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## MARKET READY PROPERTY CHECKLIST

It is our goal to get you the highest sale price in the most efficient and effective time possible. We prepared this simple property checklist to help you get Market Ready! This means that a property is in the best condition possible when it is shown to potential buyers.

Two general suggestions to keep in mind:

### 1. De-Personalize

While it may seem odd to pull any trace of you and your family off of the walls and out of sight before you leave your home, it is accepted in real estate that homes sell faster and for more when they are de-personalized. We want buyers to be able to picture themselves in your property.

### 2. De-Clutter

Since we want buyers to see themselves in your property, let's make sure it looks like there is room! We strongly suggest that you take down and store all your family photos, remove books from bookcases, and knickknacks and most decorations from view.

A professional inspector will review most of these items during the sales process so it is best to complete as much as possible. **OUR BEST TIP:** Take a first pass and get as many of the little things done first instead of going through this list from start to finish. Each item on this list makes a difference.

Exterior:

- Front/back doorway is swept and clean
- All exterior door knobs work, lock and are clean
- Shrubs have been trimmed away from house
- Mulch/plants in flower beds are presentable
- All windows cleaned
- Address numbers are visible from street and clean
- Light fixtures are clean and all lights work
- Light bulbs all work
- Exterior is swept and the eaves or overhangs are free of debris and cob webs
- Sheds/Garage/Fences in good working order
- Roof in good condition and clear of debris
- Gutters/Rain spouts working and flowing away from property
- Stairs are clean and handrails are solid



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- All balconies and porches are clean and free of clutter

Safety:

- All smoke detectors work
- Smoke detector in all sleeping areas and on each level including basement/attic
- All exterior doors have deadbolts that are operable without a need for a key
- Exterior doors are weather tight and in good working order
- Window panes are not broken or cracked
- All windows lockable/weather tight/stay open without support
- All windows have screens without rips or holes
- All habitable spaces have operable windows
- Floors are structurally sound
- Overhead lights have proper fixture coverings
- GFCI outlets are installed and in working order
- All outlets have plates installed and are in working order
- Electrical panel is properly labeled
- Clothes dryer is properly vented
- Plumbing is free of leaks

Living Areas:

- Freshly painted or cleaned interior walls
- Carpets/Flooring cleaned/replaced
- Door knobs clean/replaced in working order
- New light fixtures
- Light bulbs working/replaced
- Wall plates cleaned/replaced
- Screws turned vertical
- All Trash Removed
- Cleaned from floor to ceiling

Kitchen:

- Cabinets cleaned/painted/replaced
- Countertops cleaned



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- Sink cleaned
- Faucets clean and properly caulked
- Appliances Cleaned/ Working/Replaced
- Dishwasher
- Disposal
- Range
- Vent hood
- Oven
- Refrigerator
- Microwave
- Other
- Clean/Freshly painted interior
- Flooring cleaned
- Clean light fixtures
- Light bulbs working/replaced
- Screws turned vertical
- All Trash Removed
- Cleaned from floor to ceiling

Master Bedroom:

- Shelving in closets in working order/added
- Freshly painted or cleaned interior walls
- Carpets/Flooring cleaned/replaced
- Door knobs clean/replaced in working order
- Clean and secure light fixtures
- Light bulbs working/replaced
- Wall plates cleaned/replaced
- Screws turned vertical
- Cleaned from floor to ceiling

Bedroom 2:

- Shelving in closets in working order/added
- Freshly painted or cleaned interior walls



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- Carpets/Flooring cleaned/replaced
- Door knobs replaced
- Clean and secure light fixtures
- Light bulbs working/replaced
- Wall plates cleaned/replaced
- Screws turned vertical
- Cleaned from floor to ceiling

Bedroom 3:

- Shelving in closets in working order/added
- Freshly painted or cleaned interior walls
- Carpets/Flooring cleaned/replaced
- Door knobs clean/replaced in working order
- Clean and secure light fixtures
- Light bulbs working/replaced
- Wall plates cleaned/replaced
- Screws turned vertical
- Cleaned from floor to ceiling

Bedroom 4:

- Shelving in closets in working order/added
- Freshly painted or cleaned interior walls
- Carpets/Flooring cleaned/replaced
- Door knobs clean/replaced in working order
- Clean and secure light fixtures
- Light bulbs working/replaced
- Wall plates cleaned/replaced
- Screws turned vertical

Master Bath:

- Cabinets cleaned/painted/replaced
- Countertops cleaned
- Bathtub cleaned/resurfaced



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- Shower cleaned/resurfaced
- Faucets clean/replaced in working order and properly caulked
- Freshly painted or cleaned interior walls
- Flooring cleaned/replaced
- Door knobs clean/replaced in working order
- Clean and secure light fixtures
- Light bulbs working/replaced
- Wall plates cleaned/replaced
- Screws turned vertical
- Cleaned from floor to ceiling

Bath 2:

- Cabinets cleaned/painted/replaced
- Countertops cleaned
- Bathtub cleaned/resurfaced
- Shower cleaned/resurfaced
- Faucets clean/replaced in working order and properly caulked
- Freshly painted or cleaned interior walls
- Flooring cleaned/replaced
- Door knobs clean/replaced in working order
- Clean and secure light fixtures
- Light bulbs working/replaced
- Wall plates cleaned/replaced
- Screws turned vertical
- Cleaned from floor to ceiling

Bath 3:

- Cabinets cleaned/painted/replaced
- Countertops cleaned
- Bathtub cleaned/resurfaced
- Shower cleaned/resurfaced
- Faucets clean/replaced in working order and properly caulked
- Freshly painted or cleaned interior walls



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- Flooring cleaned/replaced
- Door knobs cleaned/replaced in working order
- Clean and secure light fixtures
- Light bulbs working/replaced
- Wall plates cleaned/replaced
- Screws turned vertical
- Cleaned from floor to ceiling

Garage:

- Garage door is working
- Light bulb replaced/working
- Clean and free of all trash and debris

Other:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## PROPERTY WALK THROUGH SUMMARY

EXTERIOR

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ROOF

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ENTRYWAY, FRONT



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DOORS \_\_\_\_\_

LIVING ROOM:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

DINING ROOM:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

KITCHEN/APPLIANCES:  
\_\_\_\_\_

DEN/FAMILY ROOM:  
\_\_\_\_\_

HALLWAYS:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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MASTER BEDROOM:  
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MASTER BATHROOM:  
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BEDROOM:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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BEDROOM:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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BATHROOM:  
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BATHROOM:

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BATHROOM:

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PORCH/LANAI:

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GARAGE:

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DEN/FAMILY ROOM:

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POOL/SPA:

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OTHER:

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OTHER:

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OTHER:

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OTHER:

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OTHER:

**NOTES:**

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## WHAT IS CURB APPEAL?

When it comes to attracting buyers to your property, first impressions are critical. According to national surveys of buyers who purchased, "75% of homebuyers drove by the home, and 63% walked through the home, after viewing it"<sup>1</sup> so curb appeal counts. It is important to focus on curb appeal and how your property looks when a potential buyer visits.

*So what is curb appeal?*

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<sup>1</sup> Source: National Association of Realtors, Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers 2011



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What makes a property attractive from the exterior varies as much as how we decorate the interior of our homes. We have prepared this list of the top items that every potential buyer is likely to look at when visiting your property.

1. **Think like a buyer** - stand outside your property and take a really good look. You probably have not done this in a while. Is there anything that looks out of order?
2. **Depersonalize** - the entryway to your home is clean and free of personalized decorations or signs.
3. **Less is more** - this may sound like a cliché however, when it comes to exterior landscaping less really is more. Make certain that all of your landscaping is cut, trimmed and looks clean.
4. **Improve your view** - clean windows make an impression, so do not so clean windows. It is a good idea to make certain that all the windows in your home are clean. Pay special attention to those that are visible from the front of the house.
5. **How are your accents?** - take a look at your address numbers, doorbell, doorknob, or even the door kick plate. They should all look new and make the best impression possible.
6. **Raise the roof** - well maybe not the roof, but you should make sure that you raise any landscaping or tree limbs off of your roof and that the entire roofline is clear and the roof is clean.
7. **Keep it up** - when your home is listed and being shown, you should consider lawn maintenance at least once a week. During the summer months twice a week maybe necessary.
8. **Sweep it up** - walkways and stepping stones are wonderful outdoor accents for a property. When they are swept clean, they make a fantastic impression.

NOTES:



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## HOW DO I DE-CLUTTER?

*Spending a few bucks on de-cluttering and cleaning a home results in an 872% return on the investment when it sells.<sup>2</sup>*

All of the things in our home that make us comfortable, can often make a potential buyer uncomfortable or block them from seeing themselves in the property. This is human nature and is true for most all of us.

When a buyer looks at your home, we want them to see a blank canvas that they can put their personal touches on. By removing clutter we can make this happen!

Here are the top suggestions for the most effective de-cluttering of your property:

- Your front door and doorstep are clean and only have a welcome mat
- All collections, figurines, models and free standing decorations are removed
- Refrigerator magnets are off and doors are clean
- Bookshelves are sparse with a lot of open space
- Counter tops are barren - or have almost nothing on them
- Cabinets are sparsely filled and clean
- The refrigerator is lightly stocked and clean
- Bathrooms are clean and empty
- Personal photos are gone or minimized
- Trophies, awards, certificates and diplomas are removed
- Furniture may need to be re-arranged or even removed: create open space
- Remove excessive wall décor. All family photos should come down
- Landscapes, fruit and vegetable stills or neutral artwork is fine
- Remove posters and excess decoration from kids rooms
- Organize your closets so they look like an ad from the closet store
- Any personalized or monogrammed items are removed
- The backyard is well kept and free of toys and personal items
- Sidewalks, walkways and stepping stones are swept and clean
- Fences are in good condition and clean
- Laundry room is clean and the appliances are dusted
- Driveways are pressure washed (if necessary) and clean
- Garages are well organized and as empty as possible

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<sup>2</sup> According to a 2009 HomeGain® Real Estate Agent Survey on Top 12 Home Improvements For Sellers.



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## HOW DO I DE-PERSONALIZE?

*90% of buyers can't visualize the potential of a home.*

*Which means preparing it to show to its full potential is critical.<sup>3</sup>*

While it may seem odd to remove any trace of you and your family off of the walls and out of sight before you leave your home, it is accepted in real estate that homes sell faster and for more when they are de-personalized. We want buyers to be able to picture themselves in your property.

### So what does DE-PERSONALIZE mean?

De-personalizing can be somewhat difficult and even emotional, we have found that having the right mindset and understanding really helps. Our goal is to create a space that buyers can see themselves moving right into. This certainly does not mean completely vacant. It may help to think about a hotel room, while filled with furniture and functional there is no trace of personality.

Here are some simple steps:

1. **Store or Pack Your Belongings** - when it comes to preparing your home to sell, less is more. Pack anything that is not essential and stacks of boxes neatly in the garage or in a storage room. You may consider renting a storage space.
2. **Family Photos** - pictures of you and your family create a mental block for buyers. This is a great time to pack them up safely so they're ready for their next destination.
3. **Neutralize** - non-neutral items are those that fit your individual taste and style. Take a look around your house and ask yourself which items stand out and store them.
4. **Kitchen** - the kitchen is usually pretty easy. Simply remove any photos and make sure that the refrigerator door is clean and free of magnets or anything hanging on it.
5. **Bedrooms** - the bedroom can be difficult to depersonalize. Take a look with a critical eye ask yourself if there is anything that stands out four may make a potential buyer feel less comfortable. We want them to feel at home.
6. **Bathrooms** - bathrooms should have cleared countertops and sparkling clean mirrors. It may be an inconvenience, however is also a good idea to keep your toiletry products out of sight and inside cabinets.
7. **Pets** - we love our pets, but not everyone loves them. It is recommended you keep pet's items out of sight and if possible pets should be removed from your property during showings. We want the focus

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<sup>3</sup>NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS SURVEY 2009



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on the property and pets create a distraction.

8. **Remove Personalized Items** - anything that is monogrammed or personalized should be removed. These are the definition of personal.
9. **The Rest of the House** - walk the rest of your home and look for items like diplomas, achievement certificates, trophies and anything else that is personal. These items are important and should be stored safely. Doing so will help any buyer see themselves moving in.

## SUCCESSFUL SHOWING GUIDELINES

Because you only have one chance to make a first impression...

### *TIPS TO GET YOUR HOME SOLD FASTER AND FOR MORE MONEY*

Our goal is to get your home sold quickly and for the highest price possible. We want to make sure that your property is ready for the market and is going to give potential buyers a great experience during their showing. Here are some tips that will help buyers feel comfortable and feel as if they have walked into their new home.

1. **Depersonalize your home.** While family photos and personal collections are cherished items, they can be a distraction and prevent potential buyers from getting a feel for the home. Pack away as many of your personal items as possible to make it easier for them to picture themselves and their cherished belongings in the home.
2. **Don't cook anything that leaves and offensive odor to others.** Your favorite flavors and spices are tasty and enjoyable. However, they may not be a potential buyers favorite. Make it your goal to neutralize the air in your home. In fact you may boil some vanilla extract in water before a showing - this smells like cookies. Who doesn't love cookies?!
3. **Be gone during showings.** Avoid making potential buyers feel like intruders. If you are present, they will tend to rush through the house and not get to know it and see themselves living in the space. We want them to feel comfortable and when the current homeowner is there it is difficult for them to settle and see themselves moving in.
4. **Play up your home's unique qualities.** Every home has great qualities and unique features. We want to play those up. If you have a wonderful drawer with built in spice rack, put a note on that drawer that says "Open Me"!
5. **If something doesn't stay...** Try to remove any sentimental items from the house that you don't intend to leave behind and replace them with a substitute, if at all possible. If it is important for the appearance and functionality of the home, like a Tiffany lamp, hang a sign on it that says, "This is a gift from my grandmother and will not stay with the house."



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6. **Set the stage...it is show time.** Make your home as welcoming as possible. Set the tone and create ambiance. Place bright, fresh flowers by the front door or on the dining room table. Play some soft unobtrusive music. Consider all of your senses and create an experience for the buyer. Buyers see a lot of houses in a day, make yours light, clean, inviting and smelling good. You want your home to be the one they don't forget.
7. **Turn on the lights.** The minute a potential buyer walks in the home, they form an opinion. Put your home in it's very best light -- the more light, the more spacious an impression you will create. Open window shades so that natural light can shine through and also turn on every light, even in closets and bathrooms.

*Keep these in mind when getting prepared for each showing and you are on your way to getting **your AUSTIN HOME SOLD!***

## LAST MINUTE SHOWING SUCCESS

It is always our intention to give you as much time as possible to prepare for a showing, unfortunately sometimes a last minute showing is not avoidable. It's ironic how many last-minute showings result in the sale of the home so let's make it count!

### PREPARE FOR A SHOWING IN 10 MINUTES (OR LESS)

- Put the dishes in the dishwasher. (Or quickly wash the dishes!)
- Make the beds.
- Wipe all of the counters.
- Empty the garbage.
- Hide dirty clothes in the hamper or the washing machine.
- Take a deep breath.
- Quickly vacuum.
- Turn on all of the lights.
- Leave the house before showing.



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Smile - you did it.



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## OUR BEST MOVING TIPS

Very few people would say moving is easy, however this list of our best moving tips will help you make yours easier!

- Provide the post office with your forwarding address two to four weeks ahead.
- Notify your credit card companies, mortgage companies and bank of your change of address. This correspondence all contains sensitive information.
- Create an email list of friends, relatives, and business colleagues who need to be notified about your move.
- Arrange to disconnect utilities and have them connected at your new home.
- Cancel the newspaper, or change the address so it will arrive at your new home.
- Check insurance coverage for the items you're moving. Usually movers only cover what they pack.
- Clean out appliances and prepare them for moving, if applicable.
- Check with your condo or co-op about any restrictions on using the elevator or particular exits for moving.
- Have a "first open" box with the things you'll need most, such as toilet paper, soap, trash bags, scissors, hammer, screwdriver, pencils and paper, cups and plates, water, snacks, and toothpaste.

Plus, if you're moving out of town, be sure to:

- Get copies of medical and dental records and prescriptions for your family and your pets.
- Get copies of children's school records for transfer.
- Consider special car needs for pets when traveling.
- Let a friend or relative know your route.
- Empty your safety deposit box.
- Put plants in boxes with holes for air circulation if you're moving in cold weather.