Your logo here

Get Your House Ready to Sell

Seller checklist: from 4 to 6 weeks out to every showing

YOUR AGENT _____ PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

PROPERTY _____ PHOTO DAY _____ LISTING DATE _____

Count back from photo day. Tick each box as you go, and ask your agent before any big project.

4 to 6 weeks out — Declutter, depersonalize and plan repairs

- [ ] Pack what you won't use before the move: off-season clothes, extra dishes, books, decor.
- [ ] Store boxes off-site, or stack them neatly in the garage or basement.
- [ ] Clear counters, shelves and the tops of furniture.
- [ ] Leave closets and cabinets about half full.
- [ ] Take out bulky or extra furniture so rooms look larger.
- [ ] Put away family photos, kids' names, mail, calendars, diplomas and awards.
- [ ] Walk the house with your agent and list what needs fixing.
- [ ] Fix leaks, drips, loose handles, sticking doors and cracked tiles.
- [ ] Test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms; fix tripping hazards.
- [ ] Get estimates for big items (roof, heating and cooling, appliances), even if you won't fix them.
- [ ] Optional: ask your agent about a pre-listing inspection.
- [ ] Book help early: handyman, painter, cleaners, stager, photographer.

2 weeks out — Clean, paint, light and the outside

- [ ] Deep clean windows, carpets, light fixtures, walls and baseboards.
- [ ] Clean grout, the oven and the fridge, inside and out.
- [ ] Air out the house; skip strong scents and scented candles.
- [ ] Touch up scuffs; repaint bold rooms in beige, gray or soft white.
- [ ] Replace burned-out bulbs; add lamps to dark rooms.
- [ ] Mow, edge, weed and trim; clear leaves and branches.
- [ ] Clean the front door, make the house number easy to read, clear the walk.
- [ ] Add a new doormat and a few potted plants by the entry.
- [ ] Pick a staging plan: your own furniture, edited; a stager for a few rooms or the whole house; or virtual staging in the listing photos.

Documents to gather

Start a folder now. General pointers: ask your agent what your state requires.

- [ ] Seller disclosure form, if your state uses one (ask your agent); fill it in early.
- [ ] Receipts and permits for repairs and upgrades.
- [ ] Warranties and manuals for appliances and systems that stay.
- [ ] HOA rules, fees and contacts; ask when to order resale documents.
- [ ] Recent utility bills, in case buyers ask.
- [ ] Latest mortgage statement, for the payoff estimate.
- [ ] Built before 1978? Find any lead paint reports; ask your agent about the federal lead disclosure.
- [ ] Any past inspection reports.

Photo day — The morning of the shoot

- [ ] Turn on every light; open blinds and curtains.
- [ ] Clear kitchen and bath counters, the sink and the fridge door.
- [ ] Make beds; hang fresh towels.
- [ ] Hide trash cans, pet bowls, cords, remotes and toiletries.
- [ ] Move cars, bins and hoses away from the front.
- [ ] Take pets out for the shoot.
- [ ] Empty rooms: leave them clean and bright; they can be virtually staged later.
- [ ] Virtual staging: label each staged photo “Virtually staged” and keep the original.
- [ ] Never stage or edit a photo to hide a defect.

Before every showing — A quick reset, under an hour

- [ ] Make beds; pick up toys, clothes and dishes.
- [ ] Wipe counters, sinks, mirrors and appliance handles; tidy the fridge.
- [ ] Empty the trash; avoid strong cooking smells.
- [ ] Open blinds, turn on all the lights, set a comfortable temperature.
- [ ] Clear paths of leaves, snow or ice.
- [ ] Take your pets along; turn off the alarm as your agent asks.

Safety and privacy

Strangers walk through during showings.

- [ ] Lock away jewelry, cash, documents and prescription medications.
- [ ] Secure firearms and collectibles.
- [ ] Put away laptops, tablets and other small electronics.
- [ ] Hide mail, calendars, wi-fi passwords and computer logins.
- [ ] Ask your agent about a “No photography” note in the MLS.