



There's a lot involved in selling a home, and the process can seem overwhelming at first. Your first step should be to contact a real estate agent who can walk you through the process and help you along the way. However, if you're not ready to take that plunge just yet, you can use this checklist to get you started and give you an idea of what's to come.

Get Professional Advice From A REALTOR®

Seeking the advice and guidance of a real estate professional will set you up for success along the way.

Generate a Plan To De-clutter Your Home

Throw away things of little or no value that you don't use. Host a garage sale. Give away, sell, or donate other items you no longer have a need for. Use offsite storage for anything you won't use before your home is sold. Keeping your home looking clean and de-cluttering makes potential buyers feel more welcome in your home, which allows them to easily imagine themselves calling your property home.

Inspect Your Home And Make Repairs

It's better to make repairs in advance, as you'll be legally required to disclose certain issues to prospective buyers. A few things to pay close attention to are listed below.

- Electrical issues
- Plumbing problems
- Structural defects
- Asbestos
- Dry rot
- Mold
- Infestations
- Roof leaks

Decide Which Appliances And Fixtures You Keep

Generally speaking, buyers expect to receive appliances and anything that's a fixture to the home, so if you plan to take certain things, it's important to let buyers know what is included in the sale of your home:

- Appliances
 1. Laundry machine
 2. Oven
 3. Dishwasher
 4. Refrigerator
 5. Microwave Oven
- Light fixtures (*you should always replace any light fixtures you wish to take with you, like a chandelier*)
- Custom window coverings
- Built-in furniture
- Hardware (*cabinet knobs, etc.*)
- Playground equipment
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Landscape features like statues or birdbaths

Clean The Home So It Feels Inviting

Keeping your home clean at all times is important when marketing it. Sometimes it's much easier to hire someone to help with the cleaning of your home. Consider cleaning:

- Appliances
- Windows (*window treatments, glass, ledges*)
- The entryway
- Carpets/ flooring
- Cabinets
- Trash bins
- Dust furniture
- Closets
- Shower curtains
- Polished woodwork

Perform Interior Repairs And Maintenance

Although you can update certain rooms, like the kitchen and bathrooms, to help make your home ready for the real estate market, the most important point is to ensure everything is tidy and in proper working order.

Consider taking the following measures:

- Oiling door hinges
- Contacting pest control
- Painting
- Fixing any drips or clogs
- Repairing/replacing carpets and flooring

Perform Exterior Repairs And Maintenance

There's no need to redo an entire lawn to prepare for a sale, but the yard and exterior of the home should be orderly and functioning well. Consider taking care of:

- Pest control issues
- Oiling and cleaning the garage door
- Painting
- Lawn mowing
- Maintaining snow removal of sidewalks and driveways
- Sweeping sidewalks
- Pruning trees, gardens, and bushes
- Weeding gardens and flower beds
- Cleaning/repairing gutters
- Replacing any missing or damaged shingles

Stage The Home

Buyers tend to buy emotionally. To get the greatest effect when motivating potential buyers to write an offer, try to:

- Focus on creating inviting spaces
- Remove counter-top appliances
- Add flowers near the entryway
- Bake cookies or bread
- De-clutter the refrigerator
- Replace all soaps and towels
- Replace or clean floor mats
- Keep your home at a comfortable temperature

Get A Market Valuation

Your REALTOR® can perform a comparative market analysis to help you determine what a fair market value is. Pricing is important to be sure you avoid the pitfalls of over- or underpricing your home by working with a professional real estate agent.

Your agent can give you more tips specific to your home and neighborhood, and walk you through what prospective buyers are looking for. They will also handle most of the "heavy lifting" in regard to marketing, negotiating, and closing the sale of your home, so once you've given them a clean plate to work with, you can sit back and relax.