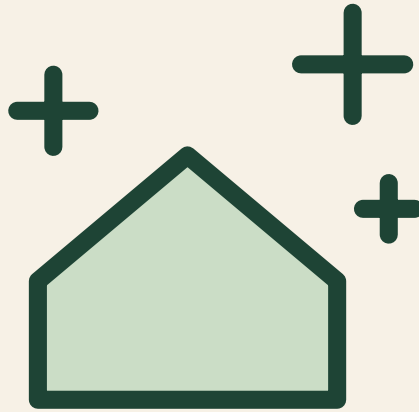




A SELLER'S GUIDE

How to Prepare Your Home for Sale

The big-picture roadmap — every stage of getting your home ready to list, in the right order, so nothing important slips through the cracks.

Prepared for homeowners across the greater Houston area



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Educational guide — current as of 2026. The steps and documents involved in preparing a home for sale vary by property, neighborhood, and situation; this is general information, not legal, inspection, or appraisal advice. For specifics, talk with your agent, a licensed inspector, or a real-estate attorney. If your home is currently listed with a REALTOR® or broker, please disregard any solicitation — this is shared for education, not to interfere with an existing agreement. Equal Housing Opportunity.

START HERE

The whole journey, laid out — so each step feels manageable.



Selling your home is exciting and rewarding — and, let's be honest, a little stressful. There's no way to make it effortless, but there is a way to make it smooth: knowing the steps ahead of time and tackling them in order. When you can see the whole path, no single step feels overwhelming.

Think of this guide as the map for the whole trip. It walks you from the first assessments and paperwork, through repairs and cleaning, on to curb appeal, and finally to showings and offers. It's the big picture — the sequence and the timeline — not a deep dive into any one task.

For the close-up work, I've put together separate companion guides on staging, home maintenance, curb appeal, and outdoor spaces. This roadmap tells you when each of those matters; those guides tell you exactly how. Use this one to stay oriented, and reach for the others when it's time to roll up your sleeves.

WHAT'S INSIDE

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- 2 Repairs, maintenance, and cleaning
- 3 Curb appeal and first impressions
- 4 Showings and open houses
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SECTION 1

Assessments and consultations

Before a sign goes in the yard, the smart work is logistical: lining up assessments, gathering records, and setting the price. Getting this groundwork right first keeps every later step on solid footing.

1

Schedule the assessments

Your agent will give you a checklist of items to handle before buyers walk through. Depending on your situation that can include a home inspection, a pest inspection, an appraisal, an insurance-claims history, a title review, and even smart-home logins if your house has connected systems.

2

Gather your documents

Pull together the paperwork tied to your home now, while you have time. Having records organized up front means fewer scrambles later and a smoother path once an offer is on the table.

3

Set the price with your agent

This is also when you and your agent land on a competitive list price. You'll talk through recent comparable sales, current market trends, your home's special features and history, and where your home fits in today's market.

WHY THIS COMES FIRST

Knowing your home's true condition and a realistic price before you list keeps you from over-spending on the wrong repairs or chasing a number the market won't support. A clear-eyed start makes everything that follows easier.

SECTION 2

Repairs, maintenance, and cleaning

Now the hands-on work begins. Once your assessments are in, you'll usually have a short list of items to repair or refresh. Handling them helps you attract stronger buyers — and gives both you and the next owner peace of mind that there are no surprises on move-in day.

The prep that earns buyer confidence



Fix the small stuff

Leaky faucets, sticky doors, cosmetic dings, and minor malfunctions are cheap to fix now and easy for a buyer to hold against you later. Knock them out early.



Check the systems

Make sure everything works as it should and replace smoke and carbon-monoxide detectors. Aim to put the home in its best honest condition before showings begin.



Deep clean, inside and out

Give the whole home a thorough cleaning — carpets, windows, walls, appliances, and the yard. A spotless home simply photographs and shows better.



Declutter and depersonalize

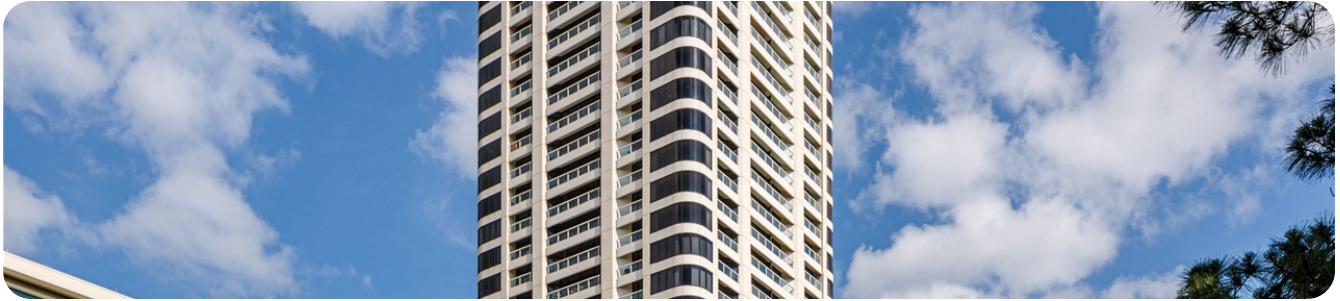
Pack away clutter and personal photos so buyers can picture their own life in the space. Bonus: it gives you a head start on your own move.

GO DEEPER

This is the big picture. For the full repair-by-repair walk-through, see my companion guide on home maintenance — and lean on your agent to decide which larger fixes pay you back at sale and which are better disclosed and priced in.

SECTION 3

Curb appeal and first impressions



Tidy the landscaping

A clean, healthy yard signals a cared-for home. Mow, trim, weed the beds, and add a little color near the entry to make the first impression a warm one.

Refresh the exterior

A pressure wash, touch-up paint, and small exterior repairs erase the tired, deferred-maintenance look that makes buyers nervous before they even step inside.

Mind the view from the curb

Look at any interior upgrades visible through the front windows, and at the entry itself. The path from the street to your door is the buyer's first real impression — make it count.

Plan the listing photos

Curb appeal isn't just for the drive-by; it has to come through on screen. Work with your agent on professional photography and marketing so all that effort actually gets seen.

COMPANION GUIDES

Want the detail? My separate guides on curb appeal and outdoor spaces cover exactly which changes move the needle most — and how to capture them in photos. This roadmap just makes sure curb appeal lands at the right point in your sequence.

Showings and open houses

You've handled the assessments, the repairs, and the curb appeal — which leads to the moment it's all been building toward: opening your home to buyers. A little preparation here turns all that earlier work into strong offers.

What gets a home truly show-ready

- ✓ Staging that creates an inviting, neutral space buyers can imagine living in
- ✓ High-quality photos that highlight your home's best features online
- ✓ A showing schedule coordinated with your agent to reach ready buyers
- ✓ Marketing — from signs and brochures to ads and social posts — that finds the right prospects

Keep it smooth from here

Stage to welcome, not to impress. Neutral, uncluttered rooms appeal to the widest range of buyers. You can hire a stager or do it yourself; my staging guide walks through the details.

Stay flexible on timing. Buyers tour on their schedule, not yours. Keeping the home tidy and easy to show means you never miss the buyer who'd make the strongest offer.

Let your agent run point. Coordinate open houses and showings through your agent, who'll work to attract buyers and show off your home's best attributes.

Prepare yourself, too. Opening your home can be an emotional step. It helps to get ready for that ahead of time — the home moves on, but the memories you made there stay with you.

THE HOME STRETCH

Showings are where preparation pays off. A home that's been assessed, repaired, cleaned, and presented well doesn't just attract more buyers — it earns their confidence, and that confidence shows up in the offers.

YOUR ROADMAP

Your prep timeline at a glance

Pull it all together, and getting your home ready to sell is a handful of stages done in the right order. Here's the whole sequence — keep this as your checklist.

1

First, assess and price.

Line up inspections and documents, then set a realistic list price with your agent. This groundwork steers every decision that follows.

2

Then repair and clean.

Fix the small stuff, confirm the systems work, deep clean, and declutter. See the maintenance guide for the full detail.

3

Next, win on curb appeal.

Tidy the landscaping, refresh the exterior, and make the entry welcoming — for the drive-by and the online photos alike.

4

Then get show-ready.

Stage the interior, schedule professional photos, and stay flexible for showings and open houses.

5

Lean on your guides — and your agent.

This roadmap keeps you oriented; the staging, maintenance, curb-appeal, and outdoor guides go deep. Your agent ties it all together.

LET'S TALK

Work with Allen



The journey to a successful sale starts with your agent — but it also starts with you. Your cooperation and attitude through the process matter, and knowing the main steps ahead of time makes the whole thing far less stressful. That's exactly what this roadmap — and a steady agent — are for.

Thinking about selling? Let's map your next steps.

I'll walk your home with you, help you prioritize which prep actually matters for your neighborhood and price range, and give you a clear, current picture of what your home could sell for today. No pressure, no obligation — just a plan. When would be a good time to connect?

Reach out for a free home-prep and value consultation

Call or text: (832) 709-2540 · allen@allenmarkel.com · allenmarkel.com

If the smartest move is a few targeted steps — or simply waiting a season — I'll tell you honestly. My goal is to help you sell for the strongest price with the least stress. TREC #0658294.