



# SHINING HOME CHECKLIST

Getting top dollar for your house requires seeing your house through the eyes of a prospective buyer. It is the little things you do that enhance the value to the buyer. The following checklist will give you an idea of what should be done to create that first impression that says come on in – this house is loved and cared for.

## EXTERIOR

- Pressure wash to brighten color and remove mildew and dirt build-up
- Paint all faded siding, window trim and shutters
- If paint color does not conform to neighborhood norm – repaint in appropriate color
- Repair (fill nail pops) or replace and repaint all damaged, delaminated siding
- Paint front door to brighten appearance upon approach
- Repair or replace all rotten or damaged wood around windows, doors
- Check all gutters and downspouts – clean out and paint, if necessary
- Replace broken or cracked window panes and screens
- Wash windows to remove dirt, cobwebs, insect nests
- Check mailbox – replace if broken, paint if necessary
- Replace exterior entry light if outdated

## SIDEWALKS/DRIVEWAYS

- Repair all cracks in walkways and driveways (pour dry repair mix into crack, sweep away excess, sprinkle liberally with water)
- Pressure wash sidewalks and driveways to remove stains, mildew
- Edge and trim lawn next to sidewalks and driveways

## LAWN

- Keep lawn freshly mowed and trimmed
- Remove toys, bicycles, wagons, garden hoses from lawn
- Reseed or sod bare areas
- Edge lawn along curb areas

## SHRUBBERY

- Remove or replace any dead shrubs, hedges or trees
- Trim shrubs and prune back scraggly bushes
- Skirt any trees that block view of property
- Add color and charm with seasonal flowers in pots or along beds

## DECKS/PATIOS

- Pressure wash decks and patios
- Replace rotten wood, loose rails on decks, reseal if necessary



## MAKE IT SPARKLE

Curb Appeal will get the buyer to come in, but it's what's on the inside that make the sale. The following checklist will give you an idea of what should be cleaned, scrubbed and polished so that the buyer sees your house in the best light.

### KITCHEN

No room in the house has a greater impact on the buyer than the kitchen. It should sparkle and gleam.

- Oven, cook tops, ventilating hood should be spotlessly cleaned, inside and out
- Replace badly worn floor with new flooring
- Scour walls, floors, sinks and fixtures so they shine
- Clean and polish cabinets
- Remove clutter (toasters, coffee makers, can openers) from counter tops to make counter space and room look larger
- Remove photos and magnets from refrigerator front
- Wash windows and dust blinds and ceiling fans
- Repair any dripping or slow draining sink, faucets
- Replace small or ineffective light fixtures. Poor lighting can make a kitchen gloomy and un-inviting

### BATHROOM

Next to the kitchen, *the second most important room in the house*. The condition of a bathroom speaks volumes to a buyer about the overall condition of the property.

- Scour walls, floors, bathtubs, sinks, toilets, shower stalls until they shine.  
*Remember to wipe down tiles, sinks, and showers daily*
- Use special cleaning products to remove stains from tiles, toilets, bathtubs and sinks
- Replace old caulking around bathtubs. Thoroughly clean grout between tiles
- Keep all mirrors shining
- If sink and bath tub drain too slow, fix it
- Clean and polish dull cabinets inside and out

### FIREPLACES

- Remove any old ashes
- Polish fireplace tools, screens and doors
- Pile logs neatly in fireplace

### LIVING AREAS

- Wash interior windows and that they open and close easily
- Have walls in top shape. Repair any hairline cracks, nail pops. If any bookcases, drapery rods, window treatments or fixtures are moving with you, remove them and repair all damage before marketing your house



- Check ceilings for leak stains. Repair cause of leak, repair ceiling and repaint
- Replace all burned out light bulbs
- Make certain all light switches work
- Make certain all sliding doors are in tracks. Rub tracks with paraffin or candle wax for easier movement
- Clean carpets – pay careful attention to traffic areas and stains
- Repaint walls if they are a unique or bold color or dirty and dingy. Use neutral colors
- Clean switch plates and wall plates
- Make sure all floors shine

### **BASEMENT, ATTIC, GARAGE**

- Clean out attic, basement, and garage. Dispose of everything you are not going to move –this will help you anyway, especially when getting moving quotes! Package everything you won't be needing until you have settled in your new home
- Make sure there is plenty of light
- Repair any cracks
- Vacuum garage floor and clean any oil spills
- Stack items neatly and close to the walls so everything will look larger. Do not stack against walls – leave enough room for viewing

## **STAGE IT FOR “EYE APPEAL”, “BUY APPEAL”**

### **LIGHT**

Bright, well-lit homes seem more cheerful, more inviting and spacious.

- Keep draperies and blinds open to let light in
- Turn on all lamps to every room (even during day) to brighten them
- Turn on lights over counter tops and cook tops
- At night, turn on porch lights and outdoor lighting

### **KITCHEN**

- Add bowls of fresh fruit to counter tops and flowers to table
- Create fragrant aromas, fresh baked goods, brewed coffee or cinnamon
- Set the table with attractive, color coordinated place mats and napkins

### **BATHROOMS**

- Mirrors should sparkle. Polish floors, sinks, tubs and tiles until they shine
- Display fresh color coordinated towels and shower curtains
- Remove all everyday cosmetics and toiletries from counter tops – place healthy green plants on counters instead



## **FIREPLACE**

- Polish all brass accessories until they gleam
- In summer, nestle fresh fragrant pine boughs (in water) in fireplace
- In winter, stack logs neatly in fireplace or, if at home, have fire going in fireplace

## **COLLECTIONS**

- Pack away all photos, collections and trophies. You want the buyer to concentrate on the home, not your collections. It is also easier for a buyer to visualize themselves in your home if it is not full of your personal things

## **FURNITURE**

- Remove excess furniture to give rooms a larger feel. Utilize space in your garage, attic and basement to neatly stack excess furniture and packed up collectibles
- Rearrange furniture to give warm, intimate feel to room

Remember, you are also going to be on the buyers side soon if not already. Think about what is important to you when you go to look at a new home. The buyers walking through yours are thinking and noticing the same things you are! The more you are willing to do before marketing your home, the shorter you will likely be on the market. You will also maximize your sales price!



## The Showing Process

Homes tend to sell more quickly and for higher prices when they show their best!

### Preparing for the Sale

It's very important that your home shows well. We're also aware that it can't always be perfect. After all, you and your family have to live there, too. Develop a routine that will allow you to pick up and be prepared to show in a reasonable period—a 45 minute count-down, for example. This means that certain things should be done in advance. For example, beds should be made first thing in the morning, dishes put away right after meals, etc. This way you can prepare for each showing in an organized, un-hassled routine.

### Before Each Showing....

**Pick up Every Room** Check counters, floors, halls and stairs. Straighten up and remove newspapers, magazines, mail, toys, clothing, dishes and any clutter.

**Turn on All Lights** Even those in closets and storage spaces. Electric lights have an amazing capability to create largeness and lightness.

**Open All Drapes and Blinds** Do all that you can to make each room as light, open, and bright as possible.

**The Kitchen** Be sure all counter-tops clear and "squeaky" clean. Put small appliances in cabinets and wipe down appliances and sink.

**Clean Air** Keep air fresheners in closets and every room. Be sure kitchen is kept as odor free as possible. Coffee brewing or a candle if you are going to be home creates a lasting, inviting effect.

**Air and Heat** Make sure your home has a comfortable temperature at all times of the year. This is not a time to conserve if you are at work all day.

**The Entryway** This is the first and last impression that your buyers will have on your home. If you often enter through the garage check it often and keep sharp and free of leaves, webs and dirt.

### The Showing

**Relax** More than likely you will have a courtesy call for your showings. If you are home you can wait until they arrive to then leave rather than trying to make yourself busy for the 3-4 hour window the agent has given. It is difficult to know exactly how long a buyer will want to stay at other listings before getting to yours so they may be early or late.

**The Dog** Keep Spot away. Pet lovers will be dis-tracted by your animals and for those that do not have pets they may be bothersome.

**Ding Dong** Answer the door as you would with any welcome guest. The agent will do the introductions. If there is a situation that needs to be mentioned—such as a sick child in second bedroom—do so now. You may invite the agent to begin showing and then you may excuse yourself.

**Low Profile** Discreetly remain away from the buy-ers; take a walk around the block or stay out back or front. As helpful as you wish to be, your presence will be intimidating. They need to freely be able to discuss your home and it's features. The agent needs to learn from the buyer how they are responding to your home.

**Conversing with the Buyer** If you are asked a ques-tion about the neighborhood, schools, etc. by all means answer pleasantly. However, avoid engaging in a full conversation. Any questions regarding the sale of your home, inclusions, terms, moving plans etc. should be referred to the agents. I will contact a cooperating Bro-ker and answer any and all questions concerning the sale of your home.

**Let the "Pro" Work** As much as you love your home, don't be tempted to do the agent's job. He/she has been working with buyers and should know what is important to them. Whether they point out particular features at the beginning, end, or not at all, it is in their hands.