

Pre-Listing Checklist: What to Remove Before Photography or Showings

Preparing your home for photography and showings is one of the most important steps in the selling process. A well-presented home helps buyers visualize themselves in the space, highlights your property's best features, and often leads to higher offers and faster sales. This guide will walk you through exactly what to remove or tidy up before your home hits the market.

1. Personal Items

Buyers need to imagine themselves living in your home, not feel like they're visiting someone else's. Remove anything overly personal that might distract from the property itself.

- Family photos and portraits
- Personal collections, memorabilia, or trophies
- Children's artwork and school projects
- Name signs or monogrammed items

2. Valuables and Sensitive Information

Keep all personal, financial, and valuable items secure during showings. Even in supervised visits, many people come through the home.

- Jewelry, watches, and cash
- Laptops, tablets, and small electronics
- Medications or prescriptions
- Documents with private details such as bills or tax records

3. Clutter and Everyday Items

Clutter makes spaces feel smaller and distracts from your home's features. Start pre-packing and keep surfaces clear and organized.

- Excess furniture that blocks flow or natural light
- Paper piles, mail, and magazines
- Knick-knacks and countertop appliances
- Laundry baskets, shoes, and coats in entryways

4. Pet Items and Evidence of Pets

Not every buyer is a pet lover, and some have allergies. Minimize signs of pets to keep your home feeling clean and neutral.

- Litter boxes and pet bedding

- Food and water bowls
- Scratching posts, toys, and cages
- Remove pet odours through cleaning, not air fresheners

5. Kitchen and Bathrooms

Buyers pay close attention to kitchens and bathrooms, so keep them spotless and free of clutter.

- Dishes, dish racks, and countertop clutter
- Fridge magnets, notes, and photos
- Toothbrushes, razors, and toiletries
- Shower products left out in tubs or stalls

6. Lighting and Window Treatments

Light makes your home feel larger and more welcoming. Remove anything that blocks natural light or makes rooms appear dark.

- Heavy drapes and blinds kept closed
- Burnt-out lightbulbs or mismatched wattages
- Items blocking windowsills or patio doors

7. Outdoor and Garage Areas

First impressions start outside. Keep outdoor spaces tidy and inviting.

- Garbage and recycling bins stored neatly
- Garden tools, hoses, and lawn equipment put away
- Patio furniture cleaned and arranged neatly
- Clear pathways and entryways

8. Final Touches Before Photography

Once everything is decluttered, do a final walkthrough to make sure each room looks bright, clean, and ready for buyers.

- Open all blinds and turn on every light
- Make beds and fluff pillows
- Straighten décor and ensure symmetry
- Add subtle greenery or flowers for freshness

Preparing properly before photography and showings can make a huge difference in how your Calgary home is perceived. For more personalized guidance or to receive a detailed staging plan, reach out for a free home consultation.