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Home sellers have one goal—to sell their home as quickly as possible near or at the listing price. A home in move-in condition makes meeting this ideal easier.

Many of today's prospective homebuyers have busy lifestyles and are looking for properties that don't require a lot of work. Homeowners should be proactive by making needed repairs before putting their homes on the market.



Inspect both inside and outside the home. Take inventory of practical and aesthetic repairs. You may want to apply a fresh coat of paint on the walls, doors, and shutters. Clean the carpet and buff and polish wooden floors. Tighten and polish hardware. Repair cracks in sidewalks and driveways, and clean any stains on them. Replace missing or warped roofing. Clean or re-grout kitchen and bathrooms. Repair dripping faucets and drains or plumbing fixtures that aren't operating.

Fix sticking doors and replace old locks and doorknobs. Replace burned-out bulbs and broken electrical sockets. Replace cracked windows and torn screens. Repair broken fencing and reseal the deck. Clean up stains on the tiles and countertops.

Some experts also recommend hiring a certified home inspector to thoroughly and impartially evaluate the property. (For a list of inspectors in your area, visit the American Society of Home Inspectors website, [www.ashi.com](http://www.ashi.com), or ask your real estate professional for recommendations.) A standard report will re-

view the condition of the home's heating system, central air conditioning, plumbing and electrical systems, the roof, attic, walls, ceilings, floors, windows and doors, the foundation, basement and visible structure.

If the pre-inspection results in a checklist, have a real estate professional look over the report with you to help you prioritize the list of repairs.

Depending on your goals and budget, you may want to repair only items that could cause significant deterioration to the home, such as a leak. In addition, your local market conditions may dictate how extensive your repairs need to be. Let your budget and your real estate professional guide you.

However, be careful about fixing up too much. Sellers rarely recoup money on major remodeling projects, and you may want to save funds for your new home. Also, obtaining home improvement loans can adversely affect your ability to qualify for your next mortgage. Check out Home Sale Maximizer at [homegain.com](http://homegain.com) to measure how various repairs and improvements can affect the sale price of a home.

A home in good condition demonstrates pride of ownership. Taking the time to make small repairs to your home can go a long way in making sure that your home is presented to potential buyers in its best possible light. They also just might make the sale.

