



INSPECTION AND PREPARATION TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL SALE

Bright and early Saturday morning a Realtor with prospective buyer in tow pulls into your driveway. As you cordially approach to greet them, the prospective buyer puts down his tool box and ladder, then extends his hand to greet you. The tool box reveals the following items:

- flash light
- ice pick
- magnet
- marble
- electrical tester
- binoculars
- compass

Your heart sinks. This buyer is up to something but you have no idea what. You rightly suspect that whatever it is, it may likely result in an offer lower than you'd like.

Fortunately, this uncomfortable situation is avoidable. Had you prepared in advance, you'd have welcomed the inspection, knowing the purpose for all the items:

- 6-foot stepladder: attic access
- flash light: crawl space and attic inspection
- ice pick: to indicate wood rot and termite infestation
- magnet: to determine if plumbing pipes are iron
- marble: to note if the floors are relatively level
- electrical tester: for checking electrical ground connection, particularly in kitchen and bathroom
- binoculars: for a closer look at the roof and roof-mounted structures
- compass: to determine the building's exposure (helpful in evaluating various structural elements and components)

Before any potential buyer inspects your home, go beyond the obvious tasks of cleaning out closets, drawers, and removing extra furniture. Inspect items and areas you may have overlooked such as interior and exterior walls, electrical switches and outlets, crawlspace, attic, foundation, plumbing, roof and roof structures.

Below is a checklist designed to systematically draw your attention to often overlooked items. This is not a complete list, nor is it designed to replace the services of a competent home inspector. We strongly urge you to educate yourself regarding home inspection and obtain the services of a professional inspector. A home inspector will check all areas of interest and recommend needed repairs. You won't have to worry about what a potential buyer might find and use to his advantage. To learn more, visit your favorite local or online book seller and search for "home inspection."

Worthwhile Repairs

Making small but necessary repairs will increase the value of your home and help you get a good offer. Making last-minute capital improvements, such as adding a room, probably won't be economical. Capital improvements may be economical, however, when improving the kitchen or bathroom. Ask your Realtor about which repairs and improvements are worthwhile.

Pre-sale Inspection Checklist

When your inspection, organizing, cleaning, polishing and repair of the following items is complete, check it off.

Interior

- ☐ Windows, Doors and Door Frames
- ☐ Floors
- ☐ Carpets
- ☐ Ceilings
- ☐ Paint and Wallpaper
- ☐ Light Fixtures, Wall Switches and Plugs
- ☐ Kitchen Cabinets, Exterior
- ☐ Kitchen Cabinets, Interior
- ☐ Kitchen Appliances
- ☐ Kitchen Counters
- ☐ Bathroom Counters and Wall Fixtures
- ☐ Bathroom Plumbing Fixtures
- ☐ Bathroom Tile, Ceilings, Walls & Floor
- ☐ Mirrors
- ☐ Fireplaces & Heaters
- ☐ Crawl Space – Overhead and Under the House
- ☐ Basement
- ☐ Stairs
- ☐ Attic
- ☐ Closets & Pantry

Exterior

- ☐ Paint, Color, Siding and Trim
- ☐ Porches
- ☐ Decks
- ☐ Gutters

- ☐ Roof
- ☐ Windows
- ☐ Doors
- ☐ Garage or Carport
- ☐ Garbage Cans and Garbage Can Space
- ☐ Rubbish & Refuse
- ☐ Outdoor Sheds
- ☐ Pool or Spa

Foundation and Infrastructure

- ☐ Foundation
- ☐ Supports
- ☐ Slab
- ☐ Plumbing & Pipes
- ☐ Heating, Furnace, Air Conditioning
- ☐ Electrical
- ☐ Water Heater
- ☐ Water

Safety Issues & Devices

- ☐ Detectors
- ☐ Asbestos
- ☐ Lead, Formaldehyde, Radon

Landscaping

- ☐ View
- ☐ Boundaries & Fences
- ☐ Walls
- ☐ Soil
- ☐ Ponds
- ☐ Driveways & walkways
- ☐ Landscaping
- ☐ Drainage
- ☐ Sewer & Septic

Additional Considerations

- The first impression is the most important. Make the front of your home a standout in every way.
- The living areas must be open, spacious, well lighted and fresh smelling. Remove and rearrange furniture as needed, turn on the lights, open a window and bake an apple pie!

- The kitchen must appear, above all else, spacious and spotless. Store some of your overflow to make the shelves look roomier. Grind a lemon peel in the garbage disposal.
- Master bedroom and bath must give the impression of space and flow. Thin your closets, remove all extra furniture. Create enough space so that a potential buyer can imagine filling it with their own possessions.

Don't forget to ask your Realtor for additional tips on “staging” and decorating!

