

# PATHWAY REALTY GROUP

*Guiding You Home*

## 30 Steps to a Perfect Listing

(And more money in your pocket)

### 1: Light Bulbs and Light Fixtures

You want your home to be as bright as possible. Lighting makes an incredible difference in how a home looks. If you have too many ceiling fans, or dated light fixtures (it's OK, a lot of us do), make a quick trip to IKEA or your local home improvement store and pick up some modern ones. Look around. Are there any dark corners that could use a little extra light? Consider adding new fixtures, lamps or directional lighting to brighten things up.

### 3: Get Boxes and Duct Tape

Removing clutter is the easiest way to spruce up your space. Proper packing supplies are a worthwhile investment. Better yet, consider reusable boxes that won't fall apart and stack easily for storage (bonus: they're good for the environment too). Consider renting a storage locker or portable storage unit. I love portable storage units – you just fill it up at your house, they take it away and store it, then deliver it to your new home when you move in.

### 2: Prepare the Paperwork

Buyers and agents are going to ask a lot of questions, so start digging out the paperwork now: utility bills, tax bills, renovation details including permits and inspections, warranties, mortgage details, a survey if you have one, and rental contracts for anything like a rented hot water heater.

### 4: Make an Extra Set of Keys

Prospective buyers and their agents will need to access your home, so you'll need an extra set of keys. It's worth the \$3 not to have to open the lockbox every time you want to come home.

### 5: Tackle the Bathrooms

Remove all the toiletries you have on display. Invest in white towels (and no, you don't get to use them). Visit Walmart or IKEA for affordable accessories. If your toilet seat, shower curtain or bath mat are gross, replace them. Consider replacing the toilet paper holder and towel rods too – and tighten them up if they're loose.

### 6: Declutter the Kitchen

The kitchen is the room buyers are most attracted to don't skip it! Your stagers will choose items for decorating your counters, so clear them off. Remove everything. Clean inside the cupboards (and yes, I mean remove everything and wipe them out). Don't cram all your dishes and food back in – again, you want to convey to buyers that your kitchen has enough storage for all of their stuff. Clean inside the fridge (and remove the magnets, photos and reminders). Make sure the appliances are clean.

### 7: The Bedrooms

The bedrooms should be inviting, and that means more cleaning and decluttering. Clean out and remove extra things from closets so they look large. Remove personal photos, knick-knacks and personal grooming products. If you've jammed in a dresser or armoire that doesn't really fit into the space (condo owners, I'm looking at you), consider storing it offsite. If you've converted two of your three bedrooms into offices, convert at least one of them back to a bedroom. Your stager will help you with this.

# PATHWAY REALTY GROUP

*Guiding You Home*

## **8: Tackle the Living Room**

Clean the sofa and chairs if they need it. Hide the magazine rack and all the clutter that has accumulated. Don't worry too much about this room, the stager will make it sparkle. Just like in the bedroom, remove any oversized furniture that is making the space look smaller than it is.

## **9: Make Your Dining Room More Appetizing**

If you don't have a formal dining space, the stagers will figure out a space to use for this purpose. We want the house to have a formal eating space, and that space needs to be somewhere you would invite your friends

## **10: Declutter, Organize and Clean the Basement**

If your basement is anything like ours, this is going to take a day. Whether your basement is finished or just a storage area for extra stuff, you'll need to invest the time to make it look as spacious and clean as possible. And what a great way to rid yourself of all that stuff you never use. If you have nowhere else, choose a small room, or corner space in the bedroom for storage of items you will remove from the house for showings.

## **11: Tackle the Closets and Storage Areas**

Much as I'd love to say that you can cram all the stuff you don't want on display into your closets, buyers will open your closets. They'll look in your cupboards. And they'll judge you, but more importantly they will judge your house. The last thing you want is for buyers to think there isn't enough storage in your home, so take the time to pack away what you don't need in the immediate future. If you won't use it in the next 15 days, put it in a box.

## **12: Store vs. Donate vs. Throw Away**

It's a pain (and expensive) to store the stuff you don't really need. This is a great time to consider donating things you've collected over the years you have lived in your house. Many organizations will come pick the items up. If you haven't used it in 6 months, you probably never will. Consider this a great time to lighten the load.

## **13: The Entrance**

This one is important. Remember that most buyers will have an emotional reaction to your home within 15 seconds of entering. You want your entrance to be clean, de-cluttered and inviting. And no, you won't really wear all your shoes and coats while your house or condo is for sale, so be disciplined and store things away. If you don't have a hall closet, don't pile 15 coats on a coat rack – that's just drawing attention to your lack of a closet.

## **14: Get Rid of All the Things That Make Your Home Yours**

Ouch, I know it hurts to read that. You want your house or condo to appeal to as many buyers as possible, and that will only happen if they can picture their own stuff in your house. Get rid of all the family photos, the collections and the souvenirs from your trip to Asia. Walk through every room in your house and pretend you're a buyer. If what you see helps people get to know you, remove it.

## **15: Hire a Realtor**

If you haven't already hired someone, today is the day. A Realtor will likely need two weeks to schedule and prepare the marketing. An experienced listing agent will also guide you through the home preparation and staging process, so you don't have to do it alone.

# PATHWAY REALTY GROUP

*Guiding You Home*

## 16: Paint Touch-ups and Re-painting

A fresh coat of paint is one of the cheapest ways to freshen up your home. Bold colours are bound to be a turn-off. Appeal to the most people possible. Re-paint that red bedroom and blue bathroom. Don't forget about ceilings and trim. If you can't decide, white is ALWAYS the best colour when selling.

## 17: Repair What You've Been Avoiding

We all have that list of repairs and fixes that we never seem to get to. Now's the time. Fix the leaky faucet, the picture holes in the wall etc. and get it done once and for all. If you aren't handy yourself, bring in a handyman to take care of it (Royal Service knows some good ones, ask for help).

## 18: Get the Windows Cleaned

I know, you probably don't even think about cleaning your windows, but rain, snow and construction can really make your windows dirty. We like Shack Shine Durham, for affordable outdoor window cleaning. They can also help with outdoor power washing, fence cleaning, etc.

## 19: Focus on the Front Yard

Curb appeal matters and will significantly impact people's first impression of your house. Stand on your street and take in your front yard: what do you see? At a minimum, clean the scuff marks off the front door and touch-up the chipped paint or give it a fresh coat. And if your front door has seen better days, consider investing in a new one. If you have a front porch, make it look inviting (and not just a receptacle for more of your stuff). Invest in some seasonal plants. Clean up the garden. Hang a wreath on the door. A lot of buyers will see your home at night, so make sure that your outdoor lighting is bright, and showing off your home.

## 20: Spruce up Your Backyard

What you can accomplish in the back yard will, of course, depend on what time of year it is. If you're selling in the spring or summer: clean up the gardens, trim the trees, cut the grass, stain the deck and clean the patio furniture and BBQ. If it's winter: do your best to make it look presentable. If you have a garage: tidy it up and fix any peeling paint and the sagging roof.

## 21: Get the Carpets Cleaned

Unless your carpets are brand new, you'll want to have them steam cleaned (or do it yourself). You'll be amazed what a difference it makes. Wait until just before you're ready to start showings so they are as clean as possible.

## 22: Don't Forget About the Floors

If your floors are scratched, there are some great products out there to make them look almost-brand-new. Don't worry about cleaning them, our services include a professional cleaning.

## 23: Tackle the Walls and Doors

If your walls and doors are scuffed, buy some Magic Erasers and go to town. You'll wonder why you didn't do it sooner. Don't worry about your art, the stager will figure out what stays and what should come down.

## 24: The Final Clean

By now you're probably exhausted. Sorry about that. While you can do this final step yourself, we always like to bring in professional cleaners who will make sure to clean all the spots you don't: the baseboards, inside the lights, the fridge, etc. We think this step is so important that we pick up the tab for cleaning on most listings.

# PATHWAY REALTY GROUP

*Guiding You Home*

## **25: Make Plans for the Kids and the Dog/Cat/Turtle**

No buyer wants to look at all your kids' toys, finger painting works of art or dirty diapers, so put it all away and make a plan to keep it concealed. I love my dogs too, but not everyone is a dog person. Make a plan to get your pets out of the house: Doggie daycare? Grandma and Grandpa? Cat owners who can't board their loved ones for the duration will want to scoop that litter box several times a day and check it right before leaving the house for each showing.

## **26: Staging Day!**

If you're working with a professional stager, this is the day they will come and stage the house. They'll move, re-arrange and add furniture and use accessories and colour to make your home look its best. Professional staging has been proven to help homes sell faster and for more money – and many real estate agents include staging as part of their core services. I am no different and will include this service in most listings.

## **27: Make Your Home Smell Good**

If you're a pet owner, wash any couches, beds and surfaces where the pets sleep. You may not smell them anymore, but buyers will. Tuck the litter box away. Use Febreze on EVERYTHING. Consider lighting some candles (but avoid strong air fresheners). Don't use any products to add artificial smells or anything that might cause allergic reactions. Febreze works wonders.

## **28: Get a Pre-listing Home Inspection or Status Certificate**

It's not fun to find out what's wrong with your house or condo at the negotiating table, so you might want to arm yourself with the information before you list your home. You can either fix the problems before you list your home or factor it into your asking price and expectations. In a hot sellers' market, this may not be as important, but remember, anything you do extra will make your property more attractive to buyers.

## **29: Photography and Videography**

When your house or condo is de-cluttered, cleaned and ready for prime time, it's time for the photographs. This will happen a few days before you list your home for sale and may include a virtual tour or video. Make sure to tell your Realtor the times when the light is best – that'll make a big difference in the photos.

## **30: The Final Once-Over**

You've worked hard, and now it's time to step back and admire your work. How does it look? Do you see anything that might distract or turn off a buyer?

CALL US TODAY  
TO LIST YOUR HOME.

WE WILL GUIDE YOU  
HOME.

[www.pathwayrealtygroup.ca](http://www.pathwayrealtygroup.ca)

NOT INTENDED TO SOLICIT CLIENTS UNDER CONTRACT

**RE/MAX**  
JAZZ INC.  
BROKERAGE  
*the rhythm of the Region!*  
\*Independently owned and operated

