

BALSAM REALTY

SELLERS PRE-SALE CHECKLIST

When you sell your home, ideally you want a short time on the market (even if you negotiate a later time to move out), with the highest profit, best terms and a smooth closing.

This checklist is built to help you achieve those goals and avoid common inspection & repair issues (or contractual conflicts) that can hold up a sale.

Selling your home doesn't require everything on this list. However, any work you can do before listing will help sell the property and smooth the transition to your next home. Each home is unique. If you would like advice specific to your property, we are here to help.

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SALE PREP ADVICE:

- Your job is to create a "must-have product":** It's not always easy to live in a model home, but the better you are at it, the faster you can sell this home and go on to life in your new home.
- What stays/what goes:** Generally, items affixed to the property sell with the property. What do you plan to take with you? Consider removing/replacing those items now, before a buyer sees them. What are you willing to leave behind or sell (e.g. A/C units, exercise equipment, lawn mower, pool table)? Your agent can make sure it is part of the listing.
- Fixes/estimates:** Consider getting a handy-person out for a day or two with a checklist. Get estimates for items you don't want to fix. This information can be helpful during negotiations.
- List of Improvements:** Note all recent home improvements including those you do to prep the house, these will be helpful in marketing/listing the home. Receipts/invoices for previous work are helpful. Create a list for your Realtor.
- Service Appointments:** Book appointments if needed asap: furnace, septic, chimneys, appliances. Note last service dates for these items whenever known.
- Curb Appeal/Buyer Vision:** Walk around the outside and inside of your home as if you are a Buyer. What stands out or draws the eye in a negative way? Consider eliminating it. What do you love or will you miss? Take notes.
- De-clutter/Downsize now:** Clutter is a space and light killer. It also makes it difficult for a buyer to picture themselves living in the home. Consider packing up 50% of your items and clearing out all storage spaces, cabinets, closets & drawers. It will also make it easier and less stressful to move when you sell the home.
- Staging/Colors:** Light neutrals, uniform colors and light make spaces feel open and airy. Consider repainting/purchasing new drapes/linens/towels/rugs/shades in light, neutral colors and add lighting wherever possible. Look for shadowy spots and consider adding a standing lamp.
- Check your Property Lines:** Any trails on your property? Shoreland? Have neighbors been mowing or building on or near your property line? Fences? Any right of ways that have gone unused?
- Disclosures:** Check your local disclosures for all the items that you will need to disclose when you list your home. A local REALTOR can supply you with this paperwork.
- Invest in a deep cleaning:** Consider a full deep clean of your home, especially if there are odors (pet, etc) that are of concern or if it has been a year or more since the last deep cleaning. Consider carpet and floor cleaning.
- Don't skimp on the Pictures:** Most Buyers hunt for homes online. Once your home is ready for sale, invest in a great photographer and videographer to make sure your home shines on the web. We can help.
- Title has the "All Clear"?:** Recent probate or divorce? Any tax liens or easements on the property? Condominium? Make sure you have clear title before you sell. You may not have much time to clear things up once under contract. Consult a good, local attorney. We can recommend someone in your area.

SELLERS PRE-SALE CHECKLIST, PG 2

GENERAL (Take notes of items that will or won't be fixed)

- Windows:** Check that they open and close easily. Any broken panes? Holes in screens? Blinds need replacing?
- Doors:** Check that they open and close completely. Do they stick? Lock? Doorbell works? Scrape the floor at any point? Any cracks? Any keys you need to leave behind? Garage doors work and have remotes?
- Floors:** Any big scratches? Any creaking? Obvious unevenness? Stains on carpets? Consider spot cleaning carpets, replacing throw rugs.
- Walls:** Any holes? Take a quick photo to document them, especially in places the inspector won't be able to see, such as behind a TV or media stand. Are there any shelves or built-ins that you would like to take with you? Any evidence of leaks or other damage?
- Lights/Fans:** Turn on every light & fan to make sure they work, especially exterior lights. Replace any lightbulbs that have burnt out, are mismatched or are dangerous (incandescent, CFLs).
- Outlets:** Are there any outlet covers missing or damaged? Consider replacing them. Are there outlets that have automatic shut-off near water sources? (GFCI usually required in kitchen/baths)
- Furnace:** Look at the furnace. Are there any stickers that indicate the installation date? And/or dates that can confirm regular maintenance? Consider getting maintenance appointment/replace filters if it has been longer than a year.
- Water Heater (if you have one):** Check for water around the base of the water heater. Are there any signs of leaks such as rust stains? Is insulation well sealed and in good shape?
- Cabinets/Counters:** Do all doors and drawers open and close properly? Any damage to counters? Any evidence of past leaks or spills under the sink?
- Electrical:** Problems with electrical system? When was it installed? If you have a generator, was it serviced recently?
- Railings:** Are all railings secure? Spindles close together? Railings round and attached to wall at top without gaps?
- Ceilings:** Any cracks? Evidence of leaks? Is there evidence of prior repairs?
- Fireplaces:** Used recently? Functional? Cleaned and maintained? Consider cleaning and testing.
- Pets:** Is there a pet odor in the home? Pet areas clean and home free of pet damage?
- Pests:** Any evidence of vermin, snakes, spiders or other insect invasion? Consider pest control before showings.
- Water/Sewer or Well/Septic:** Are there problems? Any problems in the past? Public or private? Shared? If private, where are well and septic located? If private septic, how many bedrooms was system designed for? Well and Septic pumps functioning?
- Other items of concern?:** Anything since about the property that you have concerns about?

SELLERS PRE-SALE CHECKLIST, PG 3

KITCHEN

- Stove:** Turn each burner on and off one by one. If they all work individually, turn them all on to make sure they all work at the same time.
- Fridge/Freezer:** Do they function well? Is there a buildup of ice? Are they dirty? Do you have a functional ice maker/water filter if relevant? Remove all magnets and notes from refrigerator. Lights functioning? Drawers broken?
- Garbage Disposal/Microwave/Hood/Dishwasher/Other appliances:** Do they run without odd sounds? Do all fans/lights etc. work? Does the dishwasher leak? Clean vents/hood if needed.
- Cabinets/Counters:** Do all doors and drawers open and close properly? Any damage to counters? Clear off counters and clean out cabinets/drawers/pantry - add fresh flowers around the home for showings.

BATHROOMS

- Plumbing/Drainage:** Flush the toilet. Fill up the sink and tub and then let the water run out to test for backups or poorly performing drains. Check for leaks from all faucets.
- Flooring:** Any broken tiles? Evidence of past leaks?
- Toilet:** Does it rock or is it solidly on the floor? Is it in good condition? Consider changing out seats.
- Tub/Shower/Sinks:** Any cracks or chips? Any stains? Need caulking?
- Vanity:** Check the condition. Open it up and check the inside. Evidence of past leaks or spills? Clear out any clutter and clean drawers/cabinets. Clean or replace mirror/lighting fixtures.
- Ventilation:** Does the fan work and vent to the outside? Is there a window? Does it open and close easily?

BASEMENT

- Odor:** What does it smell like? Mold or mildew? Check for evidence of mold. Consider dehumidifier.
- Walls:** Do the walls have any cracks? Small, hairline cracks are not so concerning, but large cracks — especially horizontal cracks — can be an indicator of bigger foundation problems. Consider fixing. Is insulation needed?
- Moisture:** Any evidence of present or past leaks?

EXTERIOR

- Water/Electrical:** Are the spouts functional? Electrical outlets functioning and covered? Dryer and other vents to outside clean?
- Foundation:** Does the foundation have any cracks?
- Siding/Exterior Doors/Windows:** In good shape? Any rot or indication of water damage? Repairs/replacement/painting needed? Peeling paint? House built before 1978 (could be lead paint)? Consider cleaning & painting front door area, new lock & doormat, potted plants.
- Water Drainage/Concerns:** Are gutters & drainpipes clean and flowing away from house? Any foliage within 12" of home?
- Oil/Propane tanks:** In good shape? Do you own them or are they owned by outside company?
- Fences/outbuildings/garage:** In good shape? Any damage or repairs needed? Outbuildings clear of clutter, dirt and pests? Doors and windows functional?
- Roof:** In good shape? How old it is and has it been inspected? Shingles need repair? Any evidence of leaks? Well insulated? All chimneys in good shape/flashed properly and not causing leaks?
- Landscaping:** Trim grass, trees & bushes (away from home especially), clear out yard clutter/toys & weeds. New mulch & plantings/pots if possible. Mailbox replaced if needed. Stage firepit or deck area.

Our goal is for you to find the process of selling your home as smooth and painless as possible. This list is not a guarantee of success, nor is it comprehensive. Each home will have unique challenges to overcome and features to highlight. We love to work with clients to make each property shine.

Call us with questions, or if you would like help from our team of experts and contacts to make this important process easy (and even fun) let us know. We look forward to talking to you.

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