

# THE HOME SELLER'S PREPARATION CHECKLIST

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How to Get Your Home Market-Ready and Maximize Your Sale Price

*A room-by-room, week-by-week guide to listing success.*

***"Not Just Your Agent, Your Advocate"***

East Valley Phoenix, Arizona

Gilbert • Mesa • Chandler • San Tan Valley • Queen Creek • Apache Junction • Florence

# Why This Checklist Matters

The difference between a home that sells in 2 weeks and one that sits for 3 months often comes down to preparation. This checklist walks you through everything you should do before listing your home — organized by priority and timeline.

You don't need to spend tens of thousands of dollars. Sometimes a weekend of focused effort adds \$10,000+ to your sale price.

## Phase 1: Declutter and Depersonalize (2–4 Weeks Before Listing)

Buyers need to picture THEIR life in YOUR space. That's hard to do when they're looking at your family photos, collections, and clutter.

- Remove personal photos, religious items, and political decor — you want the broadest appeal possible
- Clear kitchen counters of everything except 1–2 decorative items (coffee maker, fruit bowl)
- Declutter closets — buyers WILL open them. Remove 30–50% of what's in there to make them look spacious
- Clear out the garage — buyers want to see usable space, not storage overflow
- Remove excess furniture to make rooms feel larger
- Pack up seasonal items, rarely used kitchen gadgets, and anything you won't need before moving
- Consider renting a small storage unit for overflow — it's worth the \$100/month investment

## Phase 2: Deep Clean (1–2 Weeks Before Listing)

A spotless home signals 'well-maintained' to buyers. A dirty home signals 'what else have they neglected?'

- Hire a professional deep cleaning service (\$200–\$400 well spent)
- Clean all windows inside and out — natural light sells homes
- Steam clean or replace carpets
- Scrub grout in bathrooms and kitchen
- Clean all light fixtures and ceiling fans (Arizona dust accumulates fast)
- Wipe down baseboards, door frames, and light switches

- Clean oven, dishwasher, and all appliances — inside and out
- Make sure there are no pet odors (you may be nose-blind to them — ask a friend)

**Brian's Tip:** In Arizona, dust is relentless. Plan to dust and vacuum daily while your home is on the market, especially during monsoon season.

## Phase 3: Repairs and Touch-Ups (1–2 Weeks Before Listing)

Fix the small stuff. Buyers notice every flaw, and small issues make them wonder about big ones.

- Fix leaky faucets and running toilets
- Repair or replace cracked/broken tiles
- Touch up paint — cover scuffs, nail holes, and high-traffic wear. Stick to neutral colors (gray, greige, white)
- Replace burned-out light bulbs — use consistent, warm-white bulbs throughout
- Fix any doors that stick, squeak, or don't latch properly
- Repair or replace damaged window screens
- Caulk around tubs, showers, and sinks where old caulk has yellowed or cracked
- Address any obvious HVAC issues — buyers in Arizona will test the AC immediately
- For older Mesa homes: consider a pre-listing inspection to identify and address issues before buyers find them

## Phase 4: Curb Appeal (1 Week Before Listing)

Buyers form their first impression before they walk through the front door. In Arizona, curb appeal means something different than the rest of the country.

- Clean up desert landscaping — trim bushes, remove dead plants, refresh rock/gravel areas
- Edge walkways and driveways
- Power wash the driveway, sidewalks, and patio
- Paint or replace the front door — this is the single highest-ROI curb appeal upgrade
- Update house numbers and the mailbox if they look dated
- Add a few potted plants or desert-friendly flowers near the entry
- Clean the garage door — it's one of the largest visible surfaces on your home
- Make sure exterior lighting works and looks inviting for evening showings

## Phase 5: Stage and Photograph (Listing Week)

- Consider professional staging — staged homes sell faster and for more money. At minimum, follow the decluttering steps above

- Professional photography is non-negotiable. 85%+ of buyers start their search online. Bad photos = no showings
- Open all blinds and turn on all lights for the photo shoot
- Add fresh towels in bathrooms and a fresh throw on the couch
- Put out a few fresh flowers or a bowl of fruit — small touches matter
- Make sure the AC is set to a comfortable temperature for showings (Arizona buyers notice this immediately)

## During Showings: Quick Checklist

- Leave the home during all showings — buyers are uncomfortable with sellers present
- Make beds, clean dishes, and tidy up before every showing
- Secure valuables, medications, and personal documents
- Take pets with you or secure them off-site
- Leave lights on and blinds open
- Set the AC to 74–76°F before leaving

Want a free, no-obligation walkthrough of your home? I'll tell you exactly what's worth doing (and what's not) to get the best possible price.

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