

CHECKLIST TO ENSURE A SMOOTH SALE

Home Sellers Checklist Guide



ENGEL & VÖLKERS[®]
ARIAN & KEON

Getting Your Ottawa Home Ready to Sell!

Make your home feel like a model property from the moment buyers walk in. This checklist will help you transform your space into something buyers can't resist.

Leading developers know that presentation is everything. They invest in designers, marketing experts, and staging teams to perfect every detail. But what's the one thing all show homes have in common?

It's not just stylish finishes or an open floor plan—it's the feeling that no one actually lives there.

Buyers fall in love with the idea of a dream life. Show homes reflect that ideal: clean, calm, bright, and perfectly styled. Real life is messy. A show home is not.

Let this idea guide every choice as you prepare to sell. Create that dream-life feel, and buyers will be drawn to the vision you've brought to life.

Follow Our guide and transform your home into a Show Home!

18-Steps To A Successful Home Sale

- 1.  Stage Your Home to Stand Out**

In today's market, staging isn't optional—it's strategic. The return on investment can outweigh the cost, especially compared to a price drop. Even partial staging gives your home a competitive edge. Ask your Realtor if it's right for you.
- 2.  Let Buyers See Themselves Here**

Remove personal items like photos, diplomas, and awards. A neutral space allows buyers to envision themselves living there, instead of feeling like guests in someone else's home.
- 3.  Open Up the Space**

Less truly is more. Keep rooms open and airy by removing extra furniture and décor. Buyers typically tour in pairs—make it easy for them to move through the space and feel its full potential.
- 4.  Clean and Clear**

Countertops should be mostly clear, with just a few stylish touches. Clear the floors, stash the bathmats, and aim for minimalism to enhance spaciousness and create a fresh, inviting feel.
- 5.  Brighten Every Room**

Lighting makes a huge difference. Replace dead bulbs, light up dark corners, and use artificial lighting where needed. Bright, well-lit spaces make your home feel larger, cleaner, and more welcoming.

6.  **Choose Neutral, Subtle Art**

Art can be highly subjective, and what appeals to one person might not resonate with another. To avoid distractions, opt for neutral, non-controversial pieces that complement your home rather than overshadow it. The focus should remain on the space itself.
7.  **Use Mirrors to Open the Space**

Mirrors do more than reflect light—they visually expand a room. Consider placing a large mirror in key areas like entryways or living rooms to make spaces feel bigger and brighter. You can also use reflective or glass furniture to keep things airy. Avoid heavy, oversized pieces that can close off a space or make it feel crowded.
8.  **Follow the 60/40 Closet Rule**

Buyers are always looking for great storage. Keep closets no more than 60% full to give the impression of plenty of space. Remove non-essentials, organize your items neatly, and consider using matching hangers or bins for a uniform look. Think: high-end boutique, not overstuffed wardrobe.
9.  **Make Storage Look Effortless**

Even hidden spaces like storage rooms and basements should feel neat and intentional. Use clear bins, shelves, and labels to present an organized lifestyle. This signals to buyers that the home has been well cared for and makes even small storage areas feel practical and appealing.
10.  **Style the Bed Like a Hotel**

A beautifully made bed adds a sense of luxury and comfort to any bedroom. Use clean, neutral bedding, plump pillows, and a simple throw or accent cushions to elevate the space. A thoughtfully styled bed helps buyers feel like they've just stepped into a peaceful, welcoming retreat.

11.  **Turn Your Bathroom Into a Spa-Like Oasis**
A clean, tranquil bathroom helps buyers envision relaxation. Clear the vanity, organize drawers and cabinets, and remove personal items. Swap everyday towels for fluffy white ones and keep the shower minimal—just a few high-end soaps or shampoos. A spa-inspired, clutter-free space feels fresh and luxurious.
12.  **Don't Lose the Fixtures You Love**
Your sale agreement includes anything permanently attached—light fixtures, shelving, even that stylish mirror. If there's something you want to keep, swap it out before listing or have your Realtor exclude it in writing. This avoids confusion and protects the pieces you cherish.
13.  **Fix the Small Stuff Early**
Small issues can raise red flags. Walk through your home and take note of minor repairs: re-caulk tubs, patch wall holes, re-grout tile, fix squeaky doors, and touch up scuffs or stains. These low-cost fixes make a big difference and show buyers your home is well cared for.
14.  **Make Your Outdoor Space Irresistible**
Outdoor areas are extensions of your home. Style patios with cozy seating and plants, mow the lawn, trim hedges, and pull weeds. A tidy, sunlit yard or balcony invites buyers to picture their mornings or evenings spent relaxing outside.

15.  **Boost Your Curb Appeal to Attract Buyers**
First impressions matter—make your home pop from the street. Refresh trim or exterior paint, and consider a bold front door color to create a standout focal point. Update your house numbers and mailbox for a modern touch. If you have a porch, stage it with outdoor furniture and a fresh doormat. Trim bushes, mow the lawn, and clear walkways of any hazards. A welcoming exterior sets the tone and can be a deciding factor for buyers browsing MLS listings.
16.  **Add Simple, Modern Upgrades**
You don't need a full renovation to give your home a fresh feel. Swap dated cabinet handles for sleek hardware, and replace old light fixtures with stylish, modern designs. Even small changes like these can elevate your home's look, making it feel updated and well cared for—without breaking the bank.
17.  **Maximize The Sense of Space in Each Room**
Buyers love homes that feel open. Remove excess furniture and decor to highlight the size of each room. Clear out anything that clutters the space or makes it feel cramped. A clean, simplified layout not only maximizes flow—it allows buyers to focus on the home's best features and imagine how they would make it their own.
18.  **Schedule a Professional Move-Out Clean**
Arrange a professional move-out cleaning to ensure every inch of your home shines. These experts go beyond surface cleaning—they tackle walls, appliances, windows, and more. Make sure they know it's for a real estate showing so they can clean with that goal in mind. A spotless home tells buyers it's been well maintained and cared for.

The Complete Pre-Cleaning Checklist

KITCHEN

- All surfaces, shelves and light fixtures dusted
- Cabinets front and inside wiped cleaned
- Counters and back splashes washed Sinks and faucets cleaned and sanitized
- Interior of oven cleaned Interior and exterior of fridge cleaned
- Exterior of major appliances washed (fridge, stove top, range hood, oven, dishwasher)
- Area behind and under fridge cleaned (if easy to move)
- Area behind and under stove cleaned (if easy to move)
- Interior and exterior of microwave wiped clean
- Counter appliances wiped clean (coffee maker, toaster, electric kettle)
- Dish towels folded and/or hung
- Tables and chairs wiped clean/sanitized
- Light switches wiped clean
- Baseboards and heaters dusted/wiped clean
- Window sills dusted/wiped clean
- Marks on walls and baseboards cleaned (Magic Eraser)
- Doors, doorknobs, doorframes cleaned
- Empty trash and replace liners
- Vacuum and wash/steam floors

BATHROOMS

- Cabinets front and inside wiped cleaned
- Wipe mirrors, counters, and shelves
- Organize bathroom counter
- Wipe soap dish and toothbrush holder
- Sanitize sinks
- Wipe towel racks, toilet paper holde, and fixtures
- Fold and hang clean towels
- Clean and sanitize shower and bathtub
- Polish all bright metal surfaces
- Clean and sanitize toilet
- Dust/clean ceiling fan
- Clean light switches
- Dust/wipe baseboards and heaters
- Wipe window sills
- Remove wall/baseboard marks
- Clean doors, doorknobs, and doorframes
- Empty and sanitize trash bin, replace liner
- Wash and sanitize floor (mop/steam)

BEDROOMS

- Dust all surfaces, shelves, and light fixtures
- Clean closet interiors and doors
- Dust under the bed if flooring is hardwood
- Mop or steam clean hard surface floors
- Vacuum carpeted areas, especially under the bed
- Make the bed (change sheets if requested)
- Wipe headboard and bedside tables
- Clean mirrors and light switches
- Dust and wipe baseboards and heaters
- Wipe window sills
- Remove marks from walls and baseboards
- Clean doors, doorknobs, and doorframes
- Empty trash and replace liners

OTHER LIVING AREAS

- Dust all surfaces, shelves, furniture, and light fixtures
- Clean closet interiors and doors
- Dust artwork, photo frames, decor, and electronics
- Wipe coffee and side tables
- Clean mirrors and glass doors
- Fluff and neatly arrange pillows and cushions
- Organize magazines, books, and toys
- Dust and wipe staircase railings and handrails
- Clean light switches
- Dust/wipe baseboards and heaters
- Wipe window sills
- Remove marks from walls and baseboards
- Clean doors, doorknobs, and doorframes
- Empty trash, replace liners (sanitize bin if needed)

“Buyers decide within seconds—make those seconds count.” A clean, calm space invites strong offers.

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