



PREPARING FOR YOUR LISTING

**Remove and replace any fixed items that you do not want to include in the sale of your home.*

Exterior

- Lawn & Garden
 - Trim shrubs & trees away from house and remove all dead limbs & debris.
 - Cut and Edge the Lawn; add fertilizer/greening agent to lawn & plants.
 - Remove all weeds from flowerbeds, rocks, & cracks in concrete.
 - Clean up rock/mulch beds, making sure the rock/mulch covers the ground and no underlying plastic is exposed. Add more rock/mulch if needed.
 - Install decorative metal or stone borders between lawn & planting beds.
 - Add seasonal flowers or ground cover where needed. Bright blooms in the front yard or on the porch add curb appeal.

- Decks, Patios, Driveways, Porches, & Fences
 - Wash driveways, patios & sidewalks; remove grease spots and other stains; patch holes and cracks.
 - Repair and stain (or paint) fences & decks; be sure gates open and close properly.
 - Arrange outdoor furniture & stack firewood neatly.
 - Ensure that shades and awnings are in good condition, and replace if faded or worn. Gardening equipment and tools should be stored away and hoses neatly coiled.
 - Neatly store bikes & toys out of sight.
 - If street sweeper doesn't come regularly, make sure area in front of curb and driveway is clear of debris. Wash it down with hose.

- Front Porch
 - Replace front door if damaged & cannot be repaired.
 - Paint door & trim; polish any brass or metal doorknobs, kick plates, and other hardware.
 - Wash front door tread and threshold.
 - Clean porch area; put out a new doormat.
 - Install potted plants if space permits.
 - Clean or replace porch light. Install high wattage bulbs to make porch area brighter.
 - Ensure doorbell and doorbell light work properly.

- House
 - Inspect all exterior elements of home: gutters, downspouts, siding, trim & shutters. Clean, paint, repair and/or replace as needed.
 - Replace any broken windows, doors & screens; ensure they all operate properly.
 - Clean windows & screens thoroughly. This helps brighten the home inside.
 - Inspect roof for and repair any missing or damaged shingles & flashings; repair any leaks.
 - Inspect chimney for missing or broken bricks or stones and repair where needed.
 - Clean & touch up paint on the little things: house numbers, mailboxes, doorbells, etc.

Interior

- Whole House Improvements
 - Repair damage to walls & ceilings (holes, cracks, & water stains); repaint after repair.
 - Remove wallpaper & borders (buyers see work when they see wallpaper).
 - Freshly paint home using a neutral color (white, off white or beige paint).

- Whole House Improvements (continued)
 - Clean all light fixtures, bulbs, lamp shades; replace bulbs with high wattage bulbs.
 - Clean windows inside and out. Make sure windows open & close with out squeaking or sticking.
 - Clean curtains, drapes, blinds and shades, and ensure hardware is secure and working properly. Arrange shades or drapes to allow the maximum amount of light in.
 - Have carpets and area rugs professionally cleaned, if possible. If pet stains exist, replace carpet & pad.
 - Clean & wax wood floors.
 - Clean vinyl & ceramic floors.
 - Clean, paint, or replace all vent covers.
 - Clean, polish, paint/stain baseboards and other wood trim in home.
 - Tighten loose doorknobs; oil any squeaky doors or drawers.
 - Make sure all switches & outlets are working properly. Clean or replace broken plates.
 - Replace HVAC filters, or better yet, consider having HVAC tune-up.
 - Test smoke detectors to ensure they are in safe working condition.
 - Clean fireplace, remove smoke stains from wall and mantle, ensure tile and screen are in good condition, clean hearth.
 - Repair loose banisters and handrails; polish banister and handrails.
 - Be sure to remove pet odor & smoke odor when cleaning.

- Pay Attention to the Little Things
 - Wash bedspreads and other bedding
 - Arrange furniture to give an open, spacious feel. Remove any oversized or unnecessary furniture; improve traffic flow where needed.
 - Donate or pack away any unnecessary knick-knacks, magazines, clutter and items showing wear.
 - Minimize family photos to help prospective buyers to visualize themselves living there.
 - Make sure that any artwork is family-friendly and non-offensive to potential buyers.
 - Make sure all glass and mirrors are sparkling clean.
 - Check each room for hazards, making sure all extension cords are out of sight and slippery throw rugs are removed.

- Closets
 - Remove out of season clothing from closets to give a more spacious feel.
 - Leave only a few items on the floor of closets.
 - Neatly arrange items on shelving.

- Kitchen
 - Thoroughly clean all counter tops, backsplash, sink and faucet; store small appliances to open up counter space.
 - Repair leaky faucet; ensure garbage disposal is properly working.
 - Ensure all appliances are in working order; clean thoroughly inside and out.
 - Clean exhaust hood & exhaust fan; replace hood light bulb and oven light if necessary.
 - Replace refrigerator light bulb and water filter if necessary.
 - Clean often forgotten spots, like top of refrigerator and under sink.
 - Wipe down all cabinets; clean & organize drawers, cabinets & pantry.
 - Consider updating knobs on drawers & cabinets if needed.

- Bathrooms
 - Thoroughly clean all vanity tops, mirrors, sinks and faucets; store unnecessary items to open up counter space.
 - Repair leaky faucets.
 - Clean toilets; check for evidence of water at toilet base and repair if necessary; replace old toilet seats if necessary.
 - Clean tub & shower walls & door (replace shower curtain).
 - Remove rust stains and mildew.
 - Repair & clean all tile, grout & caulk. Caulk areas that cannot be cleaned.
 - Wipe down all cabinets; clean & organize drawers, cabinets & linen closet.

- Bathrooms (continued)
 - New knobs on drawers and cabinets make a difference.
 - Tighten loose towel racks.
 - Wash or replace bath mats.

- Laundry Area
 - Ensure washer and dryer are in good working order.
 - Clean washer and dryer inside and out; clean dryer lint filter.
 - Wipe down all cabinets; clean and organize cabinets, drawers and shelves.

- Garage, Basement, Attic, & Storage Areas
 - Dispose of everything you are not going to move; arrange remaining items neatly.
 - Organize garden tools and equipment (space saver: hang them on the walls).
 - Wipe off dirt & cobwebs from water heater and furnace.
 - Cure water problems in basement. Seek professional advice if needed.
 - Consider painting garage walls & ceilings white.
 - Remove stains & dirt from floor; consider painting garage floors gray.
 - Ensure the garage door opener is working properly.
 - Make sure energy-saving insulation is apparent in attic.

- Consider the bottom line.
 - Weigh the cost of improvements vs. the potential return. Don't get so carried away with prepping your home that you forget why you're doing it – to net more money. Two things to consider before making any improvements:
 - a) will this make my home more desirable to buyers?
 - b) will this increase the value of my home more than it costs me to do it?

NEED MORE SUGGESTIONS?

Always feel free to call or email me with specific repair or cleaning concerns or other questions you may have. Over the years, I have compiled a list of many trusted vendors, such as contractors, cleaners, stagers, etc., as well as countless household cleaning tips, and I am happy to share them with you.

Living Local Nashville of Benchmark Realty, LLC

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