PREPARING YOUR HOME *For Sale*

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REAL ESTATE





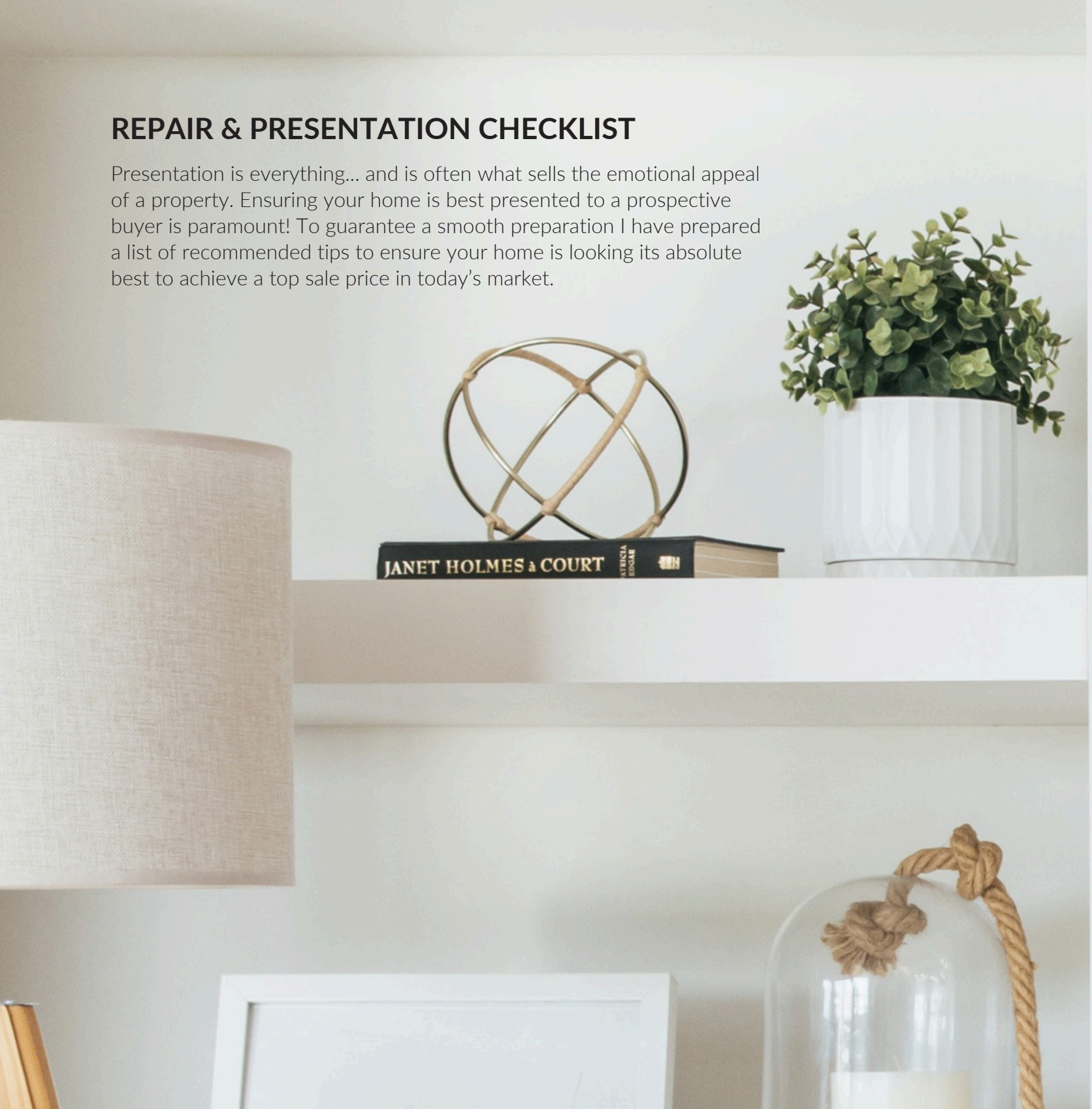


CONTENTS

REPAIR & PRESENTATION CHECKLIST
REPAIRING
CLEANING
NEUTRALISING
SPACE MANAGEMENT
ATMOSPHERE
STAGING
THE EXTERIOR
ROOM BY ROOM ANALYSIS

REPAIR & PRESENTATION CHECKLIST

Presentation is everything... and is often what sells the emotional appeal of a property. Ensuring your home is best presented to a prospective buyer is paramount! To guarantee a smooth preparation I have prepared a list of recommended tips to ensure your home is looking its absolute best to achieve a top sale price in today's market.



MAKE MINOR REPAIRS

- [ ] Replace cracked floor or counter tiles
- [ ] Repair holes in walls
- [ ] Fix leaky taps
- [ ] Fix doors that don't close properly. Ensure door handles turn & lock smoothly
- [ ] Consider painting your walls neutral colours

Replace burned out light bulbs

INTERNAL PRESENTATION

- [ ] The kitchen is the heart & hub of the home give it your all
- [ ] De-clutter kitchen bench tops
- [ ] Remove any fridge magnets & items from the front of the fridge
- [ ] Dust all light fittings and wash all exhaust fans
- [ ] Consider having the carpets professionally cleaned
- [ ] Put knick knacks into boxes & out of sight
- [ ] Remove any excess furniture
- [ ] Wash all windows
- [ ] Polish bathroom mirrors & shower glass
- [ ] Dust furniture & ceiling fan blades
- [ ] Air freshener will add an inviting aroma to any home

EXTERNAL PRESENTATION

- [ ] Spruce up the front door & entrance. Buy a new door mat & perhaps a few pot plants
- [ ] Mow the lawns, remove weeds and mulch any garden beds
- [ ] Remove any leaves or sticks from the gutters
- [ ] High pressure clean any paving and patio areas
- [ ] Remove any cobwebs
- [ ] Ensure all gates are working well

SOME THOUGHTS ON CONDITION

Of all the things homeowners can control when selling their home, the condition of their property is the most important . A crucial part of marketing any product is its presentation. Corporations and retail businesses understand this concept and pay millions of dollars each year on advertising and marketing consultants to get the best advice possible.

The same is true for Real Estate. In order to compete effectively with other sellers, homeowners must present their homes to the marketplace in an attractive, desirable condition. When you purchased your home you probably “comparison shopped”. Buyers are still doing this today. In my experience, the average purchaser looks at between 15 to 30 properties prior to purchasing a home. Regardless of how many properties are on the market, buyers always seek the best priced property that is in the best condition.



THINK LIKE A BUYER

You are not just selling a house; you are selling a shelter, a lifestyle, a dream. People always want the best for themselves, and your home should represent the buyer's answer to this goal. Put yourself in the buyer's shoes! Remember, they arrive at your front door wanting to find the right home. Don't make them search somewhere else for it. If you have done your homework, every room in your home will create a desire for them to stay.

START MAKING A LIST!

Walk outside and take a look at the property through the eyes of a buyer. Is there anything that needs repairing, looks worn, or is outdated? Start writing these items down on your list. Walk through the interior and do the same thing. Ask for the assistance of your family and friends.

The following pages will guide you step by step through the process of preparing your home for sale to achieve the highest possible sale price in the least amount of time. Our concentration will be on six areas:

Repairing
Cleaning
Neutralising
Space Management
Atmosphere
Staging

REPAIRS

The rule of thumb is, if something needs repairing, FIX IT! There are probably many things in your home that you have simply become used to over time things that you have been promising yourself that you will attend to. Well now is the time. The buyer will mentally add up the cost of repairing all of those minor flaws and end up with an amount that is generally much higher than what it would cost you to do the repairs.

Large repairs; ‘treat a buyer as you would yourself’. Repair any problems with major systems or offer an allowance for the buyer to make repairs after settlement.

CLEANING

Every area of the home must sparkle and shine! Each hour spent will be well worth it. Would you rather buy a clean car or a dirty one? Would you hurry to buy a pair of shoes with mud on them?

- Clean all windows
- Clean or polish all flooring
- Clean and polish all light fittings

NEUTRALISING

Be cautious about selecting colours when painting or replacing carpet. Your objective here is to make your home appeal to as many buyers as possible.

Forget your personal taste. The ‘market’ is always demand driven! Consider replacing unusual bold colours with neutral tones. Two coats of white paint may be the best investment you have ever made.

SPACE MANAGEMENT

This involves creating the illusion of more space.

- Arrange furniture to make the rooms feel as spacious as possible. Consider removing furniture from rooms that are crowded.
- Pack up collectibles. Leave just enough accessories to give the home a personal touch.
- Use light to create a sense of space. All curtains should be open. Turn on all the lights throughout the home before a showing and be sure to replace blown bulbs.

ATMOSPHERE

When placing yourself in the potential buyers shoes, you will want to consider the overall atmosphere of your home. Keep in mind your sense of smell as you go through the checklist. Create the atmosphere of your home as a place that is safe and warm and in good condition.

- A clean smelling house creates a positive image in the buyers mind. Be aware of any odours from cooking, cigarettes, pets etc which may have an adverse effect on potential buyers.
- If smoking or cooking odours have permeated your home, have your carpets and furniture cleaned and air out or dry clean your window coverings.
- Mildew odours are another no no. Don't allow wet towels to accumulate in hampers or dirty laundry to pile up in closets.
- Once offensive odours are removed, consider adding delightful ones. Recent studies have shown that humans have a st rong, positive response to certain smells, cinnamon, fresh flowers and scented oil burners are all excellent ways to enhance your property sale.

STAGING

This part of preparing your home for sale is the most fun and involves the use of colour, lighting, and accessories to emphasise the best feature of your home.

- Study Magazine ads or furniture showrooms to see how small details can make rooms more attractive and appealing. The effect of a vase of flowers, an open book on the coffee table, or a scented candle, can all make a huge difference to a room.
- The use of a brightly coloured pillow in a wing chair or a throw rug on a couch can add dimension to a sterile room.
- Soften potentially offending views, but always let light into your rooms. Replace heavy curtains with sheer white panels.
- Take advantage of natural light as much as possible; clean windows, open shades and curtains etc. Add lamps and lighting where necessary. Be sure that all fixtures are clean and have functionin bulbs.





THE EXTERIOR

Check your home for any maintenance just as a buyer would. Repaint or touch up if necessary. Don't let the outside turn them off before the inside turns them on.

• Colour has the power to attract. A tub or geraniums or a pot of petunias on the porch or a deck, will set the stage.
• Arrange outdoor furniture suitably dress the table with a dining setting and place cushions or throw rugs to make the scene more inviting.
• Check to see that all doors and windows are in good working order. Give special attention to your home's front entry. Remember, first impressions are likely to influence the remainder of the house tours.
• Fly screen doors should be free of any tears or holes.

THE YARD

Make sure the yard is neatly mowed, raked and edged. Prune and shape shrubs and trees to compliment your house. Consider adding seasonal flowers along the walks or in the planting areas. Petunias and Verena are easy to maintain, require nothing more than a regular watering.

THE DRIVEWAY

The surface of your driveway should be beyond reproach; after all, it's one of the first things a buyer will see when they approach your property. Sweep and wash the driveway and paths to remove debris, dirt and stains. Repair and patch the cracks, edge the sides and pull out any weeds.

ROOM BY ROOM ANALYSIS

The Front Entry

Whether a gracious, proportioned centre hall or a small space just large enough for a coat rack and a tiny table, this part of your home deserves particular attention.

• Study your entry hall and ask yourself what kind of impression it make s for your home. Flowers or a
small plant can make a striking focal point.
• Virtually any entry hall will benefit from a well placed mirror to enlarge the area.

The Living Areas

Think of these areas as if they were furniture showrooms. Your job is to make each room generate a
positive response. Add touches that make a room look truly inviting.
• Improve the traffic flow by removing excess furniture.
• Remove oversized television sets if they dominate the room.

The Dining Room

Avoid going overboard. To be effective, any settings that you create should reflect
the character of your entire home appropriately.
• Set the table with an attractive arrangement. Add fresh or silk flowers as a centrepiece.
• Visually enlarge a small dining area. Consider placing your dining table against a wall.

The Stairway

Stairways should provide transition from one level of your home to another.
• Stair lighting should be more than adequate. Stairs must be clutter free, stair railings tight an secure.
Runners or carpets should be tacked securely.
• If the stairs are a focal point of the main living areas, carefully choose accents to improve the visual
appeal.

The Kitchen:

Pay particular attention to your kitchen. This room continues to be the heart of the home. A pleasant, workable kitchen is near the top of most buyers' lists of priorities. The kitchen is a room that buyers will always scrutinise closely.

• Avoid clutter! Clear counters of small appliances and store whenever possible to maximise the appearance of work spaces.
• Clear off the top of the refrigerator or use baskets and bowls to hide the i tems kept there.
• Set the scene with an open cook book, or basket filled with fruit.
• Clean and organise all storage space. If your cabinets, drawers, and cupboards are crowded and
• overflowing, buyers assume that your storage space is inadequate. Neat, organised shelves and drawers look larger and more adequate for prospective buyer's needs.
• Set the table for an informal meal with bright place mats and a generous bowl of fruit as a centrepiece

The Laundry

A separate laundry is a true asset and is one of the most frequently requested items during a buyer's home search. Don't hide this treasure behind closed doors. Spruce up the room and open the door proudly for inspections.

• Organise cupboards and storage space.
• Keep up to date with your laundry or store all dirty laundry in a closed container.
• Clean and polish the washer and dryer

Master Bedroom

• Large master bedrooms are particularly popular with today's home buyers. Paint the room in a light colour, aim for a restful subdued look.
• An ensuite is a real sale plus. Decorate to co ordinate with the colour scheme of your bedrooms, to creating the 'suite' effect.
• Virtually all buyers are looking for a house with plenty of cupboard space. Try to make what you have, appear generous and well planned.
• Make sure all articles in the cupboard are fresh and clean smelling. When prospective buyers open your cupboard door, they should be greeted with fresh smelling air.
• Make sure the cupboard lights are working; add battery operated lights to the cupboards that lack them. Well lit cupboards look bigger, are more attractive and allow buyers to inspect the interiors easily.

The Bathroom

Wise sellers take special care when preparing their bath rooms for scrutiny by strangers. The bathroom is a very personal room of your home prospects will inspect yours carefully so be sure it is immaculate. cleanliness is the key! Make sure all surfaces are spotless.

• Replace worn or dirty shower curtains, clean and repair glass walls and doors. Remove any bath decals that are in poor condition.
• Clear off counter tops and store all personal care products out of sight
• Repair any taps that leak or do not function property. Clean off mineral deposits with vinegar or commercial products.
• Remember to appeal to a wide range of buyers. Play down dominant colours with contrasting neutral coloured towels and accessories. If your bathroom is white or a neutral colour, add a few cheerful accents.
• Scrub and polish floors.
• A gentle hint of fragrance in the air as is fine but keep it subtle.
• The Garage
• Sweep and wash the floor to remove dirt and stains. Organise tools, garden equipment, bicycles etc. A clean, organised garage appears larger.
• If the area is dark, add more light. If it is small and accommodates only one car, remove your car before buyers visit. If you have a two car garage with very little extra room, remove one of your cars so that buyers can make their inspection in comfort.

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Important points to remember when showing your home:

• Increase your chances. The more people who see your home, the more likely you are to sell it quickly.

• Yes, it's inconvenient to show your home at dinner time, but if the people buy your home ... isn't it worth it?

• There shouldn't be any major house cleaning at the point of going to the market. The only tasks you need to be concerned about are the day to day things; making beds, putting the dishes in the dishwasher, picking up loose newspapers etc.

• Open the windows and let fresh air in. Keep the temperature at a comfortable level at all times.

• Always turn on the lights for each showing. No area of your home should be dark. Turn off the television and play some soft, gentle music.

• Arrange for your pets and children to be aw ay from the house if possible.

• Don't try to sell the house with words, let it sell itself.

• Depersonalise the house as much as possible.

• Take away extra photos as these will often distract the buyer's attention away from the important thing ... the house

• Most importantly, try not to be present at a showing. It is uncomfortable and difficult for the buyers to view the home when the owners are present.

• Often, they will rush through and not give your home the proper attention it deserves.

• Last but not least Have faith in your agent ... they know what they are doing!

Keep in mind that the BUYERS will want to obtain the LOWEST PRICE and the BEST TERMS for themselves. Ray White Agents recommend that you DO NOT DISCUSS the following types of information with any buyers or anyone other than us, regardless of whom they are, or what they represent:

- Your reason for selling
- If you have purchased a new home or where you are going
- Your motivation to sell or your level of urgency
- Your willingness to consider an off er less than the listing price
- The terms under which you would sell
- Relocation or timing
- Items of personal property which you 'might' be willing to include in a sale
- Any confidential information that would serve to disclose your negotiating strategy

It may seem over the top, but some buyers may be looking for information to use as leverage during negotiations.





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