20-STEP CHECKLIST:

Prep Your Home Before Listing

INTERIOR PREPARATION

1. CLEAR AND CLEAN KITCHEN COUNTERS & SINK

Clear off kitchen countertops so the space feels larger and more inviting. Remove small appliances like coffee makers, mixers, and decorations that can make the space look cluttered. Wipe down all surfaces including appliances, the sink, and backsplash.

2. CLEAN BATHROOM SINKS, TUBS, AND SHOWERS

Remove personal items like shampoo bottles, razors, and toiletries from the counters and showers. Store them under the sink if possible. Close the toilet lid and leave only clean, neatly folded towels visible.

3. REPLACE BURNED OUT LIGHT BULBS

Check all lights in the home, including lamps and exterior lights, and replace any burned-out bulbs. Bright lighting makes your home feel warm and welcoming in photos.

4. TURN ON ALL LIGHTS

Turn on all lights throughout the home before photos. This includes lamps and exterior lighting. More light helps rooms appear brighter and more inviting.

5. OPEN ALL WINDOW TREATMENTS

Open blinds and curtains to allow as much natural light into the home as possible. Clean windows if needed to make sure they look clear and bright in photos.

6. REMOVE UNNECESSARY FURNITURE AND DECOR

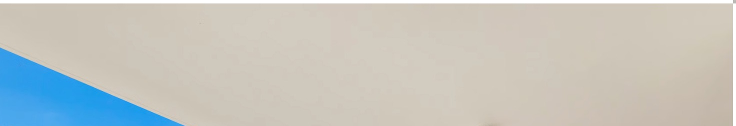
Too much furniture can make rooms feel smaller. Consider removing bulky or excess pieces to open up the space. A clean, minimal layout helps rooms appear larger and more appealing.

7. REMOVE FLOOR MATS AND RUNNERS

Floor mats and runners can make rooms look smaller in photos. Remove mats from bathrooms, kitchens, and laundry areas. Consider whether rugs should remain or be removed for the photos.

8. TURN OFF CEILING FANS, TVS, AND COMPUTER SCREENS

Photographers often use HDR photography, which combines multiple exposures into one image. Moving objects like ceiling fans or glowing screens can create strange visual effects, so turn them off before the photoshoot.



9. CLEAR APPLIANCES OF MAGNETS AND CLUTTER

Remove magnets, notes, calendars, and personal items from the refrigerator and other appliances. This helps the kitchen look clean and prevents personal information from appearing in photos.

10. MAKE ALL BEDS

Make sure every bed in the home is neatly made with matching sheets, blankets, and pillows. Decorative pillows can add a polished look to the room.

11. REMOVE PERSONAL PHOTOS AND ITEMS

Remove family photos and personal items throughout the home. This helps buyers picture themselves living in the space instead of focusing on the current owners.

12. PUT SHOES AND JACKETS IN CLOSETS

Store shoes, jackets, and other items that might be sitting near entryways or hallways. Visible clutter can make buyers think there isn’t enough storage space.

13. CLEAR NIGHTSTANDS AND DRESSERS

Remove clutter from bedroom furniture like nightstands and dressers. Leave only a lamp or a small decorative item to create a clean, hotel-like appearance.

14. REMOVE ALL PET ITEMS

Put away pet beds, toys, bowls, and litter boxes. Some buyers have allergies, and removing pet items helps the home feel neutral and fresh.

EXTERIOR PREPARATION

15. TIDY UP THE YARD AND LANDSCAPING

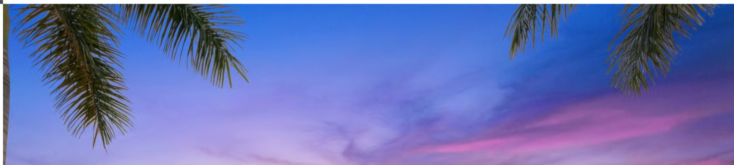
Trim plants, remove weeds, and clean up the yard so the exterior looks neat and welcoming. The first photo buyers see is often the front of the home, so curb appeal matters.

16. SWEEP PORCHES, PATIOS, AND DECKS

Sweep away leaves and debris from outdoor spaces. If possible, add simple touches like plants or outdoor furniture to make the area feel inviting.

17. REMOVE CARS FROM THE DRIVEWAY AND STREET

Move cars, trucks, RVs, and trailers out of the driveway and away from the front of the home. This allows photographers to capture a clear exterior shot.



18. HIDE GARBAGE CANS AND LAWN EQUIPMENT

Put trash cans, hoses, lawnmowers, and other yard tools out of sight. These items can distract from the home in photos.

19. REMOVE GRILL OR BARBECUE COVERS

If you have a grill or outdoor cooker, remove the cover so it looks ready for use. If the grill is old or worn, it may be best to remove it entirely.

20. OPEN PATIO UMBRELLAS

If weather allows, open patio umbrellas and arrange outdoor seating. Adding pillows or flowers can make the space feel warm and welcoming.