

PRE-LISTING HOME PREPARATION CHECKLIST

A practical guide to preparing your home for market — without over spending or overthinking

HOW TO USE THIS CHECKLIST

Not every item applies to every home. This checklist is meant to help sellers and agents focus on **high-impact preparation**, avoid unnecessary spending, and reduce surprises once the home is listed.

The goal is **market readiness**, not perfection.

INTERIOR PREPARATION

Creates space, flow, and clarity so buyers can focus on the home itself.

- ☐ Remove excess furniture to open walkways and rooms
 - ☐ Rearrange remaining furniture to improve flow
 - ☐ Clear hallways, corners, and entry paths
 - ☐ Ensure all rooms have a clear purpose
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CLEANING FOR PRESENTATION

Buyers notice cleanliness far more than cosmetic flaws.

- ☐ Floors vacuumed or swept
 - ☐ Bathrooms sanitized and deodorized
 - ☐ Kitchens wiped and cleared
 - ☐ Interior windows cleaned
 - ☐ Odors addressed (pets, smoke, moisture).
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DECLUTTERING & CLEANOUT STRATEGY

Reduces visual noise and emotional overwhelm while making rooms feel larger.

- ☐ Clear countertops, shelves, and flat surfaces
- ☐ Reduce visible personal items (photos, collections)
- ☐ Sort belongings into: Keep / Donate / Dispose
- ☐ Remove items stored in visible areas (closets, corners, garages)
- ☐ Address basements, attics, sheds, and storage rooms

Large or emotional cleanouts are often easier with professional help or a temporary dumpster.

Example local service category: Junk removal or dumpster rental

[KDR provides these services locally](#)

RISK & SURPRISE PREVENTION

Optional steps that can prevent last-minute negotiations or contract delays.

- ☐ Discuss potential risks with your agent
- ☐ Identify issues that could concern buyers

- ☐ Decide which items to address and which to disclose
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PRE-SALE HOME INSPECTION CONSIDERATIONS

A pre-listing inspection can give sellers more control over negotiations.

- ☐ Discuss with agent whether a pre-sale inspection makes sense
- ☐ Review findings for safety or structural concerns
- ☐ Decide which repairs (if any) are worth addressing
- ☐ Keep inspection documentation available

A pre-sale inspection does not mean fixing everything — it means avoiding surprises.

TERMITE & PEST INSPECTION AWARENESS

Often required by lenders and easier to handle before listing.

- ☐ Confirm if termite inspections are standard locally
 - ☐ Address active issues early if present
 - ☐ Retain documentation for buyer review
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COSMETIC IMPROVEMENTS WITH HIGH RETURN

Focuses on visual consistency, not unnecessary upgrades.

- ☐ Evaluate cosmetic issues that stand out immediately
 - ☐ Prioritize improvements that affect photos and first impressions
 - ☐ Avoid changes that won't impact buyer perception
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SELECTIVE PAINTING GUIDANCE

Paint improves value when used strategically.

- ☐ Touch up scuffed or high-traffic areas
- ☐ Neutralize bold or highly personal colors
- ☐ Avoid repainting entire home unless advised

Paint is about consistency, not perfection.

POPCORN CEILING CONSIDERATIONS

Limited removal can improve presentation in specific areas.

- ☐ Inspect bathrooms for stained or damaged popcorn ceilings
 - ☐ Consider removal only in small, visible spaces
 - ☐ Test for asbestos in older homes if required
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FLOORING & CARPET CLEANING

Refresh what exists before considering replacement.

- ☐ Clean carpets in high-traffic areas
 - ☐ Address pet odors or stains
 - ☐ Repair loose or damaged flooring where possible
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EXTERIOR WINDOW & GUTTER CLEANING

Signals care and maintenance to buyers before they walk inside.

- ☐ Clean street-facing and entryway windows

- ☐ Remove debris from gutters
 - ☐ Ensure downspouts drain properly
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EXTERIOR & CURB APPEAL PREPARATION

First impressions strongly influence buyer perception.

- ☐ Lawn trimmed and edged
 - ☐ Porch and entry swept
 - ☐ Trash bins hidden
 - ☐ Outdoor clutter removed
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DRIVEWAY & ACCESS AREA PREPARATION

A clean, even driveway improves perceived value and usability.

- ☐ Remove mud, weeds, and loose debris
- ☐ Address ruts or uneven gravel
- ☐ Improve drainage where needed

A simple surface refresh can deliver high visual impact without major cost.

Example local service category: Gravel refresh or driveway cleanup

[KDR provides these services locally](#)

PRESSURE WASHING & EXTERIOR CLEANING

Cleaning surfaces often delivers more impact than replacing them.

- ☐ Driveway and walkways
 - ☐ Entry steps and porch
 - ☐ Siding if visibly stained
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FINAL PRE-PHOTO & PRE-SHOWING CHECKLIST

Ensures the home is fully ready when buyers first see it.

- ☐ All surfaces cleared
 - ☐ Beds made, towels replaced
 - ☐ Vehicles removed from driveway
 - ☐ Trash removed
 - ☐ Exterior swept
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WHAT NOT TO DO BEFORE LISTING

Protects sellers from overspending and unnecessary delays.

- ☐ Do not over-renovate
 - ☐ Do not delay listing for “one more project”
 - ☐ Do not replace items that still function
 - ☐ Do not spend money without agent guidance
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AGENT-GUIDED RECOMMENDATIONS

To be completed on a case-by-case basis.

Seller Name: _____

Property Address: _____

- ☐ Decluttering
- ☐ Cleanout
- ☐ Cleaning
- ☐ Exterior prep
- ☐ Inspection follow-up
- ☐ Other: _____

Notes / Next Steps:

Recommended Local Providers (Optional):

Prepared for: _____

Agent Name: _____

Brokerage: _____

Phone / Email: _____

Checklist template provided by KDR

Local property preparation, cleanout, and exterior refresh services