

Countdown to Closing

A Seller's Home Preparation Checklist



Prior to Listing. Now is a great time to evaluate the house and decide what repairs or improvements are necessary before the home is ready for the market. This may include small to medium renovations as well as lots of maintenance and general repairs.

- ☐ **Walk through the home and create your to do list.** You might consider getting a pre-listing inspection at this step for a professional evaluation of the home's current condition.
- ☐ **Tackle any larger remodeling projects with an eye towards resale value.** Kitchen and baths are a great place to invest time and money. Avoid any changes that are too taste-specific.
- ☐ **Make all general repairs.** Tackle your to-do list and don't forget to address cosmetics as well. A fresh coat of paint, refreshed landscaping, and large-scale de-cluttering are all great tasks at this stage.



Prior to the Open House. Now that larger projects have been completed, it's time to polish the overall appearance of your home. Be looking for ways to accentuate your home's positive attributes—if you have beautiful wood floors under an area rug, uncover them, open the curtains, polish and clean everything in sight.

- ☐ **Clean and declutter.** You might consider hiring a professional cleaner for this special day. Don't forget to stash the everyday clutter too. When stowing it all away, go for the bottom drawer. Buyers almost never open those—but almost *always* pull out the top ones!
- ☐ **Turn on the lights and open the curtains.** Make it bright and cheerful.
- ☐ **Eliminate Odors.** Use your judgment about tricks like baking cookies or bread on open house day, but whatever you do, make sure the house smells fresh with no hints of must, garbage, smoke, or pet odors.



Prior to the Home Inspection. You'll want to make sure everything is in tip-top shape come inspection day. Be sure that all areas of the home are accessible to the inspector and that all systems are operating.

- ☐ **Utilities On.** Make sure everything is on and available for inspection.
- ☐ **Make sure it works.** Make sure everything operates as it should (toilets, lights, doors, windows, etc.). Replace light-bulbs too. Don't let your electrical be in question due to a dead bulb.
- ☐ **Make sure it's accessible.** Provide access (including keys) to all areas for inspection. Be sure that belongings are not blocking the electrical panel, attic access, or the crawlspace; and do not lock a pet away in any room of the house. Make alternate arrangements for animals.



Prior to Closing. You are about to transfer ownership of your home. Here are a few last minute household tasks to keep in mind:

- ☐ **Maintain the house in good condition.** Any damage that occurred after the buyer inspected should be fixed.
- ☐ **Notify the utility company of final service date.** Contact them at least seven days before your moving date. You also have the responsibility to give them access to your meter for a final reading and shut-off (otherwise you could end up paying for service even *after* you move out).
- ☐ **Be a stellar seller.** Leave behind any owners manuals for appliances that convey with the house. Mow the lawn. Leave the property clean!