

# Pre-Listing Checklist for Sellers

## “The Guide to Cleaning & Staging your Home for Sale”

*Our goal is to simplify, declutter, and depersonalize the home in order for it to show brighter & bigger in order to give potential buyers a feeling of spaciousness. The items on this Pre-Listing Checklist for Sellers will provide you with an advantage over your competition. Removing items to storage or packing them for moving are a very important part of this process. Think of it as giving you a head start on the move to your new home.*

### **Curb Appeal**

- Repair/replace any damaged shingles.
- Clean/repair the gutters.
- Clean/repair the HVAC units.
- Repair broken windows & shutters. Replace torn screens. Make sure frames/seams have solid caulking. If not, repair. Don't forget your security door & screens.
- Repair/replace door knobs, doorbell & light fixtures if necessary.
- Remove all toys, yard equipment, and any litter from the entryway or yard.
- Remove any cobwebs & birds' nests from the entire home. Pay close attention to the entryway and back patio.
- Remove stains from the walkways & driveway – use concrete cleaner and/or kitty litter.
- Repair/clean all patio furniture & the courtyard/patio areas. Remove any items that can't be repaired.
- Be sure the pool & spa are sparkling. And clean area around pool. Stage your pool furniture & hide toys and pool equipment away.
- Fill in any holes in exterior walls and touch up with paint.
- Clean/paint the front door & mailbox, if you have one on your lot.
- Hose off the exterior of your home – pay close attention to the entrances, courtyard & back patio.
- Wash the windows. Clean screens – but do not replace them. Sunscreens, especially, will prevent the home from being as light and bright as possible. Store the screens in the garage so the buyer can see that you own screens.
- Wash your trash can & place it somewhere that prevents buyers from seeing it when they first pull up to the home.
- Mow the lawn, if you have grass.
- Hose down artificial grass & use a flexible lawn rake or a broom with stiff bristles to remove dust, dirt, leaves and other debris. If you have pets or children, you may need to call a professional to clean, groom, & repair.
- Trim the trees and shrubs.
- Weed your garden, grass, rocks, sidewalks, driveway & any hardscaping.
- Add colorful plants to fill in any bare spots.
- Edge the walkways.
- Sweep the walkways & driveway.
- Replace doormats that are worn and torn.
- Polish/shine any brass hardware on the doors & light fixtures. Polish any wood doors & all trim with “Old English” or “Liquid Gold”.

## Overall Interior

- Walk through your home. Give away, throw away, donate, or store anything that you won't absolutely need until after the move. ie. furniture, knick knacks, clothing, toys, worn rugs, equipment, appliances, papers, books, cosmetics, jewelry, games etc.
- You MUST eliminate all odors. Have a trusted friend or neighbor (or two) walk in your home and report any odors to you.
- Depersonalize your home by storing personal photos so that potential buyers may visualize their personal items in the home. ***This is probably one of the most important things to a potential buyer.***
- Walk through the home again – this time, take your tools. Fix cracked molding, leaky faucets, loose door knobs & remove cobwebs.
- Replace worn or broken light fixtures, light switches, outlet plates, door knobs, & faucets.
- Replace or clean A/C filters. Clean all A/C vents and intake grids.
- Upgrade the wattage in all light fixtures to the highest level safety will allow. Buyers love light & bright homes.
- Dust and wash all light fixtures and ceiling fans.
- If you have a fireplace, clean it.
- Clean & organize your closets. Add extra space by storing or giving away items. You want the closets to appear spacious, and the less “stuff” you have in them, the more spacious they will appear. If the closet walls or shelves need cleaned or dusted, now is the time.
- Add a fresh coat of paint in light, neutral colors to some or all of your interior walls.
- Steam clean carpet, if not replacing. The general rule of thumb: If the carpet has not been cleaned in over a year, it needs cleaned. If the carpet remains stained or discolored, it needs replaced. If replacing, we can help you make choices that will be most appealing to buyers.
- Clean the floors. Wax, if necessary. Hire a professional to clean seriously dirty grout or consider doing it yourself.
- Clean/Vacuum/Dust window blinds, drapes, and shades.
- Wash or dry clean curtains.
- Wash all windows, window frames, and window sills. Remove any screens from the windows and store in the garage.
- Use an air freshener in each room. Try to avoid floral scents as they can be too strong.
- Remove all valuables, such as jewelry, art, knick knacks, medications, cash, guns & so on.
- Open window shades and pull back curtains to create a spacious & bright feeling.
- Put any pet supplies (including dishes) in a place where they are not the first thing a buyer sees or smells when they walk into the room.

## Living & Family Rooms

- Make these rooms spacious & inviting.
- Discard/repair any chipped or worn furniture.
- Make sure that there is not too much furniture in these rooms. Select pieces that look best & put others in the garage or in storage.
- Replace worn rugs & pillows.
- Dust/Clean all surfaces.
- Vacuum upholstery, drapes, pillows etc.

### **Dining Room**

- Put out fresh flowers as a centerpiece on your table — *Lilies smell great and last a long time.*
- Clean out your china cabinet. Polish any visible silverware.

### **Bedrooms**

- Arrange/remove furniture to create a more spacious space.
- Remove any games, magazines, toys, jewelry etc. Clear off & dust nightstands.
- Replace bedspreads, quilts & pillow shams if they are worn.
- Thin all closets dramatically & organize remaining items neatly on shelves & be sure to allow space between hanging items. At one very visible spot, leave space, so the rear wall of the closet will show when the door is opened. Leave a small empty space on each shelf to show potential storage space.

### **Bathrooms**

- Replace any bad caulking around sinks, showers, or tubs.
- Remove mildew, hard water, and rust stains.
- Wash/replace shower curtains.
- Be sure everything sparkles – even the grout.
- Remove or replace worn rugs & towels.

### **Kitchen**

- Throw away all foods (and spices) that you've been storing for too long.
- Clean the inside of the refrigerator, stove, and all cabinets & drawers.
- Make sure everything is organized to invoke a feeling of spaciousness. All flat surfaces (countertops, appliance tops, & furniture) cleared off as much as possible. Kitchen counters should have very little on them to show that there is plenty of available workspace. Keep appliances stored when not in use.
- If your stove has gas burners, purchase new drip pans.
- Polish cabinets with furniture oil.
- Be sure countertops & appliances sparkle. Polish sinks with lemon or vegetable oil.
- Install new faucets, if necessary.
- Go over the kitchen as if you were a health inspector. Clean the inside of the oven and even the seal of the dishwasher door.
- Remove all magnets, notes, pictures, etc. from the front & sides of the refrigerator.
- Stow trashcan in pantry.

### **Laundry Room**

- Organize shelves and put away non-cleanser items.
- Keep area clear of clothes.
- Be sure floor is super clean & cabinets are polished.
- Clean & dust surfaces of washer and dryer.

### **Garage**

- Get rid of any & all unnecessary items. Pack like someone who is moving soon
- Organize to create more floor space. Place all of your belonging on shelves or move them to storage. This will help make inspections easier later on.
- Be sure the garage is well-lit & bright.
- Clean all of your equipment & vents. Fix any insulation or wiring that may be showing.
- If you have window sunscreens, extra cans of paint, or extra tile or carpeting, leave it visible for a potential buyer to see.
- Deal with any odors.

### **Before Showings**

- Keep A/C set no warmer than 75 degrees and heat no cooler than 70 degrees.
- Air out your home.
- Do a quick clean & de-clutter, dust and vacuum.
- Take out all trash.
- Put pets outside, in garage, or take them with you.

Even if you don't have time to complete all of the items on this checklist, do your best to complete most prior to your scheduled photo appointment. You may need to invest a few dollars in the hiring of professionals now in order to reap the rewards of that investment in a higher sale price & a faster sale. Buyers who become at all nervous about the upkeep and conditioning of the home do not tend to present high offers.

All of our listing agents here at Stringham West Realty are trained to provide cleaning, staging, and general showing/presentation advice. Feel free to ask for our opinions or advice throughout the process in regard to any of these items or others that may not be included.



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