

Tampa Bay Home Seller's Preparation Guide

Prepare strategically. Launch confidently. Move forward with less stress.



Sondra Boruty • Tampa Bay Real Estate Advisor

Call It Closed International Realty | 813-451-2105 | HomesBySondra.com

Preparation That Protects Your Time and Equity

Your home does not need to be perfect. It needs to be ready for the buyers most likely to purchase it.

Strong preparation helps buyers feel confident, improves the quality of your marketing and reduces avoidable objections. The best plan is property-specific: it considers condition, neighborhood expectations, current competition, timing and budget.



A polished first impression begins before photography day.

The preparation order

- Clarify your goals, timing and next move.
- Review condition and likely buyer expectations.
- Prioritize repairs and presentation improvements.
- Price against current competition and recent sales.
- Complete photography and launch materials before going active.

Spend with purpose

Do not begin an expensive renovation until you know how buyers in your price range are likely to value it.

Repair, Replace or Leave Alone?

Repair first

- Active leaks, moisture signs and damaged surfaces
- Loose handles, doors, screens and fixtures
- Obvious safety or function concerns
- Exterior wood rot, peeling paint or neglected landscaping
- Items likely to complicate insurance or inspection

Replace selectively

- Worn or heavily stained flooring that dominates the room
- Broken or mismatched lighting in important spaces
- Damaged blinds, hardware or dated fixtures that are inexpensive to refresh
- Items whose condition prevents buyers from seeing the home's strengths

Often leave for the buyer

- Functional features that are simply not your buyer's preferred style
- Highly personal upgrades with uncertain return
- Major renovations that delay the sale without a clear market benefit

Three-question test

Will it affect safety or function? Will it weaken photographs or showings? Is the likely benefit worth the cost, time and disruption?

Create a Strong First Impression



Clean sightlines, light and intentional styling help buyers understand the space.

Outside

- Pressure wash as appropriate and clean the entry.
- Trim landscaping, refresh mulch and remove dead plants.
- Repair visible screens, lighting and address numbers.
- Create a simple, welcoming front-door moment.

Inside

- Deep clean kitchens, baths, floors, windows and baseboards.
- Reduce furniture and personal collections without making rooms sterile.
- Use consistent lightbulb color and replace burned-out bulbs.
- Clear countertops and define the purpose of every room.
- Secure medication, valuables, mail and sensitive documents.

For pets

- Repair yard or door damage and manage odors carefully.
- Create a safe showing plan for pets and buyers.
- Remove bowls, beds and litter areas for photography when practical.

Price and Launch With Intention

Your launch should be ready before the listing is active. Buyers compare your home with both recent sales and properties available today. Presentation attracts attention; pricing determines whether buyers see value.

A complete launch may include

- Professional photography and a benefit-focused property story
- Accurate syndication across major real estate websites
- Social, database and agent-to-agent promotion
- Showing instructions that make access practical
- Open-house and retargeting strategy when appropriate
- A process for reviewing traffic, feedback and competing inventory

Read the signals

High online views with few showings may point to price, presentation or location concerns. Showings without offers may reveal objections worth addressing. Feedback should lead to informed decisions.

Avoid these launch mistakes

- Going live before repairs, cleaning or photography are complete
- Pricing from an automated estimate alone
- Writing a feature list without explaining the lifestyle benefit
- Making showings unnecessarily difficult
- Waiting too long to evaluate weak activity

Photography and Showing-Day Checklist

- ☐ Open blinds and curtains; turn on every light
- ☐ Remove vehicles from the driveway when possible
- ☐ Clear kitchen and bathroom counters
- ☐ Hide trash cans, laundry, cords and cleaning supplies
- ☐ Make beds and straighten towels
- ☐ Remove pet items and secure pets
- ☐ Set a comfortable temperature
- ☐ Play soft, neutral background music at a low volume
- ☐ Put away valuables, medications and documents
- ☐ Check mirrors, glass and stainless surfaces
- ☐ Sweep entry, patio and pool areas
- ☐ Close toilet lids and shower curtains neatly
- ☐ Leave the home before the appointment

From Offer to Closing

Look beyond price

- Financing type, down payment and lender strength
- Inspection and financing timelines
- Appraisal terms and sale contingencies
- Requested concessions, personal property and repairs
- Closing date, possession and probability of completion

Keep the transaction moving

- Respond promptly to document and access requests.
- Maintain the property in agreed condition.
- Do not make major financial or property changes without advice.
- Prepare for appraisal, inspection and final walk-through.
- Verify all wire instructions using a trusted phone number.

Your moving plan

- Confirm movers and insurance early.
- Transfer utilities for the correct possession date.
- Keep keys, remotes, warranties and property information together.
- Photograph condition after move-out and complete agreed cleaning.

Your Next Step

A calm, personalized plan starts with a conversation.

I will help you apply this seller's preparation guide to your home, timeline and goals—without pressure. Every situation is different, and the best strategy should be built around you.

Sondra Boruty

Call It Closed International Realty

813-451-2105 | sondra@sondraboruty.com | HomesBySondra.com

Important: This guide provides general educational information. Real estate, legal, tax, insurance, lending and association matters vary by property and individual circumstances. Consult the appropriate qualified professionals before making decisions.