



Aloha,

This check list was put together to help OahuRE.com clients to sell there house faster and for more money. It is very extensive so please don't let the size of the list intimidate you. Just peruse it and do the best you can to get your home ready to sell. If you have any questions please let us know.

Exterior / Curb Appeal

- Clear the street in front of your house of any litter or debris so it looks impeccably clean from the corner right up to your front door.
- Pick up and carefully organize tools and gardening equipment. Coil hoses neatly.
- Thoroughly weed garden and shrub areas. Remove fallen sticks and leaves.
- Give your lawn a fresh mowing so it looks healthy, cared for, and well groomed. Resod any bare spots as needed.
- Trim plants and shrubs to create a feeling of orderliness and precision.
- Remove and replace any dead or dying shrubs. Clear away bikes, toys, and extra cars from the driveway. If you have a fix-it hobbyist in the house who has spare parts everywhere, show no mercy-find some place else for working on cars, bikes, boats, etc.

Entryway

- Closets:
 - Remove, consolidate, clean or paint, face all coats and jackets on wood hangers.
 - Remove shoes, boots, sporting equipment, etc.
- If your hall table is a mail collection spot, clear it off and select an alternative location or place mail in an attractive wood box or basket.
- If you're selling a condominium or apartment, make certain that other occupants' mail and deliveries are picked up daily. Consider talking to each occupant and let

them know you are willing to be on "entryway duty" during the time your unit is on the market.

Kitchen

This is the heart of your home, and many buyers feel it is the most important room in the house. Your efforts here can have a major impact on the sale price.

- Counters: Clear them off. Store small appliances, gadgets, pots, pans, and bowls.
- Cupboards, drawers, and cabinets:
 - Remove, consolidate, clean or paint interior, clean and face contents.
 - Group like items together (baking pans, serving pieces, etc.) to create a feeling of space and ease. Purchase organizers to make efficient use of tight space.
 - Silverware drawers. Purchase a new organizer if yours is worn. Sort the drawer so all similar utensils are together.
 - Cooking-utensil drawers. They don't need to look like a junk drawer. Sort through your spatulas, wooden spoons, etc., and store what you don't need. Use dividers and organizers.
 - Everyone has a junk drawer, and probably everyone needs one. This is an opportunity to show potential buyers how "perfect" your home is. Purchase drawer organizers or use small food containers to create an organized look. (There is a "junk drawer organizer" on the market.) Place all tape, pencils, and scissors together; screwdrivers and measuring tape together, etc.
- Refrigerator:
 - Remove and consolidate extra items.
 - Take out the shelves and wash and shine with glass cleaner. Wipe off food containers and consolidate. Face the items as you replace each one.
 - Add a box of baking soda to remove odors and ensure a fresh, clean smell.
- Under the sink:
 - Remove, consolidate, clean or paint interior, clean and face all items.

- Add a paper-bag holder or door organizer to hold items and get them off the floor.
- Throw out dirty rags.
- Scrub the flooring. If it is stained, paint or add a linoleum remnant.
- Put cleaning products and containers into a pail or holder.
- Plants: Give away or discard unhealthy plants. Cuttings, too.
- Memo areas: Remove papers and notes, children's artwork, chipped or broken magnets.

Bathrooms

- Counters: Clear them off and store all personal-care products out of sight.
- Vanities, medicine cabinets, linen closets:
 - Remove, consolidate, clean or paint interior, clean and face all items.
 - Put makeup into a basket or case.
 - Group cleaning supplies in a bucket.
 - If your shelves are old and stained or sticky from too many years of self-adhesive paper, consider painting or replacing them with new glass shelves.

Bedrooms

- Drawers, closets, built-ins: Remove, consolidate, clean or paint, clean and face articles and clothing.
- Remove extra furniture to create space.
- Sort through children's play areas. Box extra toys and recycle or sell old ones.

Living Room/Dining Room/Family Room

- Remove all papers and magazines from coffee and end tables.
- Rearrange furniture for openness. Remove and store, sell, or give away excess.

- Remove unhealthy and extra plants. Take down hanging plants. They block the light and get in the way of buyers seeing a room. Plants are more pleasing when you look down at them instead of up at the bottom of a pot.
- Weed out excess books from bookcases.

Basement/Garage/Attic

These are major storage areas and can seem overwhelming if you have accumulated years of mementos, souvenirs, and other paraphernalia. Take on one room at a time. You'll feel a real sense of accomplishment and be much more enthusiastic about completing the job when you can see the difference your efforts have made. A good rule of thumb is, if it's in storage, you won't need it until you move, so box and move it off the property or sell it if you no longer use it.

- Garage, tool, and storage rooms:
 - Sort, box, and store tools, shop equipment, and projects.
 - Hang tools, sports equipment, and lawn and garden equipment on the wall with organizers.
 - Store paint cans on shelves. If you don't have shelves, purchase inexpensive sturdy shelving. Move it to your new house to start out organized.
- Laundry room:
 - Sort and straighten laundry area.
 - Group and face soap, stain removers, fabric softeners.
 - Take worn-out and outgrown clothes to a charity or consignment store.
- Attic: Box and store, sell, or give away everything in the attic. Neatly stacked boxes are acceptable, but be certain they don't block a buyer's view of the storage space.
- If you have an amusement room or play area in the basement, sort, box, and store toys and games.

Backyard/Deck/Balcony

- Pick up all toys, gardening tools, and equipment.
- Remove and store any building or repairing projects in progress.

- Remove excess railing decorations and pots from balconies.
- Remove all but a few furnishings from balconies to convey spaciousness.

CLEANING, INSIDE AND OUT

Exterior/Curb Appeal

- Sidewalk and walkway:
 - Sweep completely clean.
 - Remove any weeds or grass that has grown up between the cracks.
 - Hose down sidewalks and walkways for a thoroughly clean, inviting look.
 - Fastidiously dispose of any and all pet debris.
 - Driveway: Clean up oil and other stains.
 - Siding: Wash for a fresh, bright look and feel. Professional services are available with products especially designed to restore vinyl and aluminum siding.
 - Windows: Use glass cleaner on the inside and outside to ensure a bright, clean sparkle. The garage windows and skylights, too.
 - Gutters: Clean out all debris.
 - Eaves: Hose down.

Entryway

- Windows: Clean to a sparkle.
- Walls and ceilings: Paint or clean.
- Curtains and drapes: Launder. Replace if needed.
- Floors: Scrub and polish to a shine.
- Woodwork and doors: Clean and polish. Polish doorknobs and light fixtures.

Kitchen

A clean-looking and clean-smelling kitchen is essential. Use lemon-scented products to prolong the clean scent.

- Cupboards and drawers:
 - Wipe down the insides making sure all surfaces are squeaky, sparkling clean. Use a soft cleanser on laminate shelves.
 - Use a glass cleaner on the outside of laminate cupboards.
 - Use a wood soap on wood cabinets and then a scratch cover, which can be a transformation wonder, available for both light and dark woods.
- Small appliances: Wipe them down before storing. The blender with food splatters will draw negative attention when a pantry or cupboard is opened, but a sparkling clean blender will convey a well-cared-for, like-new feeling.
- Refrigerator: Wipe down outside. Don't forget the top!
- Stove:
 - Clean the oven to a sparkle.
 - Use a single-edge razor to clean baked-on grease off a door and then shine with a glass cleaner.
 - Replace the oven light bulb.
 - Clean or replace burner liners.
 - Vents and exhaust hoods: Clean and deodorize.
- Sinks:
 - Polish and clean.
 - Remove stains and mineral buildup around faucets.
 - Clean the tile grout. Use a grout cleaner or re-caulk.
 - Run a lemon section through the garbage disposal for a fresh smell.
- Windows: Clean to a sparkle.
- Walls and ceilings: Clean all cooking residue.

- Curtains and drapes: Launder, replace if needed.
- Light fixtures, track lighting:
 - Wipe off light bulbs.
 - Wash out fixtures or vacuum inside of track lighting.
- Flooring: Wash and wax to a brilliant glow. Remove old wax if your floors are yellowed.
- Woodwork and doors: Wipe down, polish, use scratch cover.

Bathrooms

- Windows: Clean to a sparkle.
- Walls and ceilings: Wipe down to remove water spots.
- Curtains and drapes: Launder. Replace if needed.
- Flooring: Scrub and wax.
- Woodwork and doors: Clean and polish.
- Smells: Use lemon cleaning products.
- Polish all chrome to a sparkle. Don't forget the pipes underneath the sink, even if they are in a vanity!
- Remove all rust stains from sink, toilet, tub, and shower.
- Remove mineral buildup around faucets.
- Remove all mildew from tub and shower area.
- Clean all grout thoroughly. Use a grout whitener and re-caulk where needed.
- Scrub tile until it shines. Finish with glass cleaner.
- Wash the shower curtain. If it doesn't look like new, replace it.
- Clean shower doors thoroughly. Remove soap residue and shine.
- Add toilet bowl cleaner and sanitizer. Keep the lid down.

Bedrooms

- Launder or dry-clean comforters and bedspreads.
- Windows: Clean to a sparkle.
- Curtains and drapes: Launder. Replace if needed.
- Flooring: Wash wood floors, clean carpets.
- Woodwork and doors: Clean and polish.
- Wash and clean lighting fixtures and lamps.

Living Room/Dining Room/Family Room

- Windows: Clean to a sparkle.
- Walls and ceilings: Paint a fresh, clean white.
- Drapes: Dry-clean or launder. Add blinds if worn and dated.
- Use wood oil and polish your furniture, woodwork, and wood floors to a glow.
- Clean and deodorize carpeting and rugs.
- Clean and polish all lighting fixtures to a sparkle.
- Clean inside and outside of fireplaces. Polish fireplace tools to a glow.

Basement/Attic/Garage

- Vacuum basement floors and ceilings. If you have more than dust on your ceilings (cobwebs) or see any signs of insects or rodents, call an exterminator. No buyer will feel comfortable being greeted by basement pests no matter how harmless.
- Vacuum attic floors. In one house, I scrubbed the painted wood floors and it made a major difference. Instead of old and dark, it felt fresh and spacious.
- Sweep garage floors, clean grease.
- Don't forget the garage and basement windows. Let the sunlight brighten these areas.

- Thoroughly clean and deodorize all pet areas.
- Wipe down all appliances: washer, dryer, water heater, and water softener. Every interested buyer will look at them. Clean and shiny will say they are in good order.
- If you have wood paneling, polish and restore it.

Backyard/Deck/Balcony

- Clean the deck and use a sealer to make it look like new.
- Wipe down all lawn furniture, grills, and pool or spa equipment.
- Hose down screens in gazebos or porches.
- Wipe down railings on balconies.

REPAIRING, INSIDE AND OUT

Exterior/Curb Appeal

- Fence: Make sure gates-hinges and catches-work easily and noiselessly. A squeaky gate or a broken fence spells work for a buyer. If a fence is dull looking, add a fresh coat of paint or stain. It will enhance the appeal of your entire house.
- Walkways and steps: Repair cracks and any broken or crumbling steps. These are not only dangerous; they detract from your home's overall charm.
- Foundation: Repair any cracks immediately. A strong, secure foundation is critical to a home's fundamental appeal.
- The roof: Carefully evaluate the condition of your roof. Consider having a new roof put on if your home is in dire need of one. The roof is always a major concern.
 - Replace broken or missing roof shingles.
 - Repair flashings.
- Gutters and downspouts: Repair or replace if necessary. Neat gutters dress up a home's exterior.
- Driveway: Repair cracks, or separations from the house. Driveway patch and sealer is easy to work with and the results give a finished look and a cared-for feel.

- Windows:
 - Replace cracked or broken glass.
 - Repair any wood rot.
 - Re-caulk where needed.
 - Repair or replace any screens that look brittle, pushed out, or anything less than taut.
 - Touch up with paint wherever needed.
- Doors:
 - Tighten doorknobs.
 - Oil squeaky hinges to usher buyers gracefully and quietly into the house.
 - Replace rollers in sliding doors if they stick or jam. New rollers are inexpensive, easy to install, and make for smooth sliding.
 - Doorbells: Ensure that doorbells work. All children will try them, and it will definitely draw attention if they don't chime!
 - Look at every detail. Even a basketball hoop with a torn net will be noticed by a buyer.

Entryway

- Windows: Repair as needed.
- Doors: Tighten doorknobs; oil squeaky hinges.
- Thresholds must be secure. Replace rotted or cracked wood.
- Replace and match any broken switch plates or outlet covers.

Kitchen

- Cupboards and drawers: Check all hinges and knobs. Tighten loose knobs, replace broken hardware.
- Counters: Repair or replace chipped countertops or tile.

- Appliances: Check lights and timers. Repair as needed.
- Sinks: Repair leaky faucets. Check pipes underneath sink.
- Windows: Repair as needed. Make sure shades, blinds, and shutters work effortlessly.
- Floors: If your floor is badly worn, adding new neutral flooring or tile will be an added attraction to buyers.
- Walls and ceilings: Patch and repair as needed.
- Light fixtures: Fix or replace if dull and dated looking.
- Replace and match any broken switch plates or outlet covers.

Bathroom

- Windows: Re-caulk as needed. Make sure blinds are working.
- Walls and ceiling: Patch and repair as needed.
- Make any needed repairs to toilets and plumbing. Patch, repair, or replace grout and caulking.
- Replace any cracked or missing tiles.
- Replace old or cracked toilet seat or cover.
- Replace and match any broken switch plates or outlet covers.

Bedrooms

- Windows: Repair as needed.
- Walls and ceilings: Patch and repair as needed.
- Replace and match any broken switch plates or outlet covers.

Living Room/Dining Room/Family Room

- Windows: Repair as needed.
- Walls and ceilings: Patch and repair as needed.

- Flooring: Repair squeaky floors, replace carpeting if necessary.
- Replace and match any broken switch plates or outlet covers.

Basement/Attic/Garage

- Make certain all appliances are in working order. Have a technician inspect and certify the condition.
- Make certain all pipes, laundry connections, and exhaust pipes are in good working order. Repair if needed.
- Windows: Repair as needed.
- Walls and ceilings: Repair as needed. If you have corrected water damage or other damage, make sure no sign remains. It's important not to hide any currently damaged area. Fix it. (Note: You still must disclose it)
- Replace and match any broken switch plates or outlet covers.

Backyard/Deck/Balcony/Lanai

- Nail down any loose boards on deck.
- Repair screens on outdoor porches.
- Repair or replace broken tiles in a pool or spa.
- Make sure all pool and spa equipment is in working condition: filter, heater.
- Tighten railings. Touch up chipped or rusted areas with paint or stain.

NEUTRALIZING, INSIDE AND OUT

Exterior/Curb Appeal

- If your house needs painting, now is definitely the time. It's an investment you should recoup. If you don't want to paint the whole house, consider giving it a facelift by painting just the trim.
- Neatly trim around a fire hydrant or municipal post office box or lamppost. If it's an eyesore, contact your city to request permission to paint.
- Remove any visually distracting lawn accessories or ornaments.

Entryway

- Remove dated wallpaper. Paint with a neutral color.
- Replace light bulbs.

Kitchen

- Eliminate odors from cooking oil, gas, and strong spices.
- Remove dated or bold wall covering.
- If your wood cupboards are dated or worn, a coat of white enamel paint can transform them "instantly" and make the room feel larger and brighter.
- Flooring: If it's worn or dated, replace with neutral linoleum.

Bathrooms

- Paint or wallpaper in a neutral color.
- Use neutral shower curtain and towels.

Bedrooms

- Paint a restful neutral color.
- Remove distracting posters and other personalized belongings.

Living Room/Dining Room/Family Room

- Walls and ceilings: Paint a neutral color. Paint rooms that flow together the same color.
- Remove distracting posters or art. If you have a "collection" wall, pare it down and rearrange it. Make certain that frames line up at the top, bottom, and sides for a gallery look.

Basement/Garage/Attic

- Consider painting the walls white and the floors gray. It will help buyers see possibilities for additional uses.
- Paint the laundry room if it's in the basement.
- Add clip-on lights in an attic to enhance visibility.

- Replace dated carpeting with a neutral Berber style.
- If you have dated paneling, consider painting it for a more up-to-date "washed" cottage look.

STAGING, INSIDE AND OUT

As you work through your house, you'll find numerous Staging opportunities to deliver subtle messages of home and build an atmosphere of excitement for buyers. Here are Staging ideas that can work in any house.

Exterior/Curb Appeal

Remember, a buyer forms an attitude about your house within fifteen seconds. For that reason, curb appeal is the most important first impression, and encompasses everything from the street corner all the way up to the chimney.

If you're selling an apartment or condominium, look at the image presented by your building and adapt these curb appeal steps to create excitement in your potential buyers, to bring them to your unit in eager anticipation.

Greet buyers with dynamic curb appeal:

- Add splashes of color and beauty to welcome buyers. You don't have to be a master gardener to accomplish a few plantings.
 - Place potted plants at the front door and flowers along the walk or in clusters around a lamppost or tree. Over plant to create an instant lush, flourishing look.
 - Place a hanging flowering plant at eye level to add grace to a front entry, porch, or patio.
 - Group for drama. I lined a brick patio with clay pots planted identically with begonias and impatiens. It's much more dramatic than a single pot.
 - Look around your yard. Are there bare spots that could benefit from a few inexpensive plants?
 - If you have window boxes, plant fully with greens and flowers to create a flourishing, luxuriant look. If you don't have them, they are easy to install on brackets or a porch railing and give a dressed-up look to any house. Place them outside windows in condos and apartments.
- Add fresh wood chips or gravel around trees and shrubs for a well-manicured appearance.

- Make your mailbox picture-perfect. If it's an eyesore, replace it or paint it and the pole and add new, bold numbers for visibility and clarity. It's a subtle indication of good maintenance.
- A front door is more than just an entry to your home; it's the focal point of your house and a place of welcome. Your efforts here will set the stage for the inside tour. Choose ideas that will enhance the entrance to your house:
 - Consider a fresh coat of paint or a carefully applied wood polish on your front door to make it feel bright and welcoming.
 - Polish the hardware so it gives a shining, lustrous impression.
 - Add a gleaming new door knocker.
 - Add an all-season wreath.
 - Add drama by flanking the door with planters and/or large plants, such as topiary trees.
 - A new, up-to-date light fixture by the front door can be an inexpensive way to add real style to the entranceway.
- Add shutters to dress up a facade.
- Add shiny new brass house numbers or a cast-iron address plate.
- A clean, new doormat is guaranteed to be noticed.
- If your car will be in the driveway, have it washed and waxed.
- Evaluate outdoor lighting. During dark months, your house may be shown at dusk. The warm glow of walkway lights will add drama to your entrance.

Entryway

This small area is to the interior of a house as curb appeal is to the exterior. It plays a significant role in setting the tone for the entire tour.

- Enhance and add drama by showcasing a unique piece of furniture or artwork; group a small table and a colorful vase to suggest elegance.
- Greet your buyers with grace and beauty. A fresh floral bouquet is dramatic and makes a buyer feel especially welcome. It also conveys a sense of the owner's

pride in the house. In an apartment or condominium building, donate a blooming plant or an artificial arrangement for the entry.

- Place a new, dramatic throw rug in the entry to add warmth, texture, and color, making sure to secure it with a pad underneath to hold it firmly in place. It softens the entry and has a much more welcoming feel than bare floor. Over carpet, it adds dimension and the "layering" effect creates a feeling of comfort.
- Install a gleaming, new brass switch plate.
- If a lighting fixture is dated or worn, a new halogen one will cast a dramatic, focused light to highlight an important area while also adding style to a tired-looking or unexciting entry.

Kitchen

Definitely the most important room in the house, the kitchen also happens to be the easiest to Stage. It can take center stage when you focus on quick and inexpensive changes rather than extensive improvements.

- On a clean, clear counter, set a cookbook open on a stand. Place a cheerful flowering plant next to it to suggest enjoyment of meal preparation and the warm spirit of entertaining.
- Purchase bright new dish towels and pot holders. Roll them in a flowerpot or wicker basket next to the sink. Accent with a raffia bow for added texture and a finished look.
- Add color with new burner covers, and at the same time create a neat, clean look.
- Add a new soap holder.
- Create a high-tech look with track lighting.
- Add a new area rug. Store it in a closet between showings to keep it looking clean and fresh.
- Place fresh fruit in a stand. Be sure to replace any that gets old or soft.
- Keep a blooming plant on the table or in the window.
- Window treatments: Replace worn curtains with mini blinds or a bold valance to add drama.
- Stage a kitchen table:

- Use a tiered holder or pretty bowl as a centerpiece to display colorful fresh fruit. Include grapes because they drape well, giving a more relaxed feel to the arrangement.
- Purchase a set of informal show place mats and napkins that match the kitchen decor and state casual elegance and mealtime fun. These will highlight the eating area without overpowering the room.
- During an Open House, set out a serving tray with matching cups and napkins and a pitcher of lemonade. Add a plate of cookies and invite families to share a snack. This encourages prospective buyers to linger in the kitchen, talk, enjoy themselves, and to feel as if they belong in your house.
- A makeover does not have to be expensive. Freshening what you already own can have a substantial impact on your selling price and market time.
- Add molding to plain cabinets to create a richer feeling. Or consider the services of a kitchen "tune-up" company to generate a current and up-to-date look.
- Install new hardware for a dressed-up look. The variety in kitchen knobs and pulls is astounding. This is an easy way to update and add interest to a kitchen at minimal expense.
- If your counters are dark, replace them with a light, neutral top for a more universal appeal and cheerful feeling.

Bathrooms

Bathrooms run the risk of being small and dull because they're so functional, yet buyers yearn for a bigger shower, a larger tub. So, if yours looks spacious, clean, and in good repair, your buyers will have another "found" on their list of "must haves." Convey luxury and relaxation:

- Fill a shell with small, subtly scented soaps, and place a bottle of herb-scented bath oil on the tub ledge with a thick, sumptuous towel draped over the side.
- Purchase show towels in a combination of neutral and bold colors to soften the room and add texture. Fold in thirds to hide edges and seams. Hang in layers on a towel rack and roll remaining towels for display purposes in a floor basket or on a vanity. The layering creates a luxurious feeling in a room that is often stark and cold.
- Open a bathroom window if your bathroom has one, and place a small bouquet of fresh flowers or an aloe plant on the sill or vanity. Choose an innovative vase such as a little pitcher, antique bottle, or interesting candy tin. The fresh, cheerful

image of flowers combined with the pleasant surprise of the curious little vase will position the bathroom in the buyer's mind as a fresh, beautiful space.

- A new shower curtain adds inexpensive drama, texture, and luxury to a bathroom. Purchase, borrow, or create a two-paneled curtain and valance for a luxurious impact. If the bathroom is small, use curtain tiebacks to open up the space and draw the eye as far back as possible.
- Replace a dated or worn light fixture. Add a vanity strip for a current look.
- Re-enamel an old, chipped tub to bring your bathroom quickly into vogue.
- Add new towel racks to match fixtures (silver, brass, or wood).
- Add bathroom potpourri, a scented candle, and guest soaps.
- Select a few items with more decorative packaging (perfumes, lotions, soaps) to place in a basket on a ledge. Make sure everything in it is sparkling clean.

Bedrooms

Showcase tranquility and a restful haven with simple touches. Remember purchases here will move with you to set a new stage in your new home.

- Stage a nightstand by placing a crisp linen or cotton table runner over the top. Arrange a hardcover book near a small vase with flowers, a photograph, and an attractive reading lamp.
- Borrow or purchase a plush new comforter. Add panache with decorative pillows and shams.
- Hang a mirror to create a feeling of spaciousness. By placing it directly across from a window you collect and reflect the most light and bring in the peaceful, expansive feeling of the outdoors.
- Add a group of green and flowering plants in an empty space.
- Add curtains and valances or mini blinds to windows without them.
- Add humor and fun to children's bedrooms by playfully arranging toys and stuffed animals. Whether frolicking on the bed or marching in a line, stuffed animals are a great way to add whimsical humor to a child's bedroom.
 - Consult and involve your children in arranging a fantasy dress-up corner, an artist's nook, a train track, and more.

- Set a toy or puzzle on the table in a child's room, but keep others out of sight. If you do not have a toy chest or toy storage area, use a laundry basket to keep the room neat.
- Purchase an inexpensive net-type hammock to hang across a corner to hold a stuffed-animal zoo.
- Evaluate the lighting. Consider replacing old or dated overhead fixtures or adding a ceiling fan.

Living Room/Family Room

Stage the warm, congenial feelings of family fun and togetherness, a room in which to entertain or enjoy the calm at the end of a day.

- Set a board game or jigsaw puzzle neatly on a table and add a big bowl of popcorn or colorful M&M's. Buyers will immediately see themselves playing that game, laughing, and munching the evening away.
- Stage a quiet space. Drape an afghan over an easy chair, open a book on the ottoman or end table. Turn on a lamp next to the chair, or toss an afghan on a couch or armchair, suggesting leisure time to nap or cuddle. Plump all pillows, adding more if necessary
- Display a few visually interesting magazines in a magazine rack or on a coffee table, without creating clutter.
- Stage a bookcase. Place books vertically, horizontally, and face a few with interesting jackets. Add art objects and accessories to the shelves to create interest and demonstrate flexibility of use.
- Arrange artwork and furniture to highlight special features. For example, a group of vertical pictures on a small wall can enhance a bay window or a built-in buffet.
- Add a fresh bouquet of flowers or a European plant basket to a coffee table or sofa table. Display a vase or special dish to add elegance. Be cautious not to overdo it. You want buyers to feel the elegance, not browse as if they were shopping.
- If you have an entertainment center, keep doors closed and shelves neat and uncluttered. Keep televisions off.

Dining Room

Stage this room just enough to suggest how proud buyers would be to entertain here. Fuel their imagination without cluttering the room's elegance. Don't actually set a formal table,

which looks manipulative. Buyers know you aren't going to have a dinner party as soon as they leave.

- Add accessories to a dining buffet, and group in threes for interest and drama. A lone vase looks bare, whereas a grouping of three items such as candles, an antique vase, and a small stack of books looks natural, almost haphazard. It engages the eye in an appealing, memorable way.
- Add a runner, a bouquet of flowers, and candles to a polished dining room table. Stack a set of coasters or display an interesting serving piece.
- Set tables in places that buyers might not think of for eating, such as an informal setting at a coffee table in an amusement room in front of a fireplace.

Basement/Laundry Area/Garage/Attic

These are areas most sellers ignore, but a few careful touches can ensure that buyers feel daily chores and maintenance will be hassle-free.

- Arrange laundry supplies in an orderly fashion to suggest that doing laundry here is quick and easy.
 - Face all products.
 - Add a wire shelving unit over the appliances if you don't have shelves.
 - Add a green plant or artificial bouquet to make this area as cheerful as possible.
- Stage a hobby project on a work bench to suggest time and space to pursue personal activities and hobbies. By staging an actual work-in-progress, you jog buyers' minds to think of all they want to work on and how your house is the place to make those dreams a reality.

Backyard/Deck/Balcony

Create a resort look in your backyard or terrace to invoke feelings of friends and family gathered together.

- Arrange lawn furniture to suggest an outdoor barbecue. Place a table next to the grill with barbecue tongs, fork, and knife carefully laid out and ready. Borrow a croquet set and other lawn games and place them in a corner of the deck or patio to suggest hours of backyard fun.
- Arrange colorful pots of annuals in groupings on a deck. Set pots on steps.'

- Arrange children's pool toys and games on a deck or in a gazebo.
- Fill bird feeders and make sure birdhouses look appealing. Paint the metal pole or the house itself if necessary. Add a fun, new bird feeder in the backyard. The selections today are entertaining and can add another element of interest to the yard.
- Re-stain a picnic table and add a pot of flowers as a centerpiece.
- In dark months, add white lights to trees or bushes to give a sense of depth after dusk.
- Add railing pots of blooming annuals to balconies.

SHOWTIME

EXTERIOR

- Pick up lawn tools and toys.
- Pick up after pets.
- Remove obstructions from curb view.
- Clear driveways and walk areas.
- Use a leaf blower or hose down walk areas for a neat and tidy look.
- Clear away debris from pool or hot tub.

INTERIOR

- Empty wastebaskets.
- Pick up dirty clothes.
- Clear papers and notes from desks, counters, and tables.
- Check for hazards-extension cords, throw rugs, etc.
- Put away personal-care items in bathrooms.
- Straighten and stage children's play areas.
- Do a once-over cleaning: Vacuum, sweep, and dust.

- Wipe down counters, sinks, and bathtubs. Finish with glass cleaner.
- Deodorize pet areas.
- Arrange fresh flowers throughout.
- Make sure rugs are straight and clean.
- Open shades and drapes.
- Open windows to freshen rooms.
- Turn on lights.
- Add the smell of fresh baking.

LAST-MINUTE STAGING

- Arrange tables with flowers and linens.
- Set out a game, book, hobby project.
- Arrange show towels in bathrooms and kitchens.
- Play soft music and turn off television.
- Set a comfortable temperature.
- Final check every room.
- Leave, and take your pet with you.