



The Smart Seller's Guide to High-Impact Pre-Sale Upgrades

Sell faster. Maximize your profit. Skip the waste. Hampton Roads Edition

Before You Renovate, Read This

Thinking about listing your home? Before you start ripping out cabinets or dumping thousands into renovations, read this.

Not all upgrades are created equal—and the wrong ones could cost you more than they're worth.

This guide shows you what **actually pays off** when you sell in Hampton Roads.



The #1 Rule Before Upgrading



Talk to a local agent first

The "right" upgrades depend on your price point, neighborhood, and buyer pool.

A \$5,000 investment in the *right* place could earn you \$15,000...

But the same \$5K in the wrong spot? Total waste.



Get personalized ROI advice

Every Hampton Roads neighborhood has different buyer expectations.

What works in Chesapeake might not work in Suffolk.

A local expert can guide your investment decisions.

High-ROI Upgrade #1: Paint

🎨 Fresh, neutral paint = instant refresh

\$1.5K-...

Typical Cost

For whole-home interior paint

107%

Potential ROI

One of the highest-return investments

Stick to light grays, soft whites, or warm greige. Skip bold accent walls or dark colors—buyers want a blank canvas.



High-ROI Upgrade #2: Lighting



Entryway Statement

Replace dated fixtures with clean, modern options that make a strong first impression.



Kitchen Pendants

Update over-island lighting for instant kitchen modernization without major renovation.



Bathroom Vanity

Modern bathroom lighting makes spaces feel updated and luxurious with minimal investment.

💡 Small investment = big upgrade feel. Warm LED lighting creates an inviting atmosphere that photographs beautifully for listings.

High-ROI Upgrade #3: Curb Appeal Touch-Ups



First impressions matter

- Fresh mulch, trimmed shrubs, and a clean front door go a long way
- Power wash the exterior and driveway to remove mildew and stains
- New mailbox or house numbers add bonus polish at minimal cost
- Clean gutters and fix any visible exterior issues

You don't need a \$15K landscape job—just a clean, welcoming entry that makes buyers excited to see more.

High-ROI Upgrade #4: Flooring

Replace worn carpet or mismatched flooring

- If you've got 3+ types of flooring, consider unifying with LVP or laminate
- If carpet is stained or worn, replace it—or at least deep clean
- Consistent flooring throughout main living areas creates flow and perceived value
- Hampton Roads buyers prefer waterproof options due to humidity

Buyers notice floors first. Bad floors = low offers.



High-ROI Upgrade #5: Kitchen Touch-Ups

👨‍🔧 Small updates, big perception shift

Cabinet Hardware



Replace dated pulls with modern styles in brushed nickel, matte black, or brass.

Updated Faucet



A sleek new faucet modernizes the entire sink area for under \$200.

Painted Cabinets



If cabinets are old but sturdy, paint them white or light gray for an instant refresh.

Buyers want clean, functional kitchens—not gourmet chef upgrades. Focus on cosmetic improvements, not major overhauls.



High-ROI Upgrade #6: Declutter + Stage Strategically

 You're not selling the home—you're selling the space

Remove 50%

Take half of what's in each room out. Store, donate, or trash—but get it out of sight.

Create Zones

Define spaces: reading corner, coffee bar, office nook—help buyers envision living there.

Maximize Light

Use natural light, mirrors, and neutral decor to make spaces feel larger and brighter.

Professional staging in Hampton Roads typically yields a 1-3% higher sale price—well worth the investment.

What to Skip (Low ROI Projects)



Full Kitchen Remodels

Average cost: \$25K-\$65K

Typical ROI: Only 54-77%

Focus on cosmetic updates instead.



Luxury Landscaping

Average cost: \$15K-\$30K

Typical ROI: Only 40-60%

Stick to basic curb appeal improvements.



Custom Built-ins

Average cost: \$2K-\$8K per unit

Typical ROI: Only 40-50%

Too personalized for broad buyer appeal.



New Windows

Average cost: \$12K-\$20K

Typical ROI: Only 68-70%

Replace only if broken or dysfunctional.

These may look nice—but rarely earn you back what you spend when selling in the Hampton Roads market.

Want a Room-by-Room Game Plan?

I'll send you a custom prep checklist based on:

Your Home

Specific to your property's age, style, and condition

Your Budget

Prioritized recommendations to maximize your investment

Your Timeline

Tailored to your selling schedule, whether 2 weeks or 6 months

DM me "**Prep Plan**" or schedule a free consult and I'll walk you through it step-by-step.





Get Top Dollar Without Overspending

I help sellers in Suffolk, Chesapeake, and across Hampton Roads prep smart, price right, and walk away with more.



Schedule your free listing prep consult today

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Or DM me "Seller Plan"

I'll follow up personally with custom recommendations for your home