

Property Prep Checklist

Getting your home market-ready

BLACKSTREAM | CHRISTIE'S INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE

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01

PROPERTY PREP CHECKLIST

Room by room, before the lens

First impressions are made online. Every room needs to photograph well before it needs to show well. Work through this list methodically. If something feels like too much, call Erin or Annette. We have people for that.

KITCHEN

- [ ] Clear all countertops completely
  Leave one styled vignette only: flowers, a cutting board, olive oil. Everything else goes in cabinets or off-site.
- [ ] Clean and organize inside cabinets and pantry
  Buyers open doors. Neat shelves signal a well-maintained home. Half-empty reads as spacious.
- [ ] Deep clean appliances inside and out
  Stainless steel should be streak-free. Oven interiors matter during inspections.
- [ ] Remove everything from the refrigerator door
  Magnets, photos, artwork, grocery lists. All of it.
- [ ] Hide dish soap, sponges, and drying racks
  Tuck under the sink before every showing.
- [ ] Replace burned-out bulbs and maximize lighting
  Every fixture working. Under-cabinet lights on. Bright kitchens sell.

LIVING AREAS

- [ ] Edit furniture down to essential pieces
  Rooms look larger with less. Remove anything that crowds walkways or blocks sightlines to windows.

- [ ] Remove personal photos and family memorabilia
  Buyers need to picture themselves here, not your family. Store it all off-site.
- [ ] Style bookshelves and mantels simply
  Edit to one-third capacity. Group by color or size. One object per shelf grouping.
- [ ] Stow all remotes, chargers, and cords
  Tuck into drawers or baskets. Cord clutter photographs terribly.
- [ ] Fluff and arrange throw pillows and blankets
  Two or three pillows per sofa, one folded throw. Symmetrical, minimal.
- [ ] Clear entryways and mudrooms of shoes, coats, and bags
  The entry is the first interior impression. A cluttered mudroom tells buyers the house lacks storage.

BEDROOMS

- [ ] Make beds with fresh, smoothed linens
  White or neutral tones photograph best. Add two decorative pillows and a folded throw at the foot.
- [ ] Clear nightstands to one item each
  A lamp and one small object. Everything else goes in the drawer.
- [ ] Empty and organize closets to 60% capacity
  Buyers evaluate closet size. Packed closets read as too small. Color-coordinate what stays.
- [ ] Remove exercise equipment and office setups
  If the bedroom doubles as a gym, the buyer sees a room too small for its purpose.

BATHROOMS

- [ ] Clear all counters completely
  No toothbrushes, products, or soap dispensers visible. One styled item only: a small plant or candle.
- [ ] Hang fresh, matching white towels
  Rolled or folded neatly. White reads as clean and hotel-quality.

- [ ] Deep clean grout, glass, and fixtures
  Shine every surface. Re-caulk if discolored. Costs $30, adds thousands in perception.
- [ ] Toilet lids down, always
  Every photo, every showing, no exceptions.
- [ ] Replace shower curtains if stained or dated
  A $20 white waffle-weave curtain changes the entire room.

EXTERIOR, GARAGE & UTILITY

- [ ] Mow the lawn within 48 hours of photos and showings
  Fresh-cut edges frame the house. Mulch beds should be edged and topped off.
- [ ] Power-wash driveway, walkways, and siding
  Single highest-return prep task. Often under $300 and it transforms the approach.
- [ ] Clean and arrange outdoor furniture, clean the grill
  Cushions on, pillows placed. Grill wiped down, cover off if it looks good, on if it does not. Empty beats shabby.
- [ ] Paint or stain the front door if needed
  First physical impression. A fresh coat costs $50 and a Saturday morning.
- [ ] Remove all vehicles from the driveway for photos
  Nothing in the driveway. Nothing on the street in front of the home.
- [ ] Mailbox empty, no packages visible
  Every detail counts in photos. An overstuffed mailbox signals vacancy.
- [ ] Clean garage floor and organize storage
  Sweep or hose down. Stack bins neatly against walls. Buyers evaluate garage functionality.
- [ ] Clear laundry rooms of all clutter
  No clothes, detergent bottles, or ironing boards visible. Clean surfaces only.
- [ ] Tidy mechanical spaces and label the HVAC filter with its last change date

02

PHOTOGRAPHY DAY

The forty-eight hours that matter most

Our sessions run two to four hours. We strongly recommend all residents and pets vacate the property during the shoot. The crew needs to move freely and capture each space at its best.

THE DAY BEFORE

- [ ] Confirm the lawn is freshly mowed and beds are edged
  Schedule mowing for the day before. Fresh lines photograph beautifully.
- [ ] Complete any outstanding prep from the room-by-room list
  Walk every room with this checklist in hand. Last chance before the lens.
- [ ] Confirm pool or hot tub water is clear and the cover removed
  Cloudy water kills the outdoor shot. Shock it two days ahead if needed.
- [ ] Remove seasonal decor unless the listing is timed for that season
  Holiday wreaths in March are a red flag to buyers.

MORNING OF THE SHOOT

- [ ] Turn on every light in the house
  Overheads, lamps, under-cabinet, accent, closet lights. Every single one.
- [ ] Open all blinds and shutters to the same position per floor
  Consistency matters. Mismatched blinds look chaotic in wide shots.
- [ ] Turn off all ceiling fans
  Spinning blades blur in photos and distract the eye.
- [ ] Turn off all TVs and computer screens
  Black screens are fine. Glowing screens ruin the shot.

- [ ] Clean and style the fireplace, and light it if gas

  Confirm timing with the crew. Logs stacked neatly, screen closed or removed. A lit fireplace adds warmth and sells the lifestyle.

- [ ] Remove all pets, pet beds, bowls, crates, and toys

  We love your dog. The buyer does not want to see evidence of your dog.

- [ ] Remove all trash cans from visible areas

  Every room. Under sinks, behind doors. Gone.

- [ ] Leave the property 15 minutes before the crew arrives

  Cars out of the driveway. Every car, not just yours.

03

SHOWING CHECKLIST

Run this before every single one

Once you are active on MLS, showing requests come fast. Keep this on the fridge and run through it before every showing. The first one sets the tone.

BEFORE THE FIRST SHOWING

- [ ] Have the home professionally deep cleaned, if able
  This is not a vacuum-and-wipe situation. Floors, baseboards, windows, fixtures. Worth every dollar.
- [ ] Replace any warm or yellow bulbs with 3000K LED in every fixture
  Consistent color temperature makes a home feel cohesive. Mixed lighting makes buyers uneasy without knowing why.
- [ ] Hide all prescription medications and valuables in a locked space
  Open houses mean strangers in your medicine cabinet. Not a hack, just reality.

EVERY SHOWING

- [ ] Set the thermostat two degrees cooler in summer, two warmer in winter
  Buyers who feel good stay longer. Buyers who are too hot or too cold leave faster.
- [ ] Open all blinds and turn on all lights
  Same protocol as photography day. Bright and open, every time.
- [ ] Fresh flowers on the kitchen island and entry table
  Simple arrangements. White or green. Nothing overpowering.
- [ ] Set the dining table for four
  Plates, napkins, wine glasses. Sells the lifestyle, not the square footage. Costs nothing, photographs beautifully.

- [ ] Bowl of lemons on the kitchen counter
  Reads clean, smells fresh, photographs like a magazine spread. Every stager's go-to.
- [ ] Remove all daily-life clutter
  Backpacks, mail, keys, dog leashes, shoes by the door. All of it, every time.
- [ ] Take out the trash and recycling
  Full bins smell. Even if pickup is tomorrow.
- [ ] Make all beds and close all closet doors
  Quick walk-through. Two minutes per bedroom.
- [ ] Wipe down kitchen and bathroom surfaces
  Quick pass with a microfiber cloth. Water spots on faucets are visible.
- [ ] Run the shower hot for 60 seconds, then wipe mirrors with a dry microfiber
  Streak-free shine, zero products needed. Works on glass shower doors too.
- [ ] One diffuser only
  We recommend The One Diffuser by Scentiment. One scent, lightly. Buyers are suspicious of heavy fragrance. It signals you are hiding something.
- [ ] Turn on light background music
  Jazz in the Background on Alexa, or Cocktail Lounge on Spotify. Low volume. Sets a mood without competing with conversation.
- [ ] Crack two windows on opposite sides of the house 15 minutes before
  A cross-breeze makes a home feel alive instead of sealed up.
- [ ] Leave interior doors slightly ajar in each hallway
  Buyers subconsciously walk toward open doors. It controls their path through the house.
- [ ] Put the garage door down
  Always. An open garage is visual noise and makes buyers think storage problem.
- [ ] Leave the property 15 minutes before the showing
  Take the pets. Take the kids. Take yourself. Buyers do not speak freely in front of sellers.

04

WHO CAN DO THIS FOR YOU

You do not have to do any of it yourself

These are the people we send our own sellers to. Call them directly, or call Ray and he will arrange it. If you need a specialist who is not on this list, Ray knows someone.

STAGING	Linden Creek 864-214-4193
INTERIOR DESIGN	Kerry Howard, Howard House Interiors (404) 234-5902 | kerry@howardhouseinteriors.com
CLEANING	Harris Cleaning LLC 864-884-6345 | harris.cleaningllc@gmail.com
CLEANING	Lusso Cleaning Marla | 828-226-7081
PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZER	Wood & Wicker Celeste Oddo | 704-937-5746
MOVING	Swamp Rabbit Moving (864) 999-4410 | swamprabbitmoving.com
PRESSURE WASHING, PAINTING, LANDSCAPING, HANDYMAN, PLUMBING	Contact Ray Mack (864) 546-0189 | ray@damianhallgroup.com

Ray Mack is our Vendor Concierge. Scheduling, access, and follow-up are handled by us if you would rather not manage it.

05

NOTES

Rooms, quotes, dates, anything you want to remember

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Nothing on this list is optional on the day it matters. Work it once properly and the rest of the process gets easier.

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Property Prep Checklist
Companion to A Seller's Field Guide
Greenville, South Carolina