

THE ULTIMATE  
GUIDE TO SELLING  
YOUR HOME

**NICOLE PT**  
*Keeping it real with real estate*

# PREPARE TO SELL IN 10 STEPS

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**STEP 1:**  
**FRESHEN UP**  
**CURB APPEAL**



# EXTERIOR CHECKLIST

## FRESHEN UP CURB APPEAL

Curb appeal is an often overlooked area of preparing a home that can really cost you both money and time in the long run. Putting it into perspective, your curb and yard are the first and last things buyers see. A good first and last impression is critical to selling your home for the highest amount possible in the least amount of time.

### CHECKLIST

- Make sure your lawn is neatly trimmed, including shrubs and trees
- Clean all debris (especially garbage, cigarette butts, etc.)
- Make certain your flower beds are weed-free, and season willing colorful; dead foliage and fauna are huge turn-offs
- Repair your walkways (again, first impressions matter)
- Make sure all exterior lighting is working properly (especially in the winter when dark, evening showings are more common)
- Repair or replace anything that is broken (think porch railings, shutters, deck boards)
- Give your front door a refresh (choose a bright, complimentary color)
- Clean and repair gutters
- Repair or replace broken, worn, or missing window screens
- Replace weathered mailbox and house numbers
- Repaint, replace, or remove worn out and rusty outdoor furniture
- Stage patio or deck with inviting furniture to show-off the outdoor living areas
- Make sure to clean and discard of any pet waste in the yard
- Remove all movable children's toys and/or athletic gear
- Store, remove, or discard other outside "clutter"

## Declutter & Depersonalize

It's time to finally go through any closet, cubby, basement, garage, or shed and sort them out. Neatly pack away anything you are keeping, donate what you no longer need, and trash anything that just simply isn't worth keeping.

Pack away those nick-nacks. Pare down items on your shelves, hard surfaces, and even within your cabinets. If it doesn't serve a purpose, get rid of it! The kitchen and bathrooms are especially important to declutter. The fewer items on a surface the larger that surface appears and counter-space is buyer kryptonite! Sweet talk them with that glorious kitchen prep space!

Remove any personal photos or memorabilia from the walls and/or shelves. Buyers want to picture themselves in the home, not you (don't worry, I still think you're amazing!).

If you left with a lot of boxes and nowhere to go, it's time to think about a short term storage unit. Save yourself the hassle of outsourcing storage to family and friends and store all items in one easy to access space.

## STEP 2: DECLUTTER & DEPERSONALIZE



**tip** Ask a friend to come share a bottle of wine, cup of coffee, you name it and help keep you on task. All chores are more fun with laughter.



## Pare Down Furniture

Walk through your home with fresh eyes (or bring back the friend with the wine!).

Do you have any unnecessary furniture in the house that nobody uses? Does it even serve a purpose? It may be time to say goodbye to that 3rd dresser in your bedroom or that hand-me-down you just didn't have the heart to say no to (but you secretly loathe!).

Think "less is more" when setting the stage for a new buyer. Make sure each room has a designated purpose and that the furniture in each room is intentional.

Also think about the flow of walking traffic in the home. Buyers should be able to walk around from room to room with ease (after all, your home is not an obstacle course and this is not Ninja Warrior). Make it flow!

tip

Turn on *The Minimalist* on Netflix for inspiration. You may find yourself turning over a new leaf.

# STEP 3

## PARE DOWN FURNITURE





# Organize

Now that you have decluttered and pared down all those furnishings, it's time to get organized! Storage is very important to prospective home buyers so be assured; they will be opening cabinets, closets, and dreaming about what they can (or cannot) fit into these spaces.

If possible, pack away half of everything and leave some open shelves and empty hanging room. This will give the illusion of too much space (and may even inspire you to declutter more down the line).

While on the market, make sure to keep your kitchen and bathroom cabinets neat and organized. Same goes for the closets (think coat closet, linen closet, kids rooms, pantry, etc.).

This is where that short term storage unit really starts to seem appealing!

## STEP 4: ORGANIZE



**tip** Bribe that friend to come back and keep you on task, crank up your favorite tunes, and go to town (okay but don't actually go to town - get to organizing!).





**STEP 5:**  
**DEEP CLEAN**

# CLEANING CHECKLIST

CLEAN THE HOUSE TOP TO BOTTOM

I can't over-stress the importance of a junk-free, impeccably clean home when you're bringing in potential buyers. No one wants to pay for something that's dirty, and you certainly aren't going to get the best price if your home isn't super-clean. When following your deep clean checklist, think of what you would want to see if you were buying a home.

## CHECKLIST

- Vacuum and shampoo carpets, mop and polish all slick floors to a mirror finish
- Wash all linen, including curtains, bedspreads, and sheets
- Dust ceiling fans, blinds, baseboards, and bathroom fan vents
- Clean all glass surfaces including windows, glass doors, television screens and even china cabinet doors
- Polish all wooden furniture
- Make sure all kitchen appliances are immaculate
- Get rid of all of the extra junk on the counter-tops, refrigerator and tables
- Bathrooms are very important; make sure everything is clean and smells fresh
- Clean out all closets, cabinets, drawers, and storage spaces completely
- Eliminate dirty smells such as greasy food, animal odor, and day-old trash (smell sells, or if your home is stinky, doesn't sell)
- Smokers: start taking your breaks outside, non-smokers dislike the scent and it can deter a potential buyer from even making an offer
- HVAC: schedule to have the system serviced and the filters changed
- Erase all proof of inside pets before showing. I know, I know - it's heartbreaking



## Do the Smell Test

Smells can evoke a very strong emotional reaction. You want the buyers' emotions to be warm and welcoming when they are in your home.

Hide away the litter box, pick up those puppy pee pads, and ditch the cigarettes. Depending on the length of time you have been in your home and how invasive any odors are, you may want to consider ditching the drapes and getting the carpets and furniture professionally cleaned. If that won't do the trick, it would be prudent to consider new carpet and removing any furniture that just won't give up the ghost (the smelly ghost that is). Open up the windows and air out the house as often as possible (especially if it's been vacant a while).

It can be tempting to light candles, add wax melts, or plug in scent dispensers. Resist the urge to add too much to the air.

**tip**

**Bake some cookies earlier in the day before showings start. Have you ever met someone who hated the smell of cookies?**

# STEP 6

## DO THE SMELL TEST





## Brighten it up!

Most buyers are looking for a light and bright space. Take down any heavy drapes, black out curtains, or hard to open blinds and open up those window coverings!

If you have any rooms painted with darker color or even just an unusual color, change out for something light and neutral. Fresh paint throughout the house will pay you back two, three, sometimes even four fold!

The more natural light coming into the space, the larger it will feel. So, make sure to move any furnishings that may be obstructing any windows or glass doors.

Have some burned out lightbulbs? How about mismatched (too bright or too dim?)? Update your lighting and you will be amazed at the difference a few new bulbs will make to the space.

## STEP 7: BRIGHTEN IT UP



**Tip** Reach out to your power provider and see if they provide LED lightbulbs for free as a green energy incentive. A great money saver energy wise and you'll update your bulbs too!





**STEP 8:**  
**MAKE REPAIRS**

# REPAIR, REPLACE, & RENOVATE

It never hurts to do a little freshening up throughout your home. You have to find that happy medium of what you can afford to do, what is actually going to help increase the value of your home, and what isn't going to drive you insane. However, there are some small to medium projects that can really set you apart from the competition.

## CHECKLIST

### REPAIR

- Fill and patch small and large holes in walls
- Fix broken light fixtures, windows, and squeaky doors
- Wax hardwoods, clean vinyl, and shampoo carpets
- Caulk tubs, toilets, and sinks (water always wins and caulk is your best defender)

### REPLACE

- Painting all walls neutral tones, such as beige, creams, and/or grey's that appeal to the majority of buyers
- Replace anything that is incredibly outdated, damaged, or simply non-functioning
- Update interior lighting with more modern light fixtures and exchange all light bulbs for new ones (brighter spaces appear cleaner, bigger, and more comfortable)

### RENOVATE

- FLOORS: If you can't get by on cleaning alone, you might consider replacement instead. Hardwood is always a favorite, and can add value to your home, but is also expensive. Don't be afraid to use laminate, vinyl, or ceramic floors if budget is tight.
- KITCHEN: Upgrade appliances, counter-tops, and paint cabinets. Buy new hardware and faucet fixtures.
- BATHROOMS: Reglaze tub, upgrade vanity, and replace mirrors. Buy new hardware and faucet fixtures.



## Don't Skip the Permits

Did Uncle Joe install that new deck without a permit? Ya know, as a favor? Well, that was nice of him but if your municipality requires a permit for this sort of upgrade, it's possible you may need one before you close.

Check with your town to see if a permit is required for any of the upgrades you have made to the home over the years. If they do, file for the permit and get that inspected and "finalized" right away. \*Finalized means passed or approved.

Putting this off until a home inspector notes a defect or the appraiser calls out a condition is a sure fire way to add stress (and even more time until closing) to the transaction. It may even cost you prospective buyers along the way and will add to your grey hairs (and mine!).

Ⓞ Not sure where to begin? Your City or County's Building Department is a great space to start. Need more help? Call me! I will even meet you there.

# STEP 9

## DON'T SKIP THE PERMITS



## Hide Valuables

While your home is on the market, you are going to have many strangers coming into your home. While they should all be accompanied by an agent, one agent can't be everywhere at once.

If you regularly display jewelry on your dresser, pack away the jewelry into a safe place.

Don't leave money or valuable items out on display on a daily basis and if you have irreplaceable art, it may be time to safely package and add to that storage unit.

## STEP 10: HIDE VALUABLES



tip

Put it all in a safe or considering storing with a family/friend until after closing.





**READY TO HIT  
THE MARKET ?**

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WHY DO IT ALONE?

# work with a professional!

Here's the good news; starting is the hardest part and by reading through this guide (and watching through my YouTube Seller Playlist) you will be well on your preparation way! As Russell Wilson so famously stated, "The separation is in the preparation." We will be prepared for an efficient and successful sale.

## **SELL YOUR HOME FASTER**

After all this work to prepare your home, your heart is likely ready to move on to the next adventure be it downsizing, upsizing, or relocating. With my 21 Point Marketing Plan, we will have you moving towards that next milestone asap.

## **SELL YOUR HOME HIGHER**

On average, homes sold with an experienced Real Estate Agent sell for 16% higher. The stage has been set with preparation, now I will guide us through pricing your home, creating the marketing materials, and streamlining the offer and negotiation process. Let's set up a time to review the specifics of your home and to create a custom plan to get you to the market, to closing, and beyond!



# FIND OUT YOUR HOME'S WORTH TODAY!

BEFORE MAKING THE DECISION TO SELL,  
GET YOUR *COMPLIMENTARY* HOME  
VALUE ANALYSIS!

1

## **COMPARABLE HOMES**

Recently sold homes in your neighborhood similar to your home.

2

## **MARKET CONDITIONS**

Market factors that may influence the value of your home.

3

## **LISTING RECOMMENDATIONS**

General price range to use as a starting point for selling price.





# hello!

i'm nicole prigge-taylor

I enjoy long walks on short beaches with my wife, daughter, and two dogs. I'm a giant nerd with a love for podcasts, trying new things in the kitchen, and music. When I'm not working, you can find me being the human embodiment of a cartoon character to make my wife and child laugh as well as working on our horse pasture, drinking coffee, or searching for the next "it" taco truck.

I have a great passion for helping people and in this industry that means providing amazing communication, easy to digest education, and bringing all parties together to achieve one common goal: an exchange of keys for money.

**My promise to you**, the seller, is to be your advocate and to empower you with the tools you need to feel confident that you are making the most of your real estate investment.

Reading through this guide will answer many questions, but it may also raise new ones. So please don't ever hesitate to reach out. I am always here to help make concepts and wealth building more accessible.

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