

# FrontDoor's Open House Checklist for Sellers

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## 1 Plan Ahead

- Walk through each room and criticize the home from a buyer's perspective.
- Consider getting a professional home inspection and making necessary repairs.
- Hold a yard sale. Sell, donate or trash anything you don't need.

## 2 Clean, Declutter and Depersonalize

- Thoroughly clean the entire home.
- Scrub tile in the kitchen and bathrooms.
- Clean hardwood floors.
- Steam clean carpets and drapes.
- Get rid of all dust bunnies.
- Repair cracks and holes in the walls.
- Paint interior walls with neutral colors, like beige, cream or light pastels. Pale blues and greens are good for bathrooms.
- Remove excess and oversized furniture.
- Rearrange furniture to maximize space.
- Organize room closets and store out-of-season clothes.
- Remove all small appliances, toys, magazines and pet items.
- Remove family photos, personal collections and medications.
- Remove items from the garage and store them off-site.
- Secure valuable items, including cash and jewelry.

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## 3 Maximize Curb Appeal

- Paint the home's exterior, including trim, doors and shutters.
- Power wash the siding and windows.
- Inspect the roof and make repairs as needed.
- Repair cracks in the driveway and sidewalks.
- Sweep the entryway and walkways.
- Mow, water and fertilize the lawn.
- Trim shrubs and trees and rake the leaves.
- Plant colorful flowers.
- Store any toys or equipment lying on the yard.
- Clean up pet droppings.
- Clean the gutters and downspouts.

## 4 Pay Attention to Kitchens and Bathrooms

- Mop and wax/polish the floors.
- Clear the countertops.
- Replace outdated hardware.
- Clean appliances and fixtures.
- Clean and organize the pantry, cabinets and drawers.
- Replace old caulking around sinks and bathtubs.
- Remove stains from sinks, toilets and bathtubs.
- Keep all toilet seat lids closed.
- Hang fresh towels.

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## 5 Appeal to the Senses

- Bake cookies or burn scented candles.
- Offer light refreshments.
- Install higher wattage incandescent light bulbs to brighten rooms.
- Turn on all the lights.
- Open windows to let in fresh air.
- Open curtains or blinds to let in natural light and show off views.
- Turn off TVs.
- Relocate pets on the day of the open house.
- Refrain from smoking in the home.

## 6 Show Off Your Home's Best Features

- Remove rugs to show off hardwood floors.
- Pull back drapes to showcase nice views.
- Stage the front porch or deck with furniture and potted plants.
- Make sure fireplaces are in working condition.
- Clean the pool area.

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## **7** Spread the Word

- Hold an exclusive brokers' open house to let local agents know your home is on the market. Offer food and refreshments.
- Inform family, friends and neighbors of the date and time of your open house.
- Put ads in local newspapers, real estate publications and on free Web sites like Craigslist.com.
- Put up "Open House" signs on the front lawn and at nearby intersections with directions to the house.

## **8** Make the Most of the Open House

- Give each visitor a fact sheet with your contact information and a description of all the home's features, including room measurements, amenities and all appliances that will stay.
- Ask visitors to sign in a guest book.
- Have important documents available, such as homeowner's association rules, inspection reports and purchase offer forms.
- Ask for buyer feedback. Give buyers a preprinted questionnaire and pen when they arrive and ask them to leave it face down on the coffee table before they leave. They can include their contact information or be anonymous.