

# 8 Things To Do Before Listing Your Home



## 1. Make Repairs



Now is the time to fix all of those nagging things that you just lived with. Inside the house, look for things like stained ceilings, missing tile, broken windows and doors, heavily scratched floors and other signs of neglect. Outside, look for broken or missing shingles, patio pavers and tuckpointing. If you have a deck, check for cracks in floor boards and loose railings. Make a list of everything you see and then decide which things you're going to tackle. A real estate agent can be very helpful in determining what needs to be done and what doesn't, but a good rule of thumb is "If you have to ask if it should be fixed, it probably needs to be addressed."

## 2. Create Curb Appeal



It's important that your home makes a good first impression. When potential buyers drive up to your home, you want them to think, "Wow! I could live here!" To make sure buyers want to see the inside of your home, make sure the outside is well-kept, tidy and inviting. It's important to touch-up or completely repaint trim, keep the grass cut, edge along sidewalks and paths, maintain flowers and shrubs and keep the yard tidy. You never know when curious buyers will drive by.

## 3. Think Neutrals



If you decide to do some interior painting, stick to neutral colors. You've heard it before, but it's the truth. Neutrals don't distract and they allow potential buyers to imagine their things in your home. If you'd like some guidance on choosing colors, check out this collection of tips. For help on painting, check out [these ideas](#).

## 4. Update Hardware



If the knobs or handles on your kitchen cupboards or drawers are outdated, update them. It's one of the cheapest and easiest ways to upgrade a tired kitchen or bathroom, and will give your home a more modern look and will help sell your home for maximum value.

## 5. Declutter

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Resist the urge to roll your eyes at this one. It is imperative that your home looks livable. Potential buyers may not be able to see past your clutter. Think of it this way—don't move things you no longer want or need. Make decisions now and your house will sell faster and your move will be easier. It's no secret that getting started is the hardest part of decluttering. Take one room, or even part of one room, at a time and dive in. Recycle or shred paper. Donate books, toys, clothing and duplicate household items. If you're getting frustrated and you can't deal with one more stack of papers or shoebox of old photos, put them in a plastic tub, label the tub and stack it somewhere out of the way. A stack of tubs doesn't look like clutter. The more bare counter, shelf, and floor space that can be seen, the better.

## 6. Clean!

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This may be the most important step you take toward getting your home ready to sell. For a home to live up to the "move-in condition" description, it has to be clean. If you already keep a clean house, simply keep up the good work, checking to make sure you don't overlook little-used closets and other nooks and crannies that aren't part of your weekly routine. This needs to be a deep cleaning. For the rest of us, it's time to get serious. Start at the top (the attic or second-story rooms) and work your way down. Clean ceiling light fixtures first, scrub walls and woodwork and finish with floors. As you work your way from top to bottom, don't leave one area until it is completely clean and then move on. Don't drag dirt from one area back into the place you just cleaned. Finally, don't underestimate the power of clean windows. Buyers won't walk in and think, "Wow, clean windows!" But, freshly cleaned windows look great from the outside and with the lights on, they sparkle on the inside.

## 7. Rearrange Your Furniture

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Your furniture is arranged the way it best suits you and your family. When you're staging your home to sell, you'll need to use your furniture as marketing tools to help create inviting vignettes. Avoid having furniture lined up along the walls. Pull the sofa away from the wall and pull chairs close to create a conversation area. Also, you may need to remove some furniture so it's easy for people to walk around in the rooms. If you've toured model homes and had the feeling you could move right in and live there, that's what you're going for. Be sure to use best lifting practices as well. If you just don't know what to do, contact your Realtor, and they'll suggest a capable stager who can set up a consultation to give you some tips.

## 8. Remove Personal Items

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If you have a lot of family photos on the wall or several pieces of your child's artwork on the refrigerator door, you should take them down and store them out of sight. This will help buyers see the home as a clean slate they could make their own. It might be sad to take those personal items down but it will help you sell your home in the meantime.

