

SMOOTH MOVES

PREP FOR MOVING & SHOWING

Your Guide to a Stress-Free Relocation & Successful Sale



TODD KORNACK



MOVING & SHOWING PREPARATION GUIDE
A STEP-BY-STEP RESOURCE TO HELP YOU MOVE AND PRESENT YOUR HOME
BEAUTIFULLY



TODD KORNACK

Over the years, I've learned what really works when preparing a home for sale. This guide is my way of sharing those insights so you can confidently get your home ready, attract the right buyers, and achieve a successful sale—without the guesswork.

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SECTION

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

I've moved more times than I can count, and if there's one thing I've learned, it's that moving never feels easy. Boxes everywhere, endless to-do lists, and trying to keep everything organized—it can get overwhelming fast. Over the years, I've also helped a lot of people through their own moves, and I started noticing the same challenges pop up again and again.

That's what inspired me to create this guide. My goal is to help take some of the stress out of moving and give you a clear, simple way to get your home ready to list on the MLS.

A lot of people think selling a home is just about sticking a sign in the yard and waiting for buyers to show up. And to be fair, in a hot market, that sometimes does work. Homes can sell fast and with minimal effort. But when things settle into a more balanced market, it takes strategy, preparation, and attention to detail to make your home stand out.

Moving into a new home is one of life's biggest transitions. It's exciting, for sure—but it can also feel like a lot to handle. Trying to prepare your current home for showings while planning your move can feel like juggling a dozen things at once.



INTRODUCTION

That’s where this guide comes in. It’s designed to make the whole process easier by breaking it down into simple steps, practical advice, and proven strategies that actually work.

Think of this guide as your roadmap—from decluttering and packing to cleaning, staging, and doing that final walkthrough. Every section covers small, doable actions that can make a big difference when it comes to attracting buyers and keeping your move running smoothly.

By the time you’re done, my hope is that you’ll feel more organized, more confident, and maybe even a little excited about the journey ahead.



Tip:

Keep a notebook or digital planner for all moving-related tasks, contacts, and deadlines. This is your personal command center to reduce stress.



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SECTION

DECLUTTERING & SORTING

DECLUTTERING & SORTING

I still remember when we sold our second home. We were moving from a house that was about 3,800 square feet—with tons of storage—to a new place closer to 3,000 square feet with almost no storage at all. We had lived in that home for around ten years, and during that time, we managed to collect more things than we realized.

It wasn't until we started packing that we saw how crowded the rooms felt. It was time for a serious decluttering session—and, honestly, a massive garage sale. Once we got started, it felt surprisingly good to let things go. We sold enough items to make our old home look bigger and more inviting, and when it came time to move, everything fit into the new house without feeling cramped.



DECLUTTERING & SORTING

That experience taught me something important: before you pack a single box, take the time to declutter.

Go through each room carefully and ask yourself:

- Have I used this in the past year?
- Does it bring me joy or serve a real purpose?

If the answer is no, it's time to let it go. Whether you choose to donate, sell, or toss those items, you'll instantly feel lighter. And beyond making your move easier, decluttering also helps your home feel more open and inviting—something buyers notice right away.

To keep it simple, use this three-pile method:

1. Keep
2. Donate/Sell
3. Discard

This small system can make a big difference. You'll be better organized, your home will show beautifully, and when it's time to move, everything will feel much more manageable.

 Tip:

Label boxes by room and content, not just “Kitchen” or “Bedroom.” Add a short description like “Daily Dishes” or “Shirts and Sweaters” to save time later.

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SECTION

PACKING NON-
ESSENTIALS

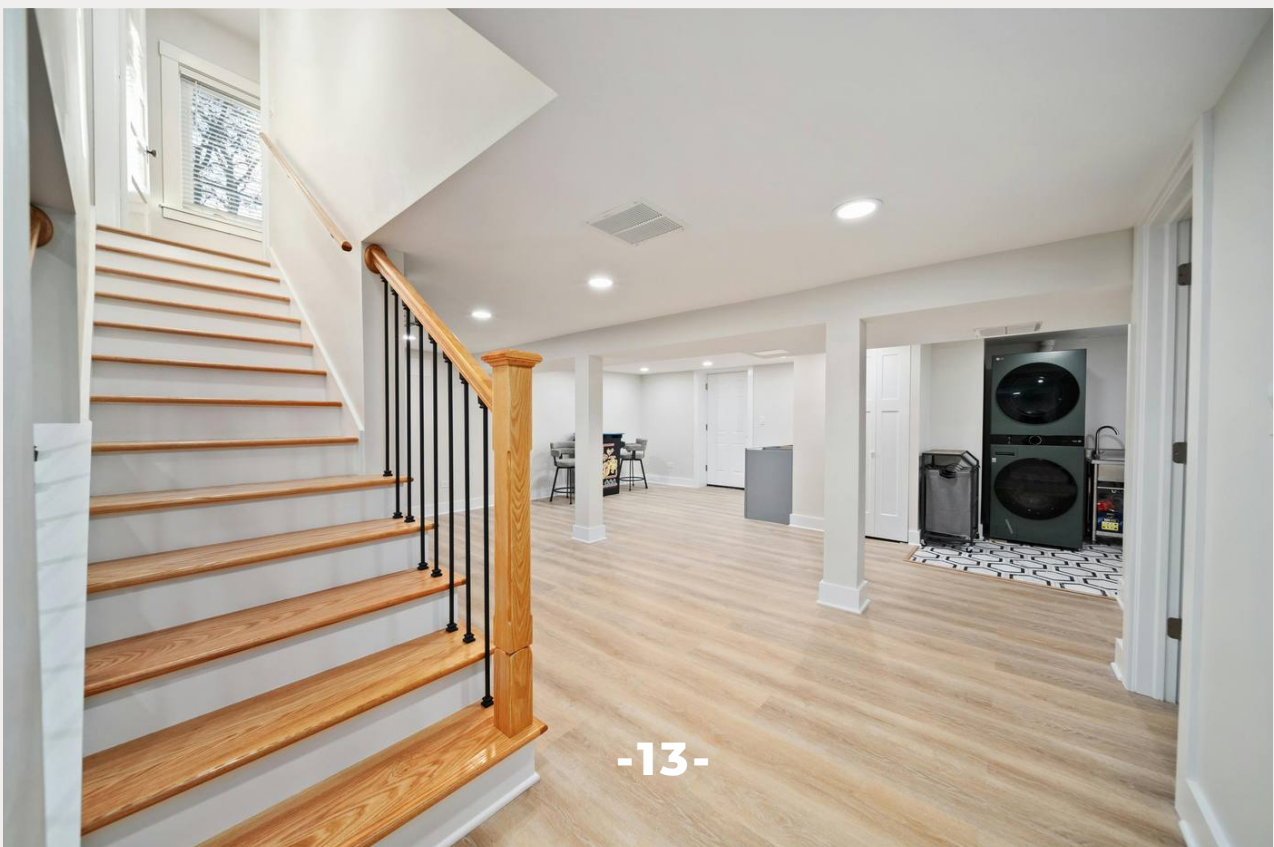
PACKING NON-ESSENTIALS

Once you’ve decluttered and your home feels lighter, it’s time to take the next step—start packing the things you don’t use every day. This is one of the best ways to get ahead of your move while also helping your home look cleaner and more spacious for showings.

When we were preparing to list one of our homes, we quickly realized how much we had out in the open—seasonal decorations, extra kitchen gadgets, stacks of books, and closets full of “just in case” items. None of it was junk, but it all made the house feel a little crowded. So we started by boxing up the things we knew we wouldn’t need for a while.

Begin with items like:

- Off-season clothing and shoes
- Holiday decorations
- Extra linens, towels, and bedding
- Decorative pieces or personal collections
- Duplicate kitchenware and small appliances



PACKING NON-ESSENTIALS

Label each box clearly and store them neatly in a garage, basement, or storage unit if possible. This not only helps your home look more open, but it also gives buyers the impression of ample storage—something everyone is looking for.

Packing non-essentials early also reduces the stress later on. When moving day comes, you'll already have a big portion of the work done, and your home will be easier to tidy up for showings in the meantime.

The key is to think of this step as staging through simplification. You're not just packing—you're setting the stage for buyers to imagine themselves living there. And that small shift can make a huge difference in how quickly and successfully your home sells.



Tip:

Use sturdy boxes and wrap fragile items with towels, blankets, or bubble wrap. Label each box clearly to make unpacking easier.



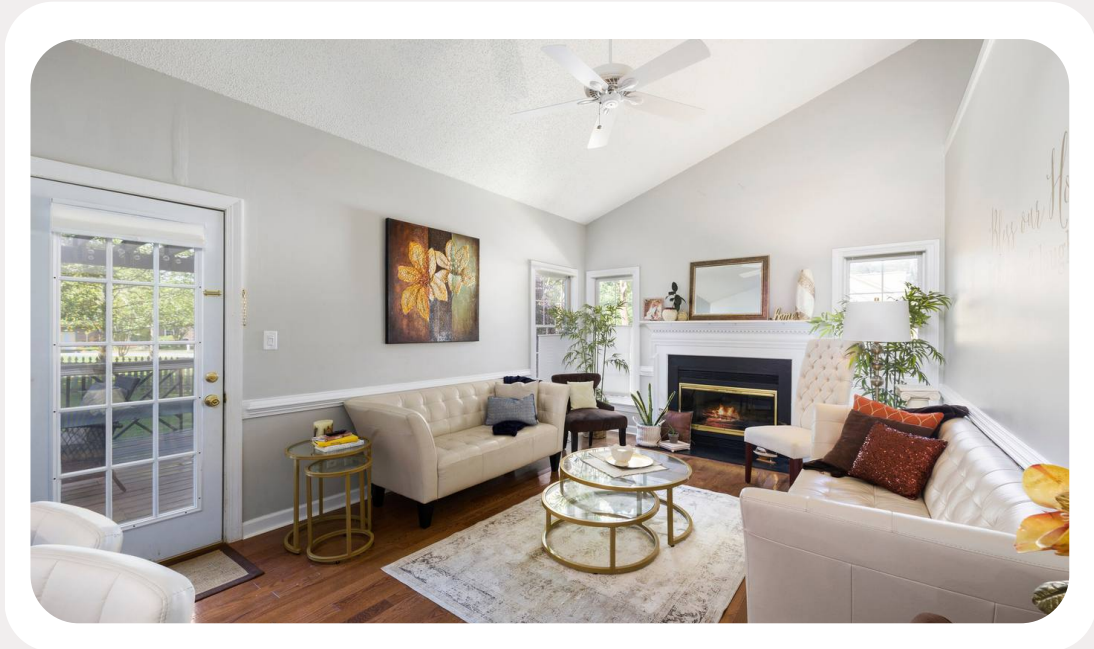
SECTION

PREPARING YOUR HOME

PREPARING YOUR HOME

Once you get to this step, your home may have never looked better. A home should feel fresh and inviting—new neutral paint, updated hardware, and, if necessary, a check on the mechanical systems can make all the difference. The goal is simple: earn the most amount of money in the least amount of time. In a balanced market, homes that shine attract the most buyers. Think about it this way: if two homes have identical features, which would you choose—the one that feels new or the one that doesn't?

We moved into our “forever home” a few years ago, so I went all in—updating everything, including the HVAC. Just six months later, we had to move, which was definitely disappointing. But the couple who bought our home felt like they were moving into a brand-new house. We sold it in a balanced market within a month.



PREPARING YOUR HOME

Making the Interior Shine

Once buyers step inside, your home should feel clean, bright, and move-in ready. Selling a home isn't just about listing it—it's about creating a space where buyers can envision their future. First impressions matter.

Steps to Make the Interior Shine

- **Create a Neutral Canvas:** Remove personal items and declutter to help buyers focus on the home itself. Neutral colors and simple décor make it easier for buyers to envision their future in the space.
- **Maximize Light and Space:** Bright, airy rooms feel larger and more inviting. Open curtains, clean windows, and add soft lighting where needed.
- **Address Small Fixes:** Leaky faucets, squeaky doors, chipped paint, and sticking windows may seem minor but can influence buyers' perceptions. Taking care of these details shows the home has been well-maintained.
- **Stage Key Areas:** Focus on rooms that matter most—living room, kitchen, and master bedroom. Arrange furniture to highlight space and flow, and add inviting touches such as fresh flowers, a clean table setting, or cozy throw pillows.

A polished, move-in ready home not only attracts buyers—it inspires them to act quickly.

PREPARING YOUR HOME

A deep clean goes a long way. Carpets, appliances, and bathrooms should be spotless, and any odors—like pets, smoke, or strong cooking smells—should be eliminated. Highlight storage space by removing out-of-season items from closets, cabinets, and pantries so buyers see the home’s full potential.

If you’re unsure where to start or want personalized advice, consulting a knowledgeable realtor can be invaluable. They can provide tips specific to your home, suggest cost-effective improvements, and guide you through the selling process to help maximize your home’s appeal and value.

By taking these steps, you’re not just showing a house—you’re showing the potential for a future home. A well-prepared, thoughtfully staged home helps buyers connect emotionally and increases your chances of a quick, successful sale.



Tip:

Even small details, like folding towels neatly or placing a tray of fruit on the counter, make your home feel cared-for and inviting.

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SECTION

ENHACING CURB APPEAL

ENHANCING CURB APPEAL

Boost Your Home's Curb Appeal

When a prospective buyer drives up, you want them to say, “WOW!” If they say nothing—or worse, “yuck!”—you’re immediately fighting an uphill battle. A home that looks inviting from the outside immediately draws buyers in and sets the tone for the entire showing. The good news? Enhancing curb appeal doesn’t have to be complicated or expensive. Often, a little elbow grease is all it takes. In a pinch, I’ve even mowed lawns and trimmed hedges for clients—but, I’m not volunteering to do your yard work!



ENHANCING CURB APPEAL

Simple Steps to Make Your Home Stand Out:

- **Freshen Up Landscaping:** Trim bushes, mow the lawn, edge walkways, and remove weeds. Adding colorful flowers or potted plants near the entryway creates a welcoming feel.
- **Clean and Maintain Exterior Surfaces:** Power wash siding, clean windows, and make sure gutters are free of debris. A tidy exterior signals that the home has been well cared for.
- **Update Front Door and Hardware:** A fresh coat of paint on the front door and modern hardware can instantly boost appeal. Consider adding a new welcome mat and attractive house numbers for a polished look.
- **Lighting Matters:** Exterior lighting not only highlights your home's best features but also adds safety and charm. Pathway lights or a well-lit porch create a warm, inviting ambiance.
- **Declutter Outdoor Spaces:** Remove toys, garden tools, and other items from the yard or porch. A clean, organized exterior makes it easy for buyers to imagine themselves living there.

A home that shines from the outside in captures attention and sets buyers up to fall in love before they even step inside. First impressions matter—make sure your home wows from the curb!



Tip:

A simple wreath or potted plant at the entrance can make your home feel inviting without over-personalizing.



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FINAL PACKING STEPS

FINAL PACKING STEPS

You may be asking, “Hey, what about the offer and scheduling showings?” That’s a great question. Your realtor will coordinate showings, either on your behalf or with your involvement. One thing to keep in mind: it’s always best to keep your home show-ready. Yes, it can be a pain—after all, we all live in our homes and life happens—but being prepared makes it easier to impress potential buyers and keeps the process moving smoothly.

Moving Day Tips: Stay Organized and Stress-Free

As moving day approaches, the key is to stay organized and plan ahead. Focus on packing the items you’ll need last and making sure everything is ready for a smooth transition. Here’s a step-by-step approach:

- **Start with non-essential items:** Pack things you don’t use daily first, like seasonal décor, books, or extra kitchen gadgets.
- **Move to everyday belongings:** Pack clothes, toiletries, and other essentials closer to moving day, keeping like items together.
- **Label everything clearly:** Write the contents and the destination room on each box. It makes unpacking faster and less stressful.
- **Create a “moving essentials” box:** Keep it with you. Include toiletries, a few changes of clothes, important documents, snacks, phone chargers, and anything you’ll need immediately upon arrival.
- **Protect fragile items:** Wrap breakables in bubble wrap, towels, or blankets. Use sturdy boxes to prevent damage during the move.
- **Keep track of valuables:** Set aside jewelry, electronics, and other small items you don’t want in the moving truck. Keep them with you for peace of mind.

FINAL PACKING STEPS

- **Pack a first-night kit:** Include bedding, towels, basic kitchen supplies, and any items to make your first night in the new home comfortable.
- **Do a final sweep:** Walk through your home one last time to make sure nothing is left behind, all boxes are sealed, and everything is ready for the movers.
- **Stay flexible and patient:** Moving can be unpredictable. Keep a positive mindset, and take it one step at a time.

By taking these steps, you'll make the move more organized, efficient, and far less stressful. A little planning now goes a long way toward enjoying your new home sooner.

💡 Tip:

Keep your moving essentials box separate in your vehicle or with you during the move. This ensures you won't scramble for necessities upon arrival.





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MOVING DAY TIPS:
STAY ORGANIZED AND
STRESS-FREE

MOVING DAY TIPS: STAY ORGANIZED AND STRESS-FREE

As moving day approaches, the key is to stay organized and plan ahead. Focus on packing the items you'll need last and making sure everything is ready for a smooth transition.

Here's a step-by-step approach:

- **Confirm Your Mover:** Touch base with your moving company a few days before the move to confirm the arrival time, route, and any potential delays. From my own experience, review your contract carefully to make sure your belongings are properly insured and that you understand exactly what the coverage includes. Also, double-check how much time you've booked with the movers — going over the scheduled time can lead to extra charges you'll want to avoid.
- **Have a Game Plan:** Designate a main point of contact for the movers to answer questions and direct boxes to the right rooms. Keep hallways and entryways clear, and make sure there's a convenient spot for the truck to park without blocking traffic or driveways.
- **Reminder: Keep Your "Moving Essentials" Box Handy** Don't forget your moving day essentials! Make sure your box with toiletries, chargers, snacks, medications, a change of clothes, pet supplies, important documents, bedding, towels, and basic kitchen items is kept with you — not on the truck. You'll be glad you did when you settle in on your first night.

MOVING DAY TIPS: STAY ORGANIZED AND STRESS-FREE

- **Do a Final Walkthrough:** Before you leave, check every room, closet, and cabinet one last time. Don't forget attics, basements, sheds, and crawl spaces — those are the most common places things get left behind. Take photos of empty rooms if you're renting or need to document condition for the buyer.
- **Prepare for the Unexpected:** Even well-planned moves can hit snags. Have bottled water and some snacks on hand, keep cash available for tips or last-minute purchases, and make sure your phone is fully charged. A little patience and flexibility go a long way.
- **Forward Your Mail:** Before moving day, set up mail forwarding with the U.S. Postal Service. You can do it online or at your local post office — it only takes a few minutes. Once you're settled, update your address with your bank, insurance provider, subscriptions, and anyone else who needs to stay in touch.
- **Handle Utilities Early:** Contact your gas, electric, water, internet, and trash providers at least a week before the move. Schedule shutoff or transfer dates for the day after you move out so you're not left in the dark while loading the truck. Take final meter readings (or photos) before you leave to avoid being charged for someone else's usage.

 **Tip:** If you're moving locally, ask about transferring service instead of closing accounts — it's often faster and can save setup fees.

MOVING DAY TIPS: STAY ORGANIZED AND STRESS-FREE

- **Celebrate the Win:** Once the last box is off the truck, take a deep breath — you made it! Moving is hard work, but it’s also a fresh start. Take a few minutes to enjoy the moment and be proud of everything you’ve accomplished.

By taking these steps, you’ll make the move more organized, efficient, and far less stressful. A little planning now goes a long way toward enjoying your new home sooner.



Tip:

Keep a small binder with all showing details, schedules, and contact information for quick reference.



Tip:

Take photos or videos during your final walkthrough for personal records and peace of mind.



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SECTION

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

Selling your home and moving at the same time can be a challenge, but with the right planning and preparation, it's completely manageable. The key is to stay organized and tackle one step at a time.

Start by decluttering and organizing—this not only helps your home show better but also makes packing easier when the time comes. Go room by room, deciding what to keep, donate, or toss. Fewer items mean less stress and fewer boxes to move later.

Next, stage your home to appeal to buyers. Simple touches like neutral colors, clean surfaces, and bright, open spaces help buyers picture themselves living there. Remember, the goal is to make your home stand out and feel move-in ready.



CONCLUSION

At the same time, stay organized for your upcoming move. Begin packing non-essential items early, label boxes clearly, and keep your most important items easily accessible. Creating a moving checklist can help you stay on track and avoid last-minute surprises.

Your efforts will not only reduce stress but also present your home in its best light to potential buyers. A well-prepared home sells faster and gives you more time to focus on the next chapter—settling into your new one.

💡 Tip:
Follow these steps and create your own timeline. Every small action adds up to a successful, smooth move.



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SECTION

HOME SELLING & MOVING CHECKLIST



HOME SELLING & MOVING CHECKLIST

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO HELP YOUR MOVE GO SMOOTHLY.

SELLING AND MOVING AT THE SAME TIME CAN BE STRESSFUL – BUT IF YOU PLAN AHEAD AND FOLLOW THESE STEPS, YOU'LL STAY IN CONTROL AND READY FOR WHAT'S NEXT.

✓ 1. GET STARTED EARLY

- ☐ CONTACT YOUR REALTOR® TO DISCUSS TIMING AND PRICING STRATEGY
- ☐ SCHEDULE A PRE-LISTING WALK-THROUGH TO IDENTIFY NEEDED UPDATES OR REPAIRS
- ☐ GATHER IMPORTANT INFO: UTILITY BILLS, WARRANTIES, HOA DOCUMENTS, AND RECENT UPGRADES
- ☐ DECIDE ON YOUR IDEAL MOVE-OUT AND CLOSING TIMELINE

✓ 2. DECLUTTER & ORGANIZE

- ☐ START PACKING ITEMS YOU WON'T NEED FOR A MONTH OR TWO
- ☐ SORT EVERYTHING INTO: KEEP, DONATE, SELL, OR DISCARD
- ☐ REMOVE EXTRA FURNITURE TO MAKE ROOMS FEEL LARGER
- ☐ ORGANIZE CLOSETS, CABINETS, AND STORAGE SPACES
- ☐ RENT A SMALL STORAGE UNIT IF NEEDED – LESS CLUTTER MEANS MORE APPEAL

✓ 3. DEEP CLEAN

- ☐ WASH WINDOWS (INSIDE AND OUT)
- ☐ WIPE DOWN BASEBOARDS, FANS, AND LIGHT FIXTURES
- ☐ SHAMPOO CARPETS AND CLEAN HARDWOOD FLOORS
- ☐ NEUTRALIZE ODORS AND KEEP THE HOME SMELLING FRESH
- ☐ CLEAN OUT GARAGE, ATTIC, AND BASEMENT

✓ 4. MAKE SMALL REPAIRS

- ☐ FIX LEAKY FAUCETS, SQUEAKY DOORS, OR LOOSE HARDWARE
- ☐ REPLACE BURNT-OUT BULBS AND USE BRIGHT, WARM LIGHTING
- ☐ TOUCH UP PAINT AND PATCH HOLES IN WALLS
- ☐ REPAIR TORN SCREENS AND WORN WEATHERSTRIPPING

✓ 5. BOOST CURB APPEAL

- ☐ MOW, EDGE, AND TRIM THE YARD – KEEP IT TIDY
- ☐ ADD FRESH MULCH OR POTTED FLOWERS NEAR THE ENTRYWAY
- ☐ POWER WASH SIDING, DECK, AND DRIVEWAY
- ☐ REPAINT OR CLEAN THE FRONT DOOR; ADD A NEW WELCOME MAT
- ☐ CHECK THAT HOUSE NUMBERS AND LIGHTING ARE CLEAN AND VISIBLE

✓ 6. STAGE YOUR HOME

- OPEN BLINDS AND CURTAINS TO LET IN NATURAL LIGHT
- USE NEUTRAL DÉCOR AND REMOVE PERSONAL PHOTOS
- CLEAR COUNTERS AND SURFACES FOR A CLEAN LOOK
- ADD SIMPLE TOUCHES LIKE FRESH TOWELS OR FLOWERS
- MAKE EACH ROOM FEEL OPEN, BRIGHT, AND WELCOMING

✓ 7. PREPARE FOR PHOTOS & SHOWINGS

- SCHEDULE PROFESSIONAL PHOTOS AFTER CLEANING AND STAGING
- KEEP CORDS, PET ITEMS, AND TOILETRIES OUT OF SIGHT
- MAINTAIN A "SHOW-READY" MINDSET – TIDY DAILY
- SET COMFORTABLE LIGHTING AND TEMPERATURE FOR EACH SHOWING

✓ 8. OFFERS

- COORDINATE SHOWING TIMES WITH YOUR REALTOR
- REMOVE PETS OR SECURE THEM DURING SHOWINGS
- REVIEW OFFERS CAREFULLY WITH YOUR REALTOR AND RESPOND PROMPTLY

✓ 9. PLAN FOR MOVING

- START PACKING NON-ESSENTIALS FIRST
- LABEL BOXES CLEARLY WITH CONTENTS AND DESTINATION ROOM
- PROTECT FRAGILE ITEMS WITH TOWELS OR BUBBLE WRAP
- CREATE A "MOVING ESSENTIALS" BOX – INCLUDE:
 - TOILETRIES
 - A FEW CHANGES OF CLOTHES
 - IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS
 - SNACKS AND CHARGERS
- SCHEDULE MOVERS EARLY AND CONFIRM THE DATE
- KEEP VALUABLES AND PAPERWORK WITH YOU

✓ 10. MOVING DAY

- CONFIRM MOVING COMPANY ARRIVAL TIME AND ROUTE
- VERIFY MOVING CONTRACT, INSURANCE, AND BOOKED TIME
- DESIGNATE A MAIN POINT OF CONTACT FOR THE MOVERS
- TAKE PHOTOS OF EMPTY ROOMS IF NEEDED

✓ **11. FINAL PREP BEFORE CLOSING**

- ❑ DO A FINAL DEEP CLEAN ONCE FURNITURE IS OUT
- ❑ REMOVE ALL PERSONAL BELONGINGS AND TRASH
- ❑ LEAVE MANUALS, WARRANTIES, AND SPARE KEYS FOR THE BUYERS
- ❑ CONFIRM UTILITY TRANSFERS OR CANCELLATIONS
- ❑ DOUBLE-CHECK ALL ROOMS, DRAWERS, AND CLOSETS

✓ **12. KEEP PERSPECTIVE**

- ❑ EXPECT SOME UPS AND DOWNS – EVERY TRANSACTION HAS THEM
- ❑ STAY FLEXIBLE AND COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR REALTOR® REGULARLY
- ❑ KEEP ALL IMPORTANT DATES, CONTACTS, AND NOTES IN ONE PLACE
- ❑ REMEMBER: PREPARATION PAYS OFF IN SMOOTHER LOGISTICS AND STRONGER OFFERS

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SECTION

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

For the past four years, I've helped homeowners and buyers throughout Kentucky and Southern Indiana navigate the challenges of moving, buying, and selling their homes. Along the way, I've seen what works — and what doesn't — when it comes to preparing a home, staging, and making a move as smooth as possible.

I've moved several times myself, so I understand how overwhelming it can be to sell a home while planning your next one. Those experiences inspired the Home Selling & Moving Checklist in this book — a practical tool to help you stay organized, avoid common pitfalls, and get the best results.

I've worked with first-time homebuyers, helping them purchase their first home, then sell it and move up the property ladder to their next. I also assist veterans relocating to Kentucky and have helped many of them transition smoothly to new locations elsewhere. Seeing clients succeed — and helping them avoid mistakes — is what drives me every day.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

My approach is simple: clear communication, attention to detail, and hands-on guidance every step of the way. I take pride in turning what can be a stressful process into a positive, organized, and even exciting journey toward your next home.

At the end of the day, real estate is about people, not just properties. It's about helping families start new chapters, giving first-time buyers the keys to their dream, and helping sellers move forward with pride in the home they've built. I look forward to helping you make your move a positive one. Whether you're buying, selling, or just planning your next steps, I'm here to guide you every step of the way.

Todd Kornack