

THE BAYLEY **BH** HAY TEAM

**Helping You Make
Your Move Easy**



**Home Sale Maximizer
The Value of Home Repairs**

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Maximizing Your Sale

Your house is one of your most important financial assets. If you are preparing to sell your house, there is good news: You don't need to spend a lot of money on repairs to realize a strong return.

This guide was created to help homeowners identify the key repairs that can result in a higher sale price for their house. This information was configured as a list of the top ten moderately priced home improvements that will benefit sellers most when they sell their homes.

There are also some repairs that are recommended in this guide that may not increase the price of your home, but may make your house more marketable and reduce the time on the market.

Before investing money in home repairs, Neil recommends that you, as homeowners, spend some time speaking with him about your circumstances and evaluate your improvement strategy based on the local market as well as the condition, age and location of your home.

This guide will provide you with useful information to help you get your home ready for sale. If you have any questions about what you should do to sell your home fast and for top dollar, call Neil today.



Call Neil Direct 705-722-5400

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Which Home Repairs Result in the Greatest Return?

In a recent "Prepare-to-Sell" study it was found that it is the small improvements that pay the biggest dividends when a home is sold. Neil would normally advise homeowners to do as little as possible - perform touch-ups on floor tiling instead of replacing the entire floor; shampoo the carpets instead of replacing them. However, if the homeowner and Neil determine that the condition of certain areas is deemed to be too poor, more extensive work may provide the greatest benefit.

Most of the activities identified in the Prepare-to-Sell study seem to be common sense, but many sellers overlook some of the most critical items in the pressure of getting their home prepared for sale.

The following is a summary of the results of a national survey, based on the ten areas of home improvement identified by real estate agents in an original survey in 2003. They are listed from the highest to lowest returns on investment:

Project	Typical Cost	Price Increase	Return on Investment*
Lighten & brighten	\$233 - 370	\$1,178 - 1,566	355%
Clean and de-clutter	\$190 - 318	\$1,505 - 1,937	578%
Landscape front/back yards	\$378 - 546	\$1,718 - 2,158	319%
Stage home for sale	\$403 - 584	\$1,938 - 2,431	343%
Repair electrical or plumbing	\$436 - 621	\$1,205 - 1,590	164%
Repair damaged flooring	\$628 - 878	\$1,633 - 2,061	145%
Update kitchen & bathrooms	\$1,404 - 1,828	\$3,216 - 3,934	121%
Replace or shampoo carpeting	\$562 - 808	\$1,532 - 1,950	154%
Paint exterior walls	\$663 - 938	\$1,757 - 2,205	147%
Paint Interior walls	\$651 - 920	\$1,741 - 2,179	150%

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Calculate Your Home Repair Priorities

As you can see from the results of the nationwide study, it is the small improvements that can have the greatest impact on the sale price of your home. Most homeowners who make structural improvements such as adding bedrooms, bathrooms and swimming pools rarely recover their investment when they sell their home.

Having Neil visit your home will more specifically determine your home repair needs and the increase in price when you go to sell your home.

To assist you in completing your home repairs yourself, Neil has detailed checklists below to help you maximize your value.

Review the checklists for each of the home repairs you have identified on the following pages of this guide.

If you decide to hire professional help, Neil can recommend painters, gardeners, cleaning crews and/or decorators.



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Lighten & Brighten

One of the most noticeable yet economical improvements you can make to prepare your house for sale is lightening and brightening. Buyers look for space, light and comfort. Often all a homeowner has to do is make simple touch-ups that can create very noticeable results. For instance, it is important to make the entry to your house as light and bright as possible. Bright light can make a small home appear larger, while soft light provides a warm, cozy atmosphere to empty spaces.



Tips:

- Clean all windows, inside and out
- Wipe all light fixtures with a rag and cleaning solution
- Keep curtains open; use as much natural light as possible
- Polish brass and glass
- Clean existing shutters, blinds and drapes
- Make sure all outdoor lighting works
- Clean all switch plates
- Install new window treatments if yours are damaged
- Prune outside trees to allow as much natural light inside as possible
- Make sure all windows open easily. Repair sticky windows that don't open
- Use the brightest light bulbs possible, while making sure they have the right wattage
- Install dimming switches in common rooms, such as dining rooms and living rooms, to allow you to create lighting for different occasions
- At night, turn on porch light and other outdoor lighting

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Clean & De-Clutter

Thoroughly cleaning your home and freeing it from all clutter can be the most important of all pre-sale activities. Buyers want to imagine themselves in your home, but will have a difficult time if there is extensive clutter. It can be difficult to maintain an immaculate home over the period of time when it is shown to prospective buyers, but it is definitely worth it. Consider renting short-term storage for excess furniture and other belongings.

Tips:

- Organize closets, storage rooms and areas
- Polish woodwork, metal and glass/mirrors
- Clean windowsills, doorsills and shelves
- Remove all of your personal possessions
- Keep screens cleaned and vacuumed
- Make stairwells and corridors clutter-free
- Get rid of odors (e.g. pet, food, cigarette)
- Get rid of all items on front and back porch
- Clean or purchase new front door hardware
- Clean the entryway carefully; it creates the buyer's first interior impression of your home
- Clean the inside of all kitchen and bathroom cabinets, and neatly organize items on shelves
- Ensure all doors, cabinets, and drawers can open completely, without any blockage
- Remove appliances from kitchen counters to give a look of spaciousness
- Make bathrooms sparkle; sinks, toilets and tubs should be immaculate
- Hire a professional to thoroughly clean the interior of your home
- Keep bookshelves and entertainment units organized neatly
- Remove excess furniture to give your home a spacious look
- Call in an exterminator to take care of insect problems



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Landscape Front & Back Yards

Many buyers will decide based on the “curb appeal” of your home whether they want to see the inside. It is advisable to invest some money on modest landscaping to enhance the appearance of your home. The same logic applies to your back yard as well. An immaculate lawn and garden can significantly increase the appeal and value of your home.



Tips:

- Mow, trim, fertilize and hydrate the lawn
- Edge the lawn and secure fences
- Remove dead or dying plants and flowers
- Clean all debris from front and back yards
- Thoroughly weed flower beds
- Power wash the deck
- Prune trees and bushes
- Rake fallen leaves
- Weed and fertilize the garden
- Keep firewood neatly stacked
- Keep trash area clean and organized
- Keep walks, steps and driveway obstacle-free
- Remove signs such as “Beware of Dog”
- Replace welcome mat at the doorway
- Remove moss and weeds from walkways and driveway
- Add colorful plants or flowers near front door and porch area
- If views are obstructed by overgrowth, restore views by trimming trees and bushes

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Stage A Home For Sale

Staging can be the secret to selling your home quickly. Your house will attract more qualified and serious buyers if it is already in staged condition when you begin to show it. Neil can assist you in adding the finishing touches and staging your home for sale. This often involves rearranging furniture or even renting modern furniture to show your house in the best possible light. Vacant houses can be more difficult to sell because most buyers have difficulty visualizing themselves living in an empty house

Tips:

- Place fresh flowers, potpourri and other decorations around house (even in bathrooms)
- Play soft music
- Turn **all** lights on
- Open drapes
- Turn fireplace on in the winter
- Use room fresheners in kitchen and bathrooms
- Set the dining room table for a dinner party
- Hang artwork on the walls
- Hang new towels in the bathroom for your guests
- Put cedar chips inside the closets
- Remove items not included in sale (i.e. water softener, special/personal items that are permanently fastened items, etc)
- Stage garage – clean up oily floors, straighten tools and other equipment



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Repair Electrical & Plumbing

All of your light switches, overhead lights and plumbing fixtures should be in working order. Before showing your house, be sure to have all defective electrical switches replaced. These low cost items can have a very positive effect on the appeal of your home. If the problems are greater, call in a licensed electrician to examine all wiring and make any necessary repairs.

Plumbing is one of those jobs that needs to be handled in the right manner. Some easy jobs you can do yourself. If you're not sure, call in a professional; the consequences of a mistake can mean costly water damage to your house.

Tips:

- Make sure that all bathroom and kitchen faucets are in good working order
- All** toilets should be in good working order
- All** drains should be clean and free flowing
- Clean** up, paint or replace old plumbing fixtures in all bathrooms
- Repair** leaky faucets and remove any rust stains in sinks or tubs
- Remove** mildew stains and repair any loose, crumbling caulk or grout around tile and tub areas
- Have your well or septic tank inspected or repaired
- Repair** holes in gutters and repair any separation from the eaves
- Service sprinkler system
- Make sure that all smoke and burglar alarms are functional
- Doorbell should be in working order
- Inspect and clean furnace; change the furnace filter

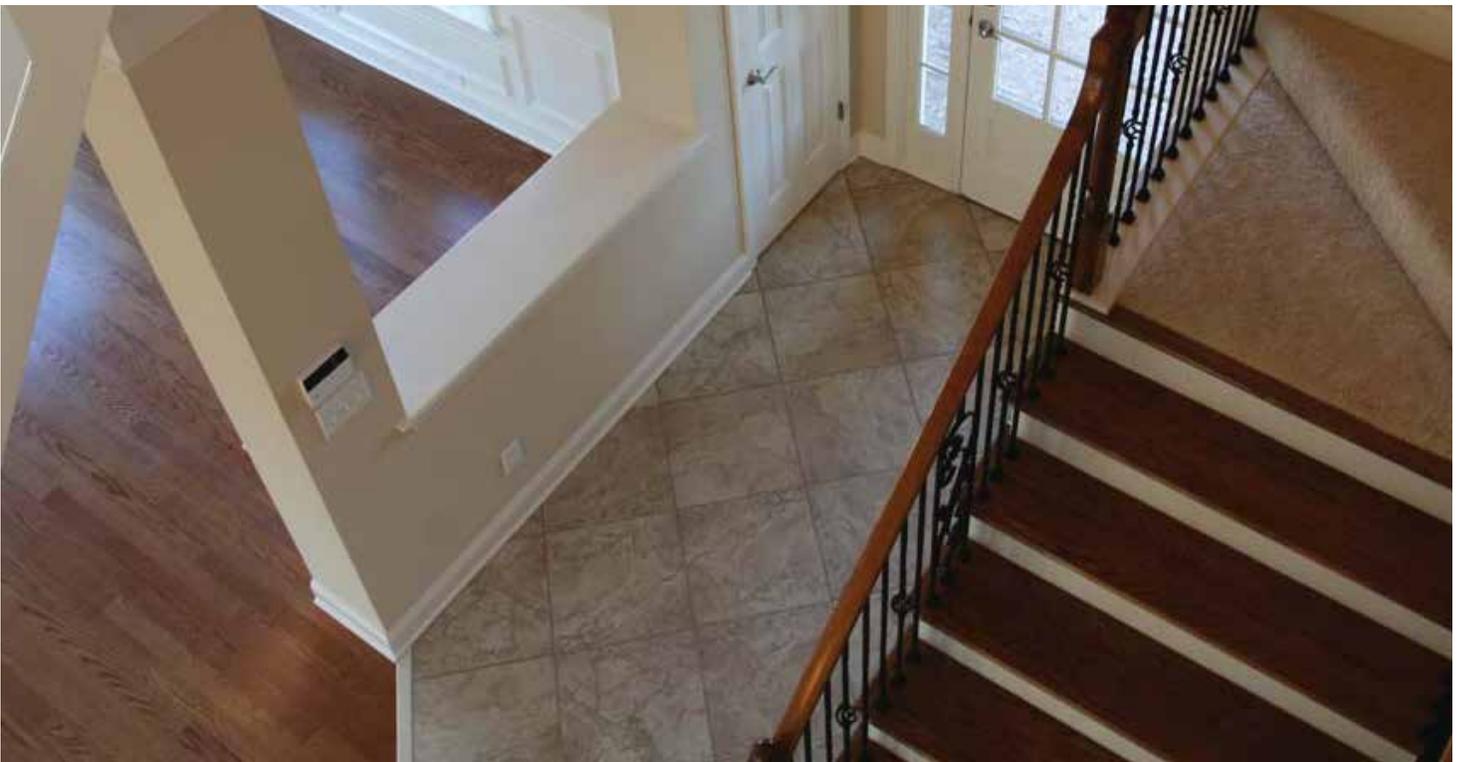


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Repair Damaged Flooring

Like everything in your house, you should keep flooring very clean all the time and, if necessary, enhance the appearance at minimal cost. Some repairs or replacement may be necessary to improve the condition and appearance of your home.



Tips:

- Patch, repair or replace hardwood flooring
- Clean** and wax wood or linoleum floors (Replace missing or damaged linoleum tiles)
- Mop and vacuum floors (carpet, marble, ceramic, etc.)
- Eliminate any creaks in floors by driving finished nails into the creaky area

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Update Kitchens & Bathrooms

Special attention should be paid to kitchen and bathrooms because they receive particular scrutiny from buyers. Prioritize those improvements that will be the most obvious and impressive to buyers. An immaculate kitchen and bathrooms can result in a faster sale. They should be free of all clutter to give an “open” appeal.



Tips:

- Make bathrooms and kitchen sparkle
- If the appliances are included with the sale of your home, make sure they are operating and have proper documentation, such as warranties and repair information
- If there are missing or damaged tiles, have them replaced
- Retouch** or repaint kitchens and bathrooms if the color is dated or the paint quality is poor
- Make sure sinks are clean and stain-free
- Repair** damaged counter tops, sinks or tubs
- Remove** any mildew stains and re-caulk crumbling caulk or grout on showers, sinks, tubs, and surrounding areas
- Clean tile grout and make stain-free
- Paint, touch up, or refinish kitchen cabinets
- Tighten or replace loose doorknobs or cabinet pulls, sticking doors and drawers, and wobbly hinges
- Replace** toilet seats
- If appliances are dated or not functioning, consider replacing

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Replace or Shampoo Carpeting

Carpets should be clean, vacuumed and completely smell-free. If the carpets are not faded or damaged, you may consider no more than a thorough shampooing of the rugs to improve the smell and appearance. If the condition of the carpet is poor or smells do not come out, you should consider replacing it with a neutral color..



Tips:

- Steam clean carpet thoroughly
- Hire a professional to** deodorize carpets if you have pets
- Replace any worn carpet
- Make sure carpets are secure. Stretch and tack down any loose or curling carpet
- Eliminate any cracks in floors by driving finished nails into creaky area (through the carpet)

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Paint Exterior Walls

Without going to the expense of painting the exterior of your house, there are many touch-ups you can do to give your home a fresh “new” look. Particularly important to the outside is the appearance of the garage and front doors. The window and door frames should also be painted..



Tips:

- Paint or clean front and garage doors
- Paint shutters, making sure they are hung straight
- Paint window ledges
- Paint the mailbox
- Paint over any rust spots or streaks on downspouts
- Sand and repaint areas with blistering or peeling paint
- Paint exterior fixtures
- Paint or re-stain fence if it is peeling or dirty
- Repair any damage to the chimney
- Repair holes in gutters and repair any separations from eaves
- Repair or replace shingles or tiles missing from the roof
- Seal cracks on porch and remove any standing water, if concrete. If the porch is wood, secure railings and seal or paint as necessary



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Paint Interior Walls

A fresh coat of paint can make a world of difference to a room. If your walls are in good condition, often you can get away with just retouching. However, if the walls are dingy or have nicks or holes in them, taking the time to repaint them now can pay off later.

The key to a great paint job is in the prep work. You should plan on patching or repairing drywall in your house to cover nail holes, furniture nicks or damage created by children's toys. Paint will not hide cracks and other defects in your walls, so you will need to spend some time up front to ensure that your paint job will look professional.

Tips:

- Remove dated wallpaper and paint walls a neutral color
- Whitewash dark paneling
- Paint, touch-up or refinish kitchen cabinetry
- Put a fresh coat of paint on your front door
- Tone down bright room colors by painting them a neutral color
- All woodwork, such as stairwell railings and doors, should be repainted and/or stained
- Have leaks repaired and watermarks covered
- Make sure that cracks in ceilings and walls are repaired
- The windows should be washed and stain-free. The window frames should be painted if necessary, and the hinges should not squeak.

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