

# SELL IT FAST

A 29 Day Guide to Preparing Your Home for Sale



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**HI, I'M JEN.**

Finding the right person to help you buy or sell a home is a big decision!

I love marketing East Bay homes, thinking creatively, and leaving no detail untouched to make it all come together for you! I will help you develop a strategic plan and back it up with my strong negotiation skills, unparalleled accessibility, and local market expertise.

But I may be jumping ahead! If you're considering possibly selling down the road, think of this guide as a jumping off point, a way to "dip your toes into the water!" Hopefully there are some tips that come in handy for you.

*Warmly, Jen*



## day 1

### Prepare the paperwork

What are all of the things you love about your house? Be ready to share with your REALTOR® so she can make them shine in her marketing.

Buyers are going to want to know everything about your house's history, so start digging out the paperwork now: renovation details, warranties, repair information, permits, etc.

## day 2

### Let there be light

A room with good lighting is bright and welcoming. It's easy to forget about all the bulbs that have burned out over the years, but you want your home to be as bright as possible. Lighting makes an incredible difference in how a home looks to potential Buyers. If you have dated light fixtures (it's okay, a lot of us do), take a quick trip to IKEA or Home Depot to pick up some modern ones, and open those window coverings!



Selling your current house and moving into a new home is a stressful undertaking. However, you'll have a good chance for a low-stress transition if you approach the process with a project-by-project plan.



## day 3

### Get boxes & packing tape

A big part of the adventure you're about to embark on involves reducing clutter. If you're going to be moving a lot of stuff out of your house for the sale, consider renting a storage unit – you fill up at your house, it gets carted away, stored, and delivered to your new home!



## day 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.

## day 5

### Turn your bathroom into a spa

Pick up some new white towels (and no, you don't get to use them). Visit Target or HomeGoods for affordable accessories: soap dish, toothbrush holder, etc. If your toilet seat, shower curtain or bath mat are gross (be honest with yourself), replace them. Consider replacing the toilet paper holder and towel rack/hooks too. Remove all the toiletries you have on display. Mildew hiding under your grout should be cleaned, buyers find that off putting.



## day 6

### Declutter the kitchen

Kitchens attract buyers so this room is extra important! Remove your blender/Kitchen Aid mixer/toaster/bread machine from the counters – you want the counters to be as clear as possible. Wipe the grease off your exhaust hood, and clean inside all the cupboards. Don't cram all your dishes and food back in – again, you want to convey to Buyers that your kitchen has enough storage for their stuff.

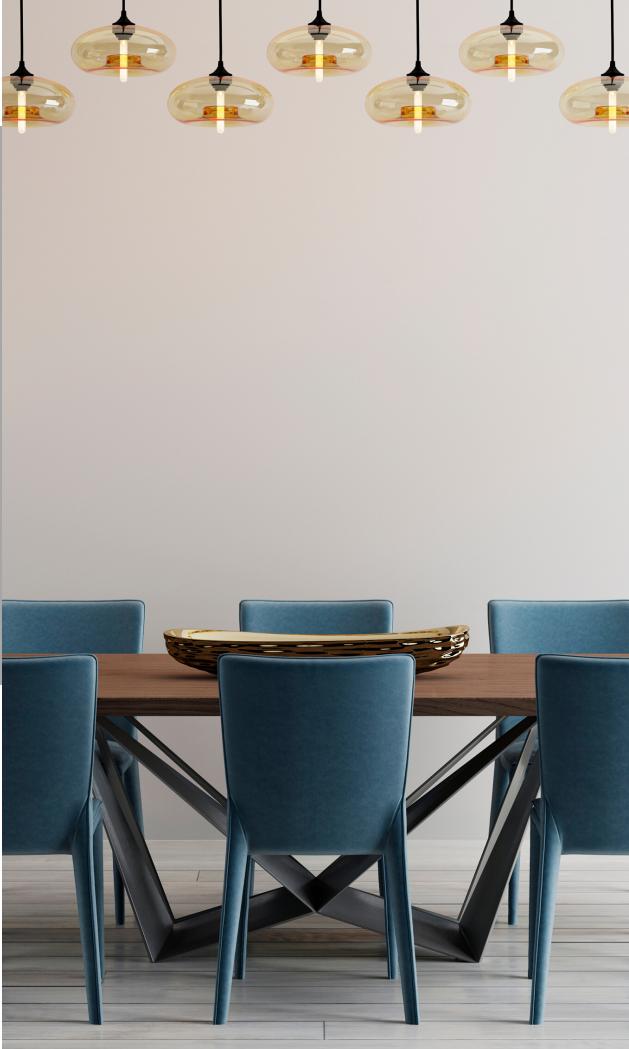
Clean inside the fridge, and remove the magnets, photos and reminders. Turn on your self-cleaning oven (probably for the first time). Store your booze collection (and take out the empties). Consider investing in some fresh flowers and a beautiful bowl with some fresh fruit in it, even better—fruit grown in your yard.



## day 7

### Tackle the living room

Clean the sofa and chairs and invest in some new throw pillows. Consider getting an area rug to bring the room together. Hide the magazine rack and all the clutter that has accumulated. Hide the wires from your TV and speakers.



## day 8

# Make your dining room look like a place someone might actually want to eat in

Remove the kids' homework and the piles of stuff that have accumulated on the dining room table.



## day 9

# Next up: the bedrooms

The bedrooms should be inviting, and that means more cleaning and decluttering and investing in a few props. If you don't already have one, invest in a neutral-colored duvet cover and some new fancy pillows. Straighten the bookshelves. Remove personal photos, knick-knacks and personal grooming products. Clean out the closets. Consider getting an area rug if the floors are cold. If you've jammed in a dresser that doesn't really fit into the space, consider storing it. If you've converted a bedroom into an office, consider converting it back into a bedroom.

## day 10

# Bring the outside in!

We all love being outside almost year-round in the East Bay! Take a look around your home to see how you can emphasize indoor-outdoor living with flowers or outdoor furniture.



## day 11

### Tackle the closets

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. 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.

## day 12

### Donate, throw out, or store?

It's not much fun packing, then unpacking, the stuff you don't need in your new home. For some people this is the easy part, for others not so much!

## day 13

### The entrance

Remember that most Buyers will have an emotional reaction to your home within 15 seconds of entering it, so what they experience at the entrance is critical. You want your entrance to be clean, de-cluttered and inviting.



## day 14

# Get rid of all of the things that make your home yours

Ouch, I know it hurts to read that!

You want your house 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 as you, remove it.



## day 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 and disclosures. An experienced agent will guide you through the home preparation and staging process, and have an army of tradespeople so you don't have to do it alone.



## day 16

### Paint

A fresh coat of paint is one of the cheapest ways to freshen up your home. Bold colors are bound to be a turn-off to some Buyers, so to appeal to the most people as possible, take the time to repaint that red bedroom and blue bathroom. (Tip: light colors will help small rooms look bigger.) Don't forget about baseboards and ceilings- they might need some paint too.

## day 17

### Finally make those repairs

We all have that list of never-never repairs and fixes. Now's the time to get to it, including fixing 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 (I know some good ones).

## day 18

### Have the windows cleaned

I know, you probably don't even think about cleaning your windows, but rain and wind can really make your windows dirty and let in less light.



## day 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. A lot of Buyers will see your home at night, so make sure that your outdoor lighting is showing off your home.



## day 20

### Now for the backyard

Luckily, we have year-round color in California! Be sure to trim the trees, cut the grass, weed, stain the deck, and clean the patio furniture.

## day 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 at what a difference it makes.



## day 22

### Don't forget the floors

You'll need more than a Swiffer to get into all the corners and cracks. If your floors are scratched, there are some great products out there to make them look almost-brand-new.



## day 23

### Tackle 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. If your art needs an update, now's the time to do it too.

## day 24

### Make your house sparkle!

By now you're probably exhausted! 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 didn't: the baseboards, inside the lights, the fridge, etc.



## day 25

### Make plans for the kids and the dog/cat/hamster

No Buyer wants to look at all your kids' toys, or works of art, so put it all away and make a plan to keep it concealed.

I love my dog too, but prospective Buyers won't appreciate the barking and jumping. Make a plan to get your pets out of the house: Doggie daycare, Grandma and Grandpa, multiple walks?



## day 26

### Staging Day!

If you're working with a professional Stager, this is usually the day they will come and stage the house. They'll add, move, and rearrange furniture and use accessories and color to make your home look its best.

Professional staging, on average in the East Bay, helps houses sell for over \$54,000 more!



## day 27

### Pay attention to smells

Don't cook with garlic or fry bacon the day before a showing, the smell will linger!

If you're a dog owner, wash any couches, beds and surfaces where the dogs sleep. You may not smell him anymore, but Buyers will.



## day 28

### Give each room a purpose

Help buyers understand what they can do with each room. Have a great space for a crafting room? Have a crafting table to help tell the story.



## day 29

### 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? Take one final walk through all the rooms and adjust as necessary.

Now...Don't. Touch. Anything.

Back away slowly... et voila!



Stressed about doing all of these things?

Don't be! I have partnered with sellers to accomplish everything on this list in as little as 48 hours. If you are in the market to sell, the sooner you hire a REALTOR® to help, the better.

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