TOLLIVER PRINCE
REALTY

PREPARE.
PRESENT.
SELL FASTER.

The Perfect Home Prep Guide

FOR SELLERS

A CLEANER HOME. A STRONGER SALE.



What are some quick and easy ways to **prep your home for a sale?**

Remove Clutter & Depersonalize

Buyers want to envision their belongings in your home. Pack up and/or put away photos, extra furniture, and other personal items. Moving everything into one bedroom, the garage or renting a storage facility can help.

Make Sure Every Surface Shines

From ceiling fans to floors and everything in between. Clean your home until it sparkles or hire a professional cleaning crew.

Eliminate Odors

Fill your home with inviting scents like fresh flowers and/or plug in fragrances. The little things make a big impact. If you have pets, hide the litter box and spray air neutralizer throughout your home.

Improve Your Landscaping

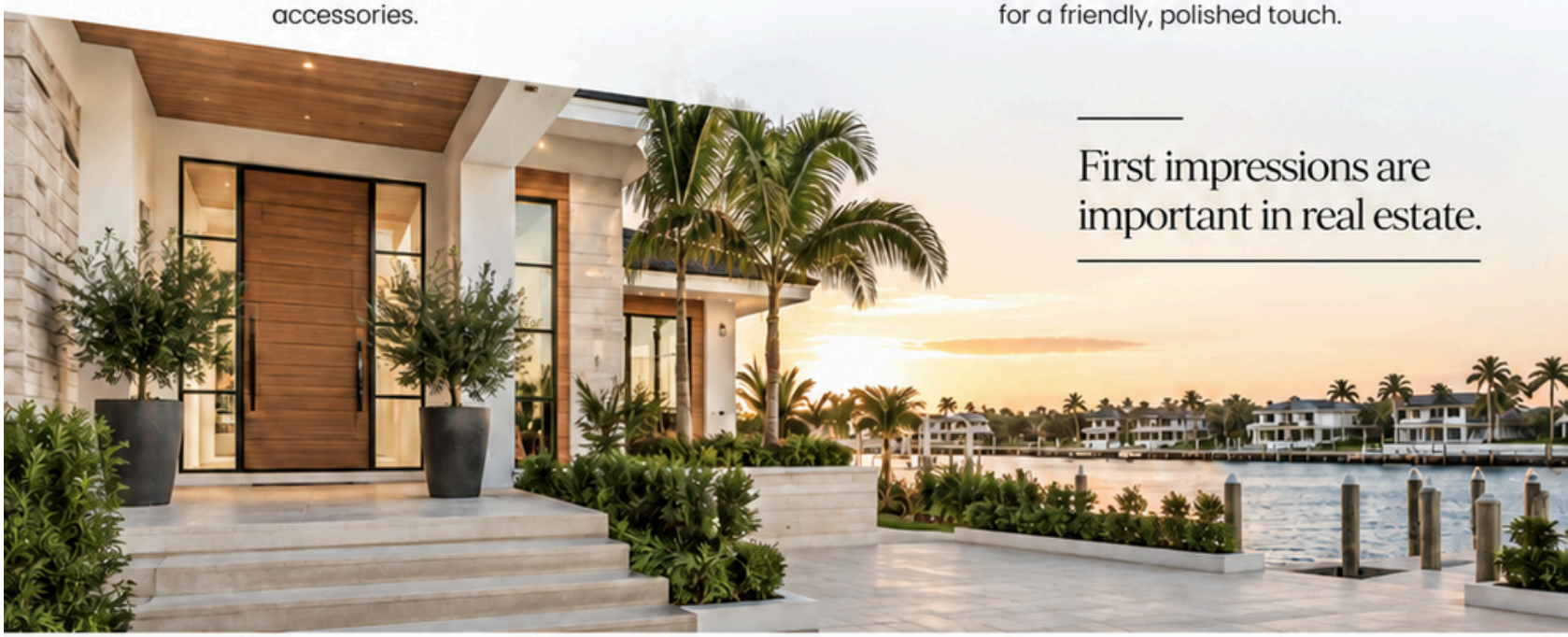
Curb appeal is crucial to a good first impression. Make sure your home's lawn is immaculate. Mow the lawn, prune the bushes, and weed the garden. Consider hiring a gardening crew to maintain the yard through the transaction.

Organize Closets & Cabinets

Messy closets give the appearance that your home doesn't have enough storage space. Organize what is necessary and remove any additional linens and accessories.

Make Your Front Door Inviting

A fresh coat of paint – especially in a color that contrasts with the home – will make the front door stand out. Add a new welcome mat and a simple planter for a friendly, polished touch.



First impressions are important in real estate.

How do I **stage my home?**

Staging is an important part of properly preparing your home for sale. Staging your home is an easy and effective way to attract more buyers, sell your home faster and for more money!

On average, people receive $2 in the increased sale price for every $1 they put into staging a home. Some of this information might be redundant, but we wanted to include it because it is important.

Golden Rules

De-Personalize

Buyers need to picture themselves in the house – not you. That wedding photo may mean the world to you, but to the buyer, it's a distraction that prevents them from seeing a home for their family.

Maximize

Declutter and maximize the space in your home. Closets packed tight with all your clothes make a place look like it lacks closet space. Consider temporarily storing the overflow offsite.

Sanitize

This golden rule is the easiest and cheapest way to stage your home – just clean it. A sink full of dirty dishes is as unappealing to you as it would be to a buyer. It is well worth the elbow grease to clean floors, walls, baseboards, ceiling fans, and windows.

Neutralize

Color can make or break a buyer's interest in your home. You may love that shocking red wall, but all the potential buyer sees is a great deal of painting in their future because red clashes with their style. Painting is an expensive way to change your home's look.

Modernize

Unless your home has exceptional period built-ins, most homes could benefit from some updating. If someone feels the home is dated, they will reflect that feeling with a lower offer. Consider simpler changes, like swapping out gold fixtures for nickel and chrome.



Bedroom Specific **Staging**



Closets

Clear closets of unnecessary clutter and organize to maximize the amount of open storage space you are showing off to potential buyers. Use boxes stacked together to hold and hide the clutter. Using matching hangers to replace free wire hangers from the dry cleaners will modernize your closets with visual impact and a more luxurious feel.



Bedrooms

A quick and inexpensive way to improve the appeal of your bedroom is to use gender-neutral colors when touching up paint jobs and re-accessorizing to have the widest possible appeal. Color coordinate whenever possible. Walls, bedspreads, curtains, etc. should have a clear theme to their colors.

Dining Room

Set the Table! This creates points of visual interest in a room that can easily be boring after the usual de-personalizing and decluttering. Be careful of over staging; you don't need to set out every piece of China.

Create a focal point by adding a vase with fresh flowers to the center of the table and remove any extra leaves from the table to maximize available space.



Bathrooms

If the walls are grimy, spray them using a common spray bottle filled with a mixture of one part bleach and one part water. Follow up with a fresh coat of paint. Clear countertops of everything but the essentials (soap dish, hand towels, etc.) to make the space look more open and larger.





Kitchen

Modernize your dated cabinets. They can be touched up for less than $200 with a new coat of wood stain, or even a good sanding and a coat of paint. Replacing brass or wooden cabinet hardware with brushed silver or stainless steel is also a cost-effective way to update your cabinets.

Living Room

Lightness is a major source of living room appeal for buyers. Make sure the shades are open before buyers come through. If possible, stage the room with light-colored furniture to make the space look larger. In especially large and/or empty living rooms, a strategically placed plant can create a focal point that draws the eye.



How to prepare your house **for a photoshoot**



Outside

- No cars in the driveway.
- No visible garbage cans.
- No visible garden hoses.
- Patio furniture near.
- Pool tools and toys put away.
- The front door closed.
- Nothing that can put a date on your picture (holiday decorations, etc.).
- No political signs.

Inside

- All lights on, including lamps.
- Take up small area rugs that are hiding nice floors.
- All window treatments open, unless you can see the next house too close.
- De-clutter.
- Takedown restraining gates, if possible.
- Nothing that can put a date on your pictures (holiday decorations, etc.).
- Replace dead light bulbs.





Bathroom

- Toilet seats down.
- Shampoo bottles put away (we can see them through the glass doors).
- No robes hanging on hooks.
- De-clutter countertops (no toothbrushes, razors, etc.).
- No bathmats on the floor.

Bonus **Items**



Your First Impression Starts with Curb Appeal

Make your home look appealing from the outside to make people want to come in. Here are some inexpensive ideas to improve curb appeal.

- Mow the lawn, trim trees, and shrubbery.
- Clean any oil stains and rust from the driveway with muriatic acid. (Please read the directions and protect your skin.)
- Rent a high-pressure washer to clean gutters, walls, garage door, siding, and facia.
- If your house needs to be painted, but you can't afford to paint the whole house, paint the front door, and put out a new welcome mat.
- If the weather permits, plant seasonal flowers and accent the landscaping with bagged pebbles or marble chips. Choose a color that complements your home.
- If you don't have landscaping, try strategically placed outdoor planters with flowers.
- Make sure the address house number is clearly visible, either on the house itself or the mailbox.

Animal House



Not everyone loves animals, and some people are allergic to cats or dogs. Unless your property is zoned for horses, it's probably a good idea to send your pets to an animal daycare when you're showing your home.

- Make sure there are no animal smells or hair stuck on the furniture. Scented candles work better than air freshener spray.
- Remove dog or cat food bowls and hide the kitty litter!
- If you do have horses, clean the stable and tack room.

Kid's Room

If there are a lot of kid's toys that must be put away, we understand that you can't put them all away at once. The idea is to put them all in one room before the photographer gets there. A room off to the side somewhere not visible from other rooms. And then we can shoot that room last.

Remember this is our one shot to make an "open house" that hundreds of people are going to see and look at every day. Let's make yours the best looking on the internet!





Kitchen

- ✓ Minimize the number of small appliances on the countertops.
- ✓ No dish drying rack on the countertop.
- ✓ No dish towels hanging on handles.
- ✓ No garbage cans.
- ✓ No dish soaps or sponges on the sink.
- ✓ No clutter on top of the refrigerator.
- ✓ No clutter on the refrigerator (magnets pictures, etc.)
- ✓ No pet dishes.

How to show **your house**

What is real estate showing?

A real estate showing is the opportunity for potential buyers and agents to view your property. It is not only important for potential buyers to attend the showings but also for agents as agents often have multiple clients who are looking for a new home. Additionally, offering showings is a good indicator of how well received your property is in the market. For example, if you are getting a lot of showings that means your property is likely in high demand.

Open House

An open house is a public event where you as a seller provide a day or multiple days where any buyers or agents can view the property. This is a fantastic opportunity to increase your exposure and generate buzz around your listing. If you plan to host an open house, please let your sales representative know ahead of time. We can help create marketing buzz as well as let all local agents know you will be hosting an open house. Additionally, we may have local agents in your location who may be willing to host the open house for you.



Lock Box House Showing

A lock box house showing is when you attach a lock box with a key to your property and provide the access code to agents. Lock boxes are often attached to the front door handle and can be Bluetooth access or have a physical code. The use of lock boxes for home showings has become one of the most popular methods. This is the primary method of showing with Home Advocates. We handle all appointment scheduling via our Showing Time app. We do not allow buyers to view the property via lock box without having an agent present. All agents are vetted by us and approved by you before receiving the access code. For further information, we have added the link to the lockbox we use which provides single-use codes.



Tips for Open House **Showings**



Print Marketing Material

Marketing material is extremely important when conducting an open house. This is because the potential buyers and agents often attend multiple open houses and can easily forget which house was yours. If you are planning on conducting an open house, we will provide you with a digital flier for you to print out. Please make sure to review the flier and provide any feedback so we can make sure all information is updated and accurate.



Get Contact Information

Getting contact information is vital to a successful open house. When you decided to conduct an open house buyers and agents will come and go very quickly. So, if you do not have any contact information you or your seller representative will not be able to follow up. Many sellers and agents include a sign-in sheet at the entrance of the open house. Questions to have on a sign-up sheet are:

- Name
- Email
- Phone
- Agent (Y/N)



Ask Questions

Asking questions and listening to feedback is often the most forgotten practice. Those who show up to your open house are your potential customers and could even be the buyer. What they say and think about your property is important. Find out what they love most and what they are hesitant about.
During the next open house, you can make changes. More importantly if you end up in a negotiation you know what details you can leverage. However, it is also important to note that many buyers will exaggerate how they feel so try to find common opinions and focus on those.

Tips for Lock Box **Showings**

Leave when your house is being Shown

Homeowners often have strong connections to their home and can feel like an overbearing salesperson when showing their house. As homeowners move through the home, they talk about small details and paint a picture of how they see it. However, buyers have a different view of the house and when being sold a different idea can turn them off. If you must stay, then we recommend greeting them warmly and then giving them space. Provide answers only when asked and be sure to avoid discussions about price. If the price is brought up encourage them to submit an offer for review. Again, try to leave if possible. We have learned that not only is it better, but buyers prefer to look at homes when they can move around freely.

Make your house as available as Possible

As we mentioned at the top, it is extremely rare for a buyer who has not seen a property to put in an offer. If you do not make the property available for showing during their schedule, then they will likely move on. Very often buyers try to schedule their showings in groups of three or four homes. So, if you miss the day, they may or may not reschedule with you. While it may be inconvenient to show your home at dinnertime or on weekends, buyers who cannot see a property when they are eager may cross it off their list.



Listen to Feedback

Just like with open houses, understanding buyer and agent sentiments are too often forgotten. After every lockbox showing, your seller representative will send multiple feedback requests to the buyer agent. The feedback will include questions asking for insights into the price and their impression, as well as questions and concerns about the showing and the listing. If your representative gets a response, they will pass the feedback onto you to discuss and create action items.

About **Steve Prince**

Imagine having the knowledge of a real estate professional, a former appraiser, and an experienced mortgage lender working for you, all in one person. Wouldn't you want that advantage when selling your home? Meet Steve Prince.

Steve brings a powerful combination of experience to real estate: mortgage lending, property appraisal, appraisal management, and brokerage ownership. That background gives him a comprehensive understanding of what makes a transaction work, where it can unravel, and how to anticipate problems before they put his client's goals at risk.

As Co-Founder and Managing Partner of Tolliver Prince Realty, established in 2013, Steve helps buyers and sellers throughout Palm Beach County navigate some of their most important financial decisions. Raised in Wellington, he combines deep local roots with a career built around understanding property values, financing, and the details that determine whether an attractive offer becomes a successful closing.



Local Expertise

Deep roots in Palm Beach County and a strong understanding of local market values.

Well-Rounded Experience

Brings together mortgage lending, appraisal experience, and real estate brokerage ownership for a unique perspective.

Client-Focused

Direct, personal, and thorough approach with a focus on your goals every step of the way.

When you choose Steve Prince, you gain an advocate who understands your transaction from multiple perspectives and brings that experience to every decision, from the initial strategy through the closing table.