Find Your Foundation, Build Your Future

Home Preparation Checklist

A comprehensive list of essential steps to prepare your home for sale—from decluttering to value-adding repairs.

High-Impact Areas
- Curb appeal
- Kitchen & baths
- Lighting & paint

Budget Tip
- Prioritize safety + big visual changes
- Keep receipts/warranties for buyers
- Neutral beats trendy

Timing
- 2-3 weeks for light refresh
- 4-6+ weeks with repairs
- Photos after prep is complete

Section 1 Curb Appeal

First impressions set the tone.

- [ ] Mow, edge, and weed; refresh mulch
- [ ] Trim trees/shrubs away from siding and roof
- [ ] Power-wash siding, walkways, and driveway
- [ ] Touch up exterior paint; repaint front door for pop
- [ ] Replace worn house numbers, mailbox, and doormat
- [ ] Check exterior lights; install warm bulbs for evening showings

Section 2 Declutter & Depersonalize

Let buyers see themselves here.

- [ ] Remove 50-70% of visible items from shelves and countertops
- [ ] Pack family photos, collections, and bold decor
- [ ] Clear closets to ~60% capacity; use matching hangers
- [ ] Store excess furniture to open traffic flow
- [ ] Secure valuables and medications out of sight

Section 3 Repairs & Maintenance

Small fixes, big confidence.

- [ ] Patch nail holes; repair cracked tiles, torn screens, loose rails
- [ ] Fix drips, running toilets, and slow drains
- [ ] Replace missing outlet covers/switch plates; tighten loose hardware
- [ ] Service garage door (quiet operation, auto-reverse works)
- [ ] Test smoke/CO detectors; replace batteries

Section 4 Paint & Surfaces

Neutral + clean wins.

- [ ] Repaint bold rooms in light, neutral tones
- [ ] Clean walls, baseboards, and door frames; magic eraser scuffs
- [ ] Deep clean flooring; replace stained carpet or refinish wood as needed

- [ ] Re-caulk tubs, showers, and kitchen backsplash as needed

Section 5 Kitchen & Bath Refresh

High ROI touch-ups.

- [ ] Replace dated knobs/handles with modern hardware
- [ ] Swap old faucet or showerhead for mid-range update
- [ ] Re-grout or color-seal dingy lines
- [ ] Stage with minimal, fresh items (white towels, bowl of lemons)

Section 6 Lighting & Electrical

Bright sells.

- [ ] Replace burnt bulbs; aim for consistent color temperature (2700-3000K)
- [ ] Add lamps in dark corners; use smart plugs for easy on/off
- [ ] Test all switches and outlets; fix loose or noisy fans

Section 7 Safety & Compliance

Easy to pass, harder to ignore.

- [ ] Install handrails where required; secure loose steps
- [ ] Verify smoke/CO detectors in correct locations
- [ ] Cap unused gas lines; label shutoffs
- [ ] Check pool/spa safety measures (fencing, covers) if applicable

Section 8 Pre-Photo Prep

Make the pixels pop.

- [ ] Schedule professional photos after prep is complete
- [ ] Hide cords, trash cans, pet bowls, and litter boxes
- [ ] Open blinds; turn on all lights; replace yellowed bulbs
- [ ] Park cars away from the front; clear driveway

Section 9 Showing Day Checklist

Fast tidy flow.

- [ ] 10-minute pickup: counters clear, beds made, towels fresh
- [ ] Run diffuser lightly; avoid strong scents
- [ ] Take pets out or crate; hide pet items
- [ ] Set thermostat to a comfortable temp
- [ ] Leave for showings 10 minutes early; lights on, blinds open

Section 10 Documents & Disclosures

Transparency builds trust.

- [ ] Gather receipts/warranties for recent work and appliances
- [ ] List known issues and fixes; have disclosures ready
- [ ] Prepare utility cost info and HOA documents if applicable
- [ ] Create a one-page 'House Highlights' sheet for buyers

This checklist is a general guide; consult your agent for local requirements.