers, especially online. With our distinct online marketing strategies, your property will gain extensive visibility.

While having your home ready for photo and video sessions is essential, please don't feel pressured for it to be perfect during our initial walkthrough. Rest assured, we've successfully handled numerous sales, and understand that every home, much like **our** own, has its lived-in charm.

Embrace it and trust us to guide you.

- Realtor walkthrough.** If needed, we will take the time to walk through your home, room by room, to discuss possible improvements that you can make with little-to-no out of pocket expenses. We will only suggest improvements that will help you reduce your time on the market and net you top-dollar for your home.
- Change light bulbs and update light fixtures.** It's easy to forget about all the bulbs that have burned out over the years, but you will want your home to be as bright as possible. Lighting makes an incredible difference. Please ensure every bulb is working, including lamps, pool lights, landscaping lights, and the oven range light. We will have these all on for photo day.
- Get some boxes.** A big part of the adventure you're about to embark on involves reducing clutter. *You can find free boxes on local FB neighborhood pages. Think of it as getting a head start on moving.* You'll want your home clutter-free so the new owners can picture themselves living there. Box up anything you are not using. Organize closets and pantries. Less is more.
- Storage unit or garage.** Consider storing any boxes, clutter, bulky furniture pieces & toys in a storage unit or neatly in the garage. If your furniture is old, damaged and worn, it may be best to show that room empty. We will help put a plan together for any furniture that may need to be removed or relocated.
- Make an extra set of keys.** Prospective Buyers and their agents will need to access your home for showings, so you'll need an extra set of keys for the digital lockbox. Agent showings are typically scheduled through a great app called ShowingTime. Sellers and Listing Agent will receive a text notification for all showing requests. Agents will only access your home upon your approval of the showing by you. Don't worry, most showings are scheduled for the day before.



- ❑ **Tackle the bathrooms.** Remove all the toiletries you have on display; counters should be clear. Think white and bright! Invest in some new white towels for the towel racks in all bathrooms. Shower curtains should be light and neutral.
- ❑ **Laundry room.** Should be clean and organized. If you have a shelf above your washer and dryer with a bunch of stuff on it, consider getting 3 matching bins to hide your stuff in. *Pinterest Laundry Rooms for inspiration.*
- ❑ **Spruce up the kitchen.** The kitchen is one of the rooms Buyers are **most attracted to** so if you're looking to skip a room, *this shouldn't be it.* You'll want the counters to be as clear as possible. Clean inside the oven, microwave, fridge (and remove the magnets, photos, and reminders). You may also want to clear the decor on top of the cabinets which can be distracting and collect dust. Consider investing in some fresh flowers and a beautiful white or clear bowl with some fresh fruit in it such as lemons.
- ❑ **Create inviting bedrooms.** The bedrooms should be inviting. That means more cleaning and decluttering, and possibly, investing in a few props if needed. If you don't already have one, invest in a neutral-colored duvet cover or a fluffy white down comforter (Amazon is a great resource). Think of your last visit to a luxury hotel, ensure all beds have a minimum of four pillows with crisp white sheets. Remove any bulky or weathered furniture.
- ❑ **Free up the master closet.** Take a close look at what you have not worn in over a year (including shoes). It may be a good idea to pack up those items or donate them. Less clothing hanging and folded on shelves will help make your closet appear larger. *Everyone wants to have a larger closet!*
- ❑ **Plumbing.** Take care of any known leaks or plumbing issues. Replace dated faucets. Switching out the kitchen faucet can be a low-priced option to freshen up your kitchen. *I have a referral for a great plumber in the area.*
- ❑ **Tackle the living room.** Clean the sofas and chairs. You may want to invest in some new light colored throw pillows. Hide the magazine rack and all the clutter that has accumulated. Hide the wires from your TV/stereo/speakers in all rooms, especially for photo and video day. Family photos are usually fine as-long-as there are only a few. The less personal effects, the more prospective buyers will be able to envision your home as their own.
- ❑ **Dining room.** Remove the piles of stuff that may have accumulated on the dining room table. Clean up the hutch or bar area. Simple and clean is best. The table should have one simple centerpiece, you can jazz it up with a runner or tablecloth also.
- ❑ **Store vs. donate vs. throw away.** It's a pain (and expensive) to store all the stuff you don't really need. Don't pack anything that you don't plan to bring to the next house. Consider donating anything you do not want or that you have not used in over a year, including clothing. Have a garage sale, or post items for sale or free on local FB pages. There are a few local Goodwill and Salvation Army donation locations that will take most items that are not seriously damaged. You can also rent a large trash dumpster for major hauling.



- ❑ **Making an Entrance.** Remember that **most Buyers will have an emotional reaction to your home within 15 seconds of entering it**, so what they experience at the **entrance** is **CRITICAL**. You will want your foyer and front yard to be clean, decluttered and inviting. Paint your front door if needed, invest in fresh throw pillows or cushions on patio furniture, add fresh flowers to a pot, pull weeds, and put away your hose. Check out Target for a fresh new, affordable welcome mat and simple wreath. Power wash the exterior walkway and driveway, if needed. Keep front porch swept before showings.
- ❑ **Backyard.** Ensure your yard is free of weeds, clean and grass is trimmed low. If you have a pool, ensure the water is clear and pool tile is clean. Declutter and remove any non-patio furniture or related items. More open space will help your yard feel more expansive.
- ❑ **Remaining Personal Items.** Once you list your home for sale, think of it as an investment you are trying to get top dollar for. You will want your home to appeal to as many Buyers as possible. That will only happen if they can picture their own stuff in your house. Walk through every room in your house and pretend you're a Buyer. Consider removing any items that you can afford to store elsewhere.
- ❑ **Paint touch-ups and repainting.** A fresh coat of paint is one of the cheapest ways to freshen up your home! Bold colors are bound to be a turn-off to some Buyers, so to appeal to as many people possible, take the time to repaint your home if needed. Kitchens and main living areas should have neutral colors. Light colors will help small rooms look bigger. Bedrooms can usually get away with bolder colors, our team will help you with those suggestions. Don't forget about baseboards and ceilings – they might need some white paint. A popular color by Sherwin Williams (can pick up at Home Depot) that works great for most homes: "Accessible Beige."
- ❑ **Make a list, check it twice.** You should have a detailed accounting of all the little repairs that you've been avoiding tackling over the years, including the leaky faucet, the picture holes in the wall, etc. Plan to complete all those items before listing the home. If you aren't handy yourself, bring in a handyman to take care of it. *(P.S. I know a guy!)*
- ❑ **Get the windows cleaned.** Investing in professional window cleaning before your photo and video day is well worth it. Did you know that over time, your windows build up a layer of dirt, water deposits, streaks, smudges, and fingerprints? This grime can obscure the incoming light and become unsightly. Clean windows will help the home shine on the outside and inside.
- ❑ **Get the carpets cleaned.** Unless your carpets are brand new, you'll want to have them steam cleaned. You'll be amazed at what a difference it makes. If your tile grout is discolored, you may want to consider having that professionally cleaned as well. If your carpets are past the point of cleaning, we may want to discuss other options for replacing the flooring.
- ❑ **The final clean.** While you can complete this final step yourself, we recommend bringing in professional cleaners who will make sure to clean all the spots you don't. It may also be wise to keep a cleaning service going while your home is on the market to keep it as fresh as possible for showings.



- ❑ **Make plans for the pets.** Prospective Buyers may not love your pets as much as you do. Make a plan to have your pets out of the house for showings, whenever possible. Remove all signs of pets for photo and video day (hide bowls, litter boxes, crates).
- ❑ **Make plans for the kids' stuff.** Most Buyer's won't want to look at all your kids' toys or finger painting works of art. Some toys are fine if they are organized. It may also help to store the extra toys in a hall closet for showings.
- ❑ **Make your house smell good.** It's important for home sellers to be honest with themselves about the smells curating in their home and take care of the root cause of the smell, rather than simply masking the smell. A clean smell and a deodorized smell are two different things. A strong scent can distract the Buyer's ability to make a decision. You may also want to limit cooking certain foods that leave strong aromas days before showings. Vanilla and citrus are some of the best scents. Essential oils are a great option too.
- ❑ **Staging.** There are certain situations where some light or full staging may be recommended. We will discuss this option with you in more detail during our walk-through.
- ❑ **Photo and video shoot.** When your home is ready, it's time for the photographer and videographer to work their magic. This will happen a few days before you list your home for sale. Natural light is very important! Plan to have all lights on and blinds up for this day. We like to shoot in the best lighting possible, if there is rain or severe clouds, we may need to reschedule the shoot. We promise that all your hard work will be well worth it!
- ❑ **The final once-over.** Take one final walk through all the rooms and adjust as necessary. Do you see anything that might distract or turn off a Buyer?
- ❑ **Showings.** Consider leaving some bottled water and snacks out for potential buyers with a note neatly on the kitchen counter. Buyers love this! Open blinds to let the natural light in. Turn light music and lights on if possible. Secure valuable items, including medication, cash and jewelry.
- ❑ **Final note.** We've helped clients accomplish everything on this list in as little as four days. We are here to help every step of the way. We are a team and if you need any help, have questions or need any additional referrals for services - we have you covered!

While this is not a completely exhaustive list, completing most of these suggestions will help position your home the best in this market, and help you prepare for listing your home and maximizing the sale value.

Thinking about selling and haven't already set up a time to meet with us? Let us show you our cutting-edge marketing strategies, market insights, and how we leverage emerging technology and social media to market our listings.

Contact me today or visit southbayarealiving.com/agent to schedule a time to meet with me.

