

Updating Your Home. What is Worth It? What Isn't?

Are you considering putting your home on the market but uncertain about the preparations required? This guide offers a collection of affordable and simple strategies designed to enhance your home's value and facilitate a faster sale.

High Return Projects - Low Expense

YES, TOTALLY WORTH IT

- Clean
- Paint
- Update lighting fixtures
- Maintain the HVAC system
- Pest control
- Septic system inspection and pumping
- Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors
- Update hardware
- RegROUT tiles & refresh caulk
- Trim trees and bushes
- Re-stain or seal wooden decks
- Add a fresh layer of mulch
- Maximize storage and declutter
- Power wash exterior: patio, porch, driveway, home exterior
- Clean carpet
- Repair fencing
- Clean out gutters and downspouts
- Repair any plumbing issues
- Declutter & remove personal items
- Update doorknobs, and cabinet handles
- Upgrade overhead lighting & old fixtures
- Add potted plants in the front walk and back yard
- Replace or fix doorbell
- Clean up landscaping - green grass/ healthy grass
- Declutter garage
- Repair the roof (not replace)

High Return - Moderate Expense

EH... MAYBE WORTH IT

- Upgrade kitchen appliances

- Landscape the yard
- Replace carpet
- Update or add laundry room amenities
- Upgrade the front door
- Paint old cabinets
- Replace bathroom vanity

High Return - Expensive

PROBABLY NOT WORTH IT UNLESS YOU ENJOY IT YOURSELVES

- Remodel bathrooms
- Replace windows or doors
- Remodel the kitchen
- Finish the basement
- Update or add outdoor living spaces

Moderate Return. Moderate Expense

MIGHT BE WORTH IT BASED UPON THE MARKET. ASK YOUR AGENT

- Refinish hardwood
- Replace the roof (Not repair. See above)
- Replace the countertops
- Crown molding
- New fencing (Not repair. See above)
- Update the electrical panel

Low Return - Low Expense

THIS IS REGULAR UPKEEP. WON'T GET YOU MORE ROI, BUT WILL HELP SELL QUICKER

- Mold inspection and remediation
- Install or upgrade ceiling fans
- Weatherstripping
- Chimney sweep and inspection
- Fertilize the lawn
- Replace sump pumps

Low Return - Moderate Expense

DON'T DO UNLESS IT IS BROKEN. YOU WON'T GET A RETURN ON THIS

- Replace the water heater
- Replace or repair siding
- Security system
- Radon testing and mitigation
- Window treatments
- Attic insulation
- Water-saving fixtures -
- Foundation inspection and repair
- Clean or replace the fireplace
- Generator installation
- Install back up sump pump
- Replace or update garage doors

Low Return - Expensive

DON'T DO UNLESS IT IS BROKEN. YOU WON'T GET A RETURN ON THIS

- HVAC replacement
- Add or upgrade a deck or patio
- Repave the driveway
- Finish an attic
- Solar panels
- Update or add irrigation system
- Upgrade to energy-efficient appliances
- Soundproofing

Hot Colors for Paint

- Benjamin Moore Stonington Gray HC-170
- Benjamin Moore Gray Owl OC-52
- Benjamin Moore Balboa Mist 1549
- Benjamin Moore Edgecomb Gray HC-173
- Trim: Benjamin Moore White Dove OC-17

Home Inspection Preparation Checklist

Make sure your home is ready for your inspection! These are all small items that might cause the buyers to ask for a credit or potentially kill the deal!

General Preparation

- Ensure all lights are working and replace any burnt-out bulbs.

- Test all smoke and carbon monoxide detectors; replace batteries or units if necessary.
- Check for leaks around all plumbing fixtures; repair as needed.
- Ensure that all utilities are on (electricity, water, gas), including pilot lights.
- Clear access to areas such as the attic, basement, heating system, and electrical panels.
- Provide receipts and documentation for any maintenance or repair work.

Exterior Preparation

- Clean gutters and downspouts to show proper maintenance.
- Trim trees and shrubs away from the house to prevent damage and allow access.
- Repair any damaged siding, bricks, or foundation cracks.
- Inspect and repair any loose or damaged roof shingles.
- Make sure the address is clearly visible from the street.

Interior Preparation

- Check for and repair any leaks in the roof or windows.
- Ensure that doors and windows open and close smoothly; lubricate or repair as necessary.
- Fix any issues with heating and cooling systems, including replacing air filters.
- Address any signs of water damage on walls and ceilings.
- Test all appliances to ensure they are in working order.

Plumbing and Electrical

- Ensure there are no leaks under sinks and that drains are functioning properly.
- Test water pressure and hot water from all faucets.
- Check for any exposed wiring or uncovered electrical panels and address as needed.
- Ensure that the electrical panel is labeled correctly and that all circuits are functioning.

Attic and Basement

- Clear any obstructions to attic and basement access points.
- Inspect insulation in the attic for proper coverage and condition.
- Check for signs of pests or rodents and address if necessary.
- Ensure the basement is dry, addressing any signs of moisture or water intrusion.

Safety Features

- Ensure that handrails on stairs and decks are secure.
- Check for secure and functioning locks on doors and windows.

- Install GFCI (ground fault circuit interrupter) outlets near water sources as required.

Get Ready For Showings!!

Before showcasing your home, it's crucial to ensure it's in top-notch condition. The following suggestions can significantly impact your home's selling price, potentially making a difference of thousands of dollars.

The Yard

- Make sure your lawn is manicured.
- Keep the lawn mowed.
- Trim shrubbery, bushes & trees removing all dead limbs & debris.
- Add fertilizer or greening agent to lawn & plants.
- Use an edger along the sidewalks and driveways
- Remove all weeds from flowerbeds, rocks & cracks in concrete. (Weed Be Gone).
- Install and Inspect decorative metal, and stone borders between lawn & planting beds.
- Clean up rock and mulch beds making sure the ground is covered, add more if needed.

Decks, Patios, Driveways, Porches, & Fences

- Power Wash driveways & sidewalks.
- Repair holes & cracks.
- Remove stains.
- Replace or repair broken areas.
- Paint and/or stain fences & decks.
- Arrange outdoor furniture & firewood neatly.
- Put away all lawn equipment, bikes, & toys.

House

- Inspect all gutters, downspouts, siding, windows sashes, trim & shutters.
- Clean & Paint.
- Repair or replace as needed.
- Replace any broken windows, doors & screens.
- Inspect the roof for missing or damaged shingles & flashing. Make any necessary repairs.

- Clean & touch up paint on the little things: House numbers, mailboxes, doorbells, etc...

Front Porch

- This should be very welcoming.
- Paint door & trim.
- Sweep and clean the porch area.
- Put out a new doormat.
- Install potted or hanging plants if possible.
- Install high wattage bulbs to make the porch area brighter.
- Clean glass on porch lights and remove bug remains.
- Interior

Clean the entire home!

- Windows & screens.
- Curtains, drapes & blinds.
- Carpets. If pet stains exist replace carpet & pad.
- Clean & wax wood floors.
- Vinyl & ceramic floors.
- Clean, paint or replace all vent covers.
- Clean, polish, paint/stain wood trim in home.
- Clean all lamp shades & covers.
- Be sure to remove pet & smoke odor when cleaning. Smell is a huge part of what buyers remember about your home.
- Freshly paint home using white, off white or beige paint. This will match the buyers furnishings.
- Repair damages to walls & ceilings. Includes: holes, cracks, & water stains.

Kitchen & Baths

- Thoroughly clean all countertops, appliances, mirrors, ovens, sinks, toilets, tub, & shower walls.
- Put away the small appliances to open up counter space.
- blender, canisters, coffee maker, etc.
- Clear off vanity countertops & store all personal care items neatly.
- Clean ventilating hood & exhaust fans.
- Remove rust stains from sinks and bathtubs.
- New knobs on drawers & cabinets make a difference.
- Clean & organize drawers, cabinets, & linen closets.
- Clean all tile grout & caulk. (Clorox Bleach Pen & Mr. Clean Magic Eraser).

- Re-caulk areas that can not be cleaned.

Make House Light & Bright!

- Replace bulbs with high-wattage bulbs.
- The brighter the better!

Closets - Make Them Appear Larger!

- Remove 'out of season' clothing from closets.
- Leave only a few items on the floor of closets.
- Add extra, empty hangers.
- Organize your shoes on racks.
- Neatly arrange items on shelving.
- Leave extra space on the shelves and floor.

Pay Close Attention to the Little Things

- Tighten loose doorknobs.
- Fix any leaky faucets.
- Tighten loose towel racks.
- Oil any squeaky doors or drawers.
- Arrange furniture to give an open feel. Remove any unnecessary or oversized furniture.
- Make sure all switches & outlets are clean & working properly.
- Place fresh flower arrangements throughout the home.
- Make sure windows open & close without squeaking.
- Hide Prescription medication. Theft of these items is rising.

Garage, Basement, Attic, & Storage Areas

- Dispose of everything you are not going to move.
- Arrange items neatly & clutter-free.
- Consider painting walls & ceilings white.
- Remove stains & dirt from the floor.
- Paints floors gray.
- Organize garden tools & equipment.
- Remove or clean muddy work boots.
- Wipe off dirt and spider webs from the water heater, furnace, washer & dryer.

Heating & Cooling

- Clean fireplaces and remove smoke stains.
- Clean your furnace/air conditioner and replace the filter if needed.
- Clean water heater.