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Preparing Your Home for  
Sale - let's start at the very begin-  
ning...



**The front door:** Most families never use their front door. Oh wow. is this a forgotten item on the home maintenance list and it is the buyer's (and your guests) first impression of your home. The buyers are standing there scrutinizing for several minutes while the agent locates the key and unlocks the door. What a dance agents do when the key doesn't operate properly, the doorknob is loose. there are cobwebs in the corner of the porch roof. it needs paint. etc etc etc. This should be number ONE on your maintenance check list every year and especially before you sell your home.

**Contact Barbara Heise at [barb@barbheise.com](mailto:barb@barbheise.com)**



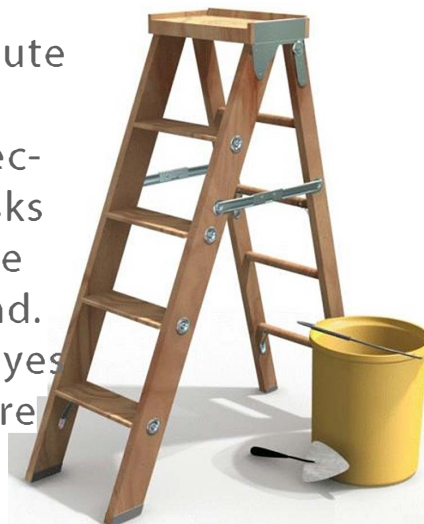
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## Get your house ready to show to buyers



**Buyers feel more comfortable purchasing a well maintained home.**

The attached home maintenance checklist includes tasks that should be tended to the minute you start considering selling your home. It is a mini inspection for you. None of the tasks are overwhelming and can be accomplished over a weekend. They seem small but in the eyes of scrutinizing buyers they are important.



A house that sparkles with cleanliness and pride of ownership is valued by a new buyer.

If, after reviewing the list, you are spending more money than anticipated, make sure to check with your realtor to prioritize your projects. Realtors are familiar with the buying trends of current buyers and can give some money saving tips.

Also, even if you aren't considering selling, this checklist is ideal for keeping your home in good condition year round.

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Items to check	What to look for	Schedule			
<b>Plumbing</b>					
Faucets and shower heads	Check interior and exterior faucets for leaks. Clean aerators. Replace washers if necessary.				
Drains	Clean with baking soda. Pour water down unused drains.				
Pipes	Inspect visible pipes for leaks. If you have cast iron stacks, make sure they are free of barnacles - replacing these can be costly.				
Kitchen and bathroom cabinets	Check under and around for leaks.				
Toilets	Check for stability and leaks. If the toilet is unstable you may have a broken seal.				
Water heater	Check area around water heater for leaks. Flush out to remove sediment.				
Shut-off valves	Inspect for proper operation.				
Faucet aerators	Check for proper flow of water. If the flow is reduced, clean the aerator screens.				
<b>Interior</b>					
Wood cabinets and trim	Make sure they are clean inside and out, drawer slides work easily and are on track, hinges work, doors are hanging straight.				
Interior doors	Repair or replace broken doors. Lubricate hinges. Make sure door knobs work, don't feel loose in your hand. Make sure fingerprints are cleaned and/or doors painted.				

Window and door tracks	Check to see if weep holes are open. Clean out dirt and dust. Lubricate rollers and latches.				
Windows <a href="#">Click for link</a>	If your home has wood windows, check the sashes, sills and glazing. Check replacement/vinyl windows to make sure they lock and do not have broken seals. Clean inside and outside.				
Basement or crawl space	Check for cracks or any sign of dampness or leaks. Check for any evidence of termites or wood-eating insects.				
Ceramic tile	Check and clean grout.				
Attic	Examine for evidence of any leaks. Check insulation and remove or add if necessary. Check for evidence of birds, squirrels, raccoons, etc. Check for proper ventilation.				
Countertops	Inspect for separations at sinks and backsplash. Recaulk where required.				
Tiled areas	Inspect for loose or missing grout or caulking. RegROUT or recaulk if necessary.				
Shower doors/tub enclosures	Inspect for proper fit. Adjust if necessary. Inspect caulking and recaulk if necessary.				
Weather stripping	Check caulking around windows and doors. Check window and door screens. Adjust or replace if necessary.				
Fireplace <a href="#">Click for link</a>	Inspect flues. Clean if necessary. Inspect fireplace brick and mortar for cracks or damage.				
<b>Electrical and appliances:</b>					
Heating system	General furnace inspection: Look for rust, scaling on heat exchanger, and proper flame color; note odd sounds or smells; and check condition of venting. Remove debris around units.				
Cooling system	Remove debris from around units and clean with garden hose. Clean and replace filters if necessary. <a href="#">Click for link</a>				
Kitchen exhaust fan	Remove and clean the filter. Clean accumulated grease deposits from the fan housing.				
Refrigerator	Clean dust from top. Clean refrigerator drain pan. Clean and defrost freezer if necessary. Clean coils.				
Dishwasher	Check for leaks.				
Wiring, electrical cords,	Check for wear or damage. Replace if necessary.				
Smoke detector	Test for proper operation and replace batteries if necessary.				
GFI outlets	Test for proper operation.				
Electrical box	Check for double lugging. Check outside coil for leaking into box.				

Exterior					
Front door	Check door knob to see if it is loose. Check keys for proper operation. Does it need paint. Is the porch roof free of cobwebs and leak stains.				
Roof	Check for leaks. Check for damaged, loose, or missing shingles. Check vents and louvers for birds, nests, squirrels, and insects. Check flashing around roof stacks, vents, chimneys and skylights for leaks.				
Gutters and downspouts	Clean and check for leaks, misalignment, or damage.				
Exterior walls	Check for deteriorating bricks and mortar. Check siding for damage or rot. Check painted surfaces for flaking.				
Landscaping	Trim shrubbery around walls. Remove tree limbs, branches, or debris that can attract insects (no wood or shrubbery should be closer than 3 inches to your house). Maintain grading.				
Decks	Scrub mildewed areas and treat for water stains, mildew, and fungus.				
Concrete and asphalt	Clean oil and grease. Check for cracks or deterioration. Reseal or repair if necessary.				
Chimney	Clean and check for deteriorating bricks and mortar. Check for leaks. Check for birds, nests, squirrels, and insects.				
Sewer lateral line and septic tank	Have sewer lateral line cleaned by reputable sewer company. Perform septic system inspection. <a href="#">Click for link</a>				
Garage door	Lubricate hardware. Adjust the travel and tension.				
Lawn and patio furniture	Clean and store or cover with weatherproof material.				

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