

ULTIMATE PREPARATION

Checklist



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**EXACTLY HOW TO
GET YOUR HOME
READY TO SELL**

EXTERIOR



EXTERIOR PREPARATION & MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST ITEMS

- Put down a new black front door mat without any personal information such as your last name
- If needed, apply a fresh coat of paint to the front door
- Put container plants on one side or both sides of the front door
- Make sure you have front porch exterior lighting in place
- If possible, install accent lights along walkways or highlighting the landscaping
- Put down a fresh layer of mulch
- Plant seasonal flowers in garden beds
- Hang flower or fern plants from front porch
- Disconnect your hose and put away in the shed
- Utilize a bench or small bistro table on front porch for a "conversation area"
- Ensure your grill is clean and cooking utensils and supplies out of site
- If you have a pool, put away all supplies and arrange furniture around pool

EXTERIOR STAGING CHECKLIST ITEMS

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- If needed, apply a fresh coat of paint to the front door
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WHOLE HOUSE



WHOLE HOUSE PREPARATION & MAINTENANCE ITEMS

FOCUS ON FLOORING

- Deep clean carpets
- Clean and polish hardwood floors
- Scrub tile floors and grout. If discolored consider a grout cleaning service.
- Clean and wax any linoleum, vct or other vinyl flooring

FOCUS ON WINDOWS AND SLIDING GLASS DOORS

- Clean your windows and sliding glass doors both inside and outside
- Repair or replace any torn or missing screens
- Repair or replace any windows or sliding glass doors that are cracked or cloudy
- Ensure all windows and sliding glass doors open smoothly
- Replace any broken or worn blinds

FOCUS ON CABINETS AND COUNTERTOPS

- Clean and polish both inside and outside of cabinets
- Ensure cabinet doors and drawers open and close smoothly
- Use a magic eraser to clean any scuff marks
- Consider painting any dated or worn wood cabinets with a cream white paint. Make sure you use paint that is appropriate for cabinets and be sure to prep them before painting
- If cabinets can not be painted and are very dated or broken, consider replacing them or refacing them
- If countertops are worn or dated consider replacing them. If your market calls for high end granite or quartz you should replace with the same materia

FOCUS ON LIGHT FIXTURES

- Replace any broken, burnt out or flickering lightbulbs
- Dust all light bulbs and fixtures
- Ensure all light bulbs are the same (bright white or warm white)
- Replace low wattage light bulbs with at least 60-75 watt lightbulbs. More light the better.
- Replace old, dirty and dark lampshades with neutral or white
- Replace dated ceiling fans with light fixtures
- Replace dated hallway lighting with white or brushed nickel flush-mounted fixtures

FOCUS ON WALLS, TRIM, DOORS, AND MANTELS

- Patch any holes or dents in the walls and touch up paint
- Dust or wash all baseboards, stair railings and fireplace mantels
- Repair any water damage and repaint
- Paint over any bold colors with a light, neutral color. Revere Pewter is a popular greige right now
- Paint over any dated wood paneling with a light, neutral color
- Apply a fresh coat of paint to any walls that are very scuffed, stained or chipping/peeling
- Apply a fresh coat of paint (white semigloss) to any trim, doors, stairwell banisters that are very scuffed, stained or chipping/peeling
- Paint all ceilings white, remove popcorn ceilings if possible
- Remove any dated wallpaper and paint walls

FOCUS ON MISCELLANEOUS AREAS

- Clean a wood burning fireplace of all ash, burned wood
- Clean fireplace screen and or doors
- Clean, dust, polish and/or vacuum all furniture
- Clean, dust and/or vacuum under all furniture
- Remove old, worn, stained and/or damaged furniture
- Remove any large space consuming plants
- Remove any dead, dying or unhealthy plants
- Clean and dust any remaining plants including fake decorative ones
- Eliminate all pet smells and smoke smells





WHOLE HOUSE STAGING ITEMS

- Remove all throw rugs (not area rugs) such as those in front of kitchen and bath sinks/toilets
- Try to reduce as much pet items as possible
- Let as much natural light in as possible and remove most curtains and window treatments. This is hard to believe but it will allow your home to photograph and show better
- Remove any personal boards from walls such as bulletin boards or child behavior charts, etc.
- Remove personal items like pictures of family, diplomas, trophies etc. You want buyers to imagine themselves living here and not you
- Remove any paperwork with personal identification information
- Remove all team specific sports decoration items
- Remove all religious items
- Remove anything that identifies with a specific culture
- Remove any animal wall trophies (antlers, heads, etc)
- Remove firearms or other weapons from the home
- Remove any free-standing coat racks
- Remove extra art or pictures on the walls, try to limit to 1 per room or 1 group per room
- Remove extra televisions that are around the house, only have one or two in main living areas
- Rearrange furniture to improve traffic flow through the house
- Remove any extra furniture that is not needed to make the house look larger
- Wall art should be hung at eye level for a 5'7 person
- Consider decorative mirrors to make rooms look larger instead of wall art
- Group decor items into groups of 3 with varying heights or styles
- Consider adding plants into rooms that are dull or boring

FOCUS ON CLOSETS

- Remove all items from the floor
- Remove as much as you can to make closets look spacious and not cramped
- Organize and have all items in the closet hanging in the same direction and uniform



KITCHEN



KITCHEN PREPARATION & MAINTENANCE ITEMS

- Ensure your appliances are in good working order, repair or replace if necessary
- Ensure your appliances light bulbs are working correctly, replace if necessary
- Clean stove including deep cleaning inside and top
- Clean stove vents
- Clean refrigerator both inside and outside as well as underneath and behind
- Clean microwave both inside and outside. If hanging above stove be sure to clean the underside too.
- Clean dishwasher and ensure no leaks
- Clean or replace trash cans
- Ensure "Whole House Preparation & Maintenance Items" was followed for this room

KITCHEN STAGING ITEMS

- Try to remove everything from kitchen countertops such as small appliances such as toasters and coffee makers, containers, paper towel holders etc. You want to show as much of the countertops as possible
- In the corner of countertops, you can add a piece such as a decorative plate or flowers in a vase to show depth and bring some color into the space
- Consider replacing your cabinet hardware with new stylish brushed nickel or oil rubbed bronze depending on your decor
- You can also add a singular decorative piece onto the island such as a glass vase filled with apples.
- Organize and remove extra items from cabinets, keep only essentials
- Clear the refrigerator front from any magnets, calendars or anything else you put on there
- If your cabinets don't go all the way to the ceiling, remove anything your store or decorate from the tops of the cabinets
- Remove any mats from in front of the sink
- Consider adding under top cabinet lighting strips
- Organize kitchen pantry, closet, and cabinets. Ensure open bags have clips, face items forward and use baskets or storage containers for loose items



DINING ROOM



DINING ROOM STAGING ITEMS

- Dust and clean room and furniture, including any dining ware on display in a China Cabinet
- Ensure "Whole House Preparation & Maintenance Items" was followed for this room

DINING ROOM STAGING ITEMS

- Remove any extra leaves in dining room table which will make the room look larger
- Remove any extra chairs from around dining room table, only have a total of 4 (4 at sides) or if a large room have 6 (2 at head and 4 on sides)
- Only have a maximum 6 sets of china on display in the China Cabinet
- Do not set your table, instead close a centerpiece that is an appropriate size that adds some color and texture



BATHROOMS



BATHROOM PREPARATION & MAINTENANCE ITEMS

- Ensure showers, bathtubs, sinks, and toilets are repaired and deep cleaned.
- Remove old or dirty caulk and apply a new layer of caulk around bathtubs, showers, and sinks.
- Clean all mirrors and glass surfaces.
- Dust and clean all vents.
- Ensure "Whole House Preparation & Maintenance Items" was followed for this room.

BATHROOM STAGING ITEMS

- Make bathrooms have a spa feel to them. Decorate with candles and new bar soaps and a couple accessories
- Replace shower curtain and liners with new white ones. Especially if old out of date patterns
- Only keep in the shower what is essential (shampoo, conditioner and bar of soap) remove everything else
- Take all everyday products off the countertops such as toothbrushes, razors, q-tips, etc.
- Remove extra towels, only have 1 or 2 on display and preferably freshly washed ones
- Hide any cleaning items, especially toilet bowl brushes
- Remove all bathmats

BEDROOMS CHECKLIST



BEDROOMS PREPARATION & MAINTENANCE ITEMS

- Wash or dry-clean all comforters and pillows for a fresh look
- Ensure "Whole House Preparation & Maintenance Items" was followed for this room

BEDROOMS STAGING ITEMS

- Declutter, remove as many items as possible from the floor and furniture
- If a kids room, remove as many toys as possible
- Remove as much from the walls as possible, especially anything that does not match the comforter
- Remove any extra furniture that is not needed to make the room look larger

LIVING ROOM



LIVING ROOM PREPARATION & MAINTENANCE ITEMS

- Remove any old or worn furniture, especially if you have an old chair that doesn't match the rest of the decor. If your furniture is heavily worn, damaged or dated, then consider renting furniture from a rental company
- Ensure "Whole House Preparation & Maintenance Items" was followed for this room

LIVING ROOM STAGING ITEMS

- Take down all personal photographs and family items that show people this is your house and not their house. You want buyers imagining themselves living in your home.
- Remove as much knick-knacks and decorations as possible.
- Consider a couple new decorative throw pillows to add some color to the room.
- Drape a soft decorative blanket over one side of the couch.
- Hide all remote controls, magazines, and other daily items.
- Create a focal point in the room to draw the buyers eyes to. Use a colorful object near the focal point and place the couch facing it.
- Consider hanging a decorative mirror to make the room look larger.
- Consider purchasing and displaying a coffee table book.



HALLWAYS/CLOSETS AND SHELVES



HALLWAYS/CLOSETS AND SHELVES PREPARATION & MAINTENANCE ITEMS

- Ensure "Whole House Preparation & Maintenance Items" was followed for these areas.

HALLWAYS/CLOSETS AND SHELVES STAGING ITEMS

- Remove items from shelves so a maximum of 2/3 of space is used
- For rows of decorative shelving, place taller books on lower shelves and shorter books on higher shelves. Also, stack some books on their sides and place a few decorative objects that match the books on top of the stacks
- Remove any religious, political, sports teams, self-help and other items that express an opinion the buyers may not agree with
- Remove as many items from closets as you can to show them off as spacious and have enough storage space for the new buyers
- Remove items from the floor
- Follow the retail merchandising concept called "facing" where you position all items in closets so that they face forwards or hung in the same direction
- Group similar items together. Winter coats together, pants together, shirts together, etc. Make the closet look extremely organized
- Organize loose items into baskets or storage containers
- For coats use wooden hangers
- For large hallways hang a large picture or group of 3 pictures together

9) HOME OFFICE



HOME OFFICE PREPARATION & MAINTENANCE ITEMS

- Store all files and paperwork you don't need for everyday activities
- Store all personal and confidential or client information out of sight. Be sure to set up a password-protected screen saver on your computers
- Ensure "Whole House Preparation & Maintenance Items" was followed for this room

HOME OFFICE STAGING ITEMS

- Remove any big and bulky filing cabinets that take up a lot of space and store them somewhere else to make the office look larger and more appealing
- Clean everything off your desk surface and leave only your computer and lamp
- Declutter any bulletin boards or wall organizers. You can leave a few things but don't have it looking overcrowded.
- If your home office is not a dedicated room consider taking it down and making the room to serve its main purpose.



PLAYROOMS



PLAYROOMS PREPARATION & MAINTENANCE ITEMS

- Ensure "Whole House Preparation & Maintenance Items" was followed for this areas.
- Inspect the furniture in the playroom, kids tend to be tough on furniture. Clean, remove or replace any furniture that looks like it has seen better days.
- Make sure to remove any smells from the room, kids tend to have lots of reasons to make a room smell bad and you might not even know it.
- Ensure "Whole House Preparation & Maintenance Items" was followed for this room

PLAYROOMS STAGING ITEMS

- Be sure to put away toys, stuffed animals, games and anything else that belongs to your kids into boxes or bins and make the room look as tidy as possible.
- Highlight the room as a playroom by making sure a few items naturally are around to define the room.



GARAGE



GARAGE PREPARATION & MAINTENANCE ITEMS

- Remove everything from the garage to get everything in order. Be sure to sweep and hose down the garage floor and if there are any stains then look into soaking them up and possibly painting the garage floor.
- Paint the garage walls an off-white color
- Ensure "Whole House Preparation & Maintenance Items" was followed for this room

GARAGE STAGING ITEMS

- Put everything you removed from the garage back in an orderly fashion
- Store unnecessary items in storage or throw out anything that you can get rid of
- Consider organizing all of your tools to present how well you take care of the things that take care of your house



BASEMENTS



BASEMENTS PREPARATION & MAINTENANCE ITEMS

- If your basement is finished, follow the preparation and maintenance items for the equivalent room above
- Consider sprucing up the basement a bit with a fresh coat of paint on the walls and ceiling if they are finished. If they are not finished, there is a special type of concrete paint for them
- There is also a special floor paint for basement floors. You should seriously consider applying this because it adds a nice finishing touch
- If your basement smells musty, consider running a dehumidifier and keep fans running for circulation of the air
- Ensure "Whole House Preparation & Maintenance Items" was followed for this room

BASEMENT STAGING ITEMS

- If your basement is finished, follow the staging items for the equivalent room above
- Make sure your basement has plenty of lighting and doesn't give off a dark and creepy feeling when buyers are down there
- Store as much as you can in inexpensive moving boxes or plastic storage bins to make your basement look neat and orderly. If storing items on shelves, keep the top shelf that is closest to the ceiling free from a lot of clutter because it will make the basement look cramped

