

Hello Home Seller,

Thank you again for reading my book and for requesting these companion checklists. You're already doing more than most sellers ever do: preparing *before* the sign goes in the yard.

Inside, you'll find simple, practical guides you can use right away:

- How to get your home ready before you list.
- What to do before photos and 3D tours.
- A quick "showing-ready in 15 minutes" checklist.
- How to prep for closing and the final walk-through.
- A "should I fix it or leave it?" quick reference.

Use them as much as you like, and feel free to share them with anyone you know who's thinking about selling.

If you'd like help applying these to your specific home—or want a second opinion on timing, pricing, or strategy in your town—I'd be happy to take a look and talk through your options.

You can call or text me at 973-666-0365, or reach me via

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Talk soon,

Patrick
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“The First Time Home Seller’s Guide”

Companion worksheets

1. Pre-Listing Prep Checklist

“What to do, What to Fix, What to Ignore, What to Hide”

Exterior & Curb Appeal

- Mow, edge, and weed front and back yards.
- Trim shrubs/trees away from windows, walkways, and roof.
- Remove dead plants and debris from beds and lawn.
- Power wash front walk, steps, and driveway (if stained).
- Repaint or clean front door; update hardware if badly dated.
- Make sure house numbers are visible and not crooked/faded.
- Store hoses, toys, tools, and random yard items out of sight.

Interior: Declutter & Depersonalize

- Remove 30–50% of visible decor (knick-knacks, collections, wall art).
- Take down most family photos and personal memorabilia.
- Clear off counters, shelves, and table tops as much as possible.
- Pack or donate anything you know you’re not taking to the next home.
- Create clear walk paths in every room (no furniture “obstacle courses”).

Repairs Worth Doing (Usually)

- Fix obvious safety issues (loose railings, broken steps, exposed wires).
- Repair visible damage: holes/cracks in walls, broken tiles, missing trim.
- Address active leaks or water stains (and the underlying cause).
- Replace burnt-out bulbs and clearly broken light fixtures.
- Make sure doors and windows open/close/lock properly.

Usually NOT Worth a Full Remodel

- Total kitchen or bath gut jobs right before selling.
- High-end custom upgrades that only match your specific taste.
- Major flooring replacements when clean/refinish can do the job.

Smell & Cleanliness

- Deep clean kitchen, baths, floors, baseboards, and windows.
 - Remove or treat pet odors (including rugs and upholstery).
 - Keep litter boxes, trash, and strong cooking smells under control.
 - Aim for “hotel clean,” not “we live here and did our best in 5 minutes.”
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2. Photo Day & 3D Tour Checklist

“How to Get Your Home Camera-Ready”

The Day Before Photos

- Finish decluttering flat surfaces (counters, shelves, dressers, nightstands).
- Clear kitchen counters of everything except 1–2 simple items.
- Put away dish racks, sponges, soaps, fridge magnets, and mail.
- Remove personal items from bathroom counters and shower/tub edges.
- Hide trash cans in kitchen and baths (or use small, clean ones).
- Coil/tuck visible cords (TVs, lamps, routers) wherever possible.

Morning of Photo Shoot

- Open all blinds and curtains fully.
- Turn on all lights (overheads, lamps, under-cabinet where available).
- Make all beds neatly with simple, clean bedding.
- Straighten and fluff pillows on beds and couches.
- Put away pet bowls, crates, toys, and litter boxes if possible.
- Remove floor mats that break up small spaces (unless they're decorative and spotless).
- Clear floors of toys, laundry baskets, and extra rugs.
- Wipe kitchen counters, sink, and appliances.
- Wipe bathroom mirrors, counters, sinks, and shower glass.

Room-by-Room Quick Check

- **Kitchen:** Clear sink; no dishes. Counters mostly empty. Appliances wiped.

- **Bathrooms:** Toilet lids down; counters clear; towels fresh and neatly hung.
- **Living/Family Rooms:** Fewer, well-placed decor items; no stacks of stuff.
- **Bedrooms:** Nightstands mostly clear; no clothing on floors; doors tidy.
- **Entry:** Shoes and coats minimized; no piles of mail or packages.
- **Outdoor:** Patio/deck swept; cushions straight; no visible clutter.

During Photos/3D Tour

- Plan to be out of the way (ideally leave the house).
 - Make sure pets are removed or secured.
 - Park vehicles so the driveway and front of the house are visible.
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3. Showing-Ready Checklist

“10–15 Minute Tidy Before Every Showing”

Before You Leave

- Open blinds and curtains; turn on all lights.
- Make beds and straighten pillows/throws.
- Clear kitchen counters of dishes, food, and clutter.
- Load or hide dirty dishes; wipe counters and sink.
- Empty or hide visible trash cans if they're full.
- Remove or hide pet bowls, beds, toys, and litter boxes if possible.
- Quick wipe of bathroom sinks, counters, and mirrors; toilet lids down.
- Pick up toys, shoes, and laundry from floors and stairs.
- Make sure all interior doors can open easily (no blocked paths).

Safety & Comfort

- Take small valuables, meds, and sensitive documents out of sight or secured.
- Set temperature to a comfortable level (not freezing or sweltering).
- If using scent, keep it light and neutral (no overpowering sprays).

Before You Walk Out

- Turn off any TVs/music unless light background music is part of your plan.
 - Make sure pets are out of the house or safely contained.
 - Leave the home at least 5–10 minutes before the scheduled showing time.
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4. Pre-Closing & Final Walk-Through Checklist

“How to Avoid Last-Minute Drama”

One Week Before Closing

- Confirm closing date, time, and location with your agent and attorney.
- Confirm your move-out date and time (aim to be fully out before walk-through).
- Schedule utilities for shut-off/transfer for the day of or after closing.
- Gather keys, remotes, and access codes in one place.

Move-Out Standards

- Remove all personal belongings from the house, garage, attic, basement, and yard.
- Dispose of old paint, chemicals, and junk (or follow any written agreement about leaving paint).
- Vacuum/sweep all floors; wipe kitchen and bath surfaces.
- Empty and clean fridge, freezer, oven, and microwave.
- Remove nails/screws from walls or leave them neatly if agreed.

Repairs & Agreements

- Complete any repairs you agreed to in writing.
- Keep receipts or simple documentation of completed work.
- Inform your agent/attorney if any promised repair couldn't be done as planned.

Right Before Final Walk-Through

- Ensure the home is empty (unless post-occupancy was agreed in the contract).
- Do a quick sweep/vacuum and surface wipe in kitchen and baths.

- Double-check all cabinets, closets, attic, and storage for missed items.
 - Turn off ceiling fans but leave lights ready to be tested.
 - Leave keys, garage remotes, and any welcome/house-info sheet in an obvious spot.
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5. “Should I Fix It or Leave It?” Quick Reference

For Common Seller Dilemmas

More Likely to Fix/Address (Usually safety items and quick fixes)

- Active leaks or recent water damage.
- Electrical safety issues (exposed wiring, missing covers, GFCI around water).
- Loose or broken railings, steps, or decks.
- Obvious trip hazards at entry or main paths.
- Broken windows or doors that don't lock.
- Minor cosmetic flaws (small nail holes, light scuffs).

More Likely to Offer a Credit (Or priced right)

- Older but working HVAC, roof, or water heater.
- Aging appliances that still function.
- Non-urgent exterior paint or cosmetic wear.

More Likely to Leave As-Is

- Older but functional finishes buyers may replace anyway (laminated countertops, basic lighting), unless very out of line with price point.
 - Non-safety, purely aesthetic buyer preferences (color choices, style choices).
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