

What Not to Fix When Selling a House in Orangeville

Pre-Sale Repair Checklist — Save Money, Sell Faster, Net More

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The \$500 Rule: If a repair costs more than \$500 and won't return at least \$1,500 in perceived sale price value — **skip it.**

SKIP These Repairs (Poor ROI)

These common pre-sale repairs lose money. The cost exceeds what buyers will pay back.

- Major Kitchen Renovation** | Cost: \$25,000–\$50,000 | Loss: \$10,000–\$20,000
Buyers want to choose their own style. Deep clean, paint cabinets, update hardware for under \$500 instead.
- Full Bathroom Remodel** | Cost: \$15,000–\$30,000 | Loss: \$7,000–\$15,000
Re-caulk, replace toilet seat, update mirror and light. Under \$300 total.
- Roof Replacement (If Functional)** | Cost: \$8,000–\$15,000 | Loss: \$5,000–\$12,000
Disclose age and offer \$2,000–\$3,000 credit. Buyer controls timing and contractor.
- HVAC Replacement** | Cost: \$5,000–\$12,000 | Loss: \$3,000–\$8,000
Service it, change filters, clean ducts. Provide service record to buyers.
- Swimming Pool Repairs** | Cost: \$3,000–\$15,000+ | Loss: \$3,000–\$15,000+
Clean and balance only. Pools polarize buyers — many see them as liabilities.
- Finished Basement Overhaul** | Cost: \$10,000–\$40,000 | Loss: \$5,000–\$25,000
Ensure it's dry, clean, and organized. Paint concrete floor with epoxy if needed.
- Window Replacement** | Cost: \$8,000–\$20,000 | Loss: \$5,000–\$14,000
Clean tracks, lubricate hinges, replace screens, touch up caulking. Under \$100.
- Driveway Resurfacing** | Cost: \$3,000–\$8,000 | Loss: \$2,000–\$6,000
Seal cracks, power wash oil stains, edge the grass line. \$100–\$200.
- Landscaping Overhaul** | Cost: \$5,000–\$15,000 | Loss: \$3,000–\$11,000
Mow, edge, trim, weed, mulch, add annuals in pots. \$200–\$400.
- Hardwood Floor Refinishing** | Cost: \$3,000–\$6,000 | Loss: \$1,500–\$3,000
Deep clean, buff minor scratches, use area rugs for showings. Under \$100.
- Wall-to-Wall Carpet Replacement** | Cost: \$2,000–\$6,000 | Loss: \$1,500–\$4,500
Professional clean and spot-treat. If beyond saving, remove and expose subfloor.
- Garage Door Replacement** | Cost: \$1,000–\$3,000 | Loss: \$500–\$2,000
Service opener, lubricate tracks, power wash, touch up paint. Under \$100.

DO These Repairs (High ROI)

Small investments that dramatically improve buyer perception and sale price.

- Interior Paint (Whole Home)** | Cost: \$500–\$1,500 | Return: \$3,000–\$5,000
Use neutral tones: greige, soft white, warm gray. Biggest bang-for-buck improvement.
- Deep Clean + Declutter** | Cost: \$300–\$600 | Return: \$2,000–\$4,000
Professional clean every surface. Remove 50% of personal items and furniture.
- Minor Repairs** | Cost: \$200–\$500 | Return: \$1,500–\$3,000

Fix leaks, patch cracks, replace burned-out bulbs, tighten loose hardware.

Curb Appeal Touch-Up | Cost: \$200-\$400 | Return: \$1,500-\$3,000
Mow, edge, mulch, trim hedges, clean gutters, wash front door.

Lighting Improvements | Cost: \$100-\$300 | Return: \$1,000-\$2,500
Upgrade to bright LED bulbs, replace dated fixtures, ensure every room is well-lit.

Professional Photography | Cost: \$300-\$500 | Return: \$2,000-\$5,000
Homes are shortlisted or rejected online first. Strong photos drive showings.

Quick Reference: Repair ROI at a Glance

Repair	Cost	Expected Return	Net Result	Verdict
Interior paint	\$500-\$1,500	\$3,000-\$5,000	+\$2,500-\$3,500	DO IT
Deep clean + declutter	\$300-\$600	\$2,000-\$4,000	+\$1,500-\$3,400	DO IT
Minor repairs	\$200-\$500	\$1,500-\$3,000	+\$1,000-\$2,500	DO IT
Kitchen renovation	\$25,000-\$50,000	\$15,000-\$30,000	-\$10,000-\$20,000	SKIP
Bathroom renovation	\$15,000-\$30,000	\$8,000-\$15,000	-\$7,000-\$15,000	SKIP
Roof replacement (functional)	\$8,000-\$15,000	\$3,000-\$5,000	-\$5,000-\$12,000	SKIP
Window replacement	\$8,000-\$20,000	\$3,000-\$6,000	-\$5,000-\$14,000	SKIP
Landscaping overhaul	\$5,000-\$15,000	\$2,000-\$4,000	-\$3,000-\$11,000	SKIP

Ontario Disclosure Requirements

Skip the repair, not the disclosure. Ontario law requires honest disclosure of latent defects — issues not visible during ordinary inspection that make the property dangerous or unfit. This includes foundation problems, active leaks, mould, and electrical hazards. Aging but functional systems do NOT require replacement. Price for the condition. Disclose what you know.

When "As-Is" Makes Sense

Estate Sales

Out-of-province sellers who can't supervise repairs. Price for condition, target investors.

Investor Targeting

Investors want fixer-uppers. They control scope, choose contractors, build equity.

Timeline Pressure

Job relocation, divorce, financial pressure. Every week of delay costs carrying expenses.

Big-Ticket Issues

Foundation repair (\$20,000+), structural work, environmental remediation. Cost exceeds value increase.

Room-by-Room Walkthrough Checklist

Exterior / Curb Appeal

Mow and edge lawn

- Trim hedges and shrubs
- Weed garden beds, add fresh mulch
- Power wash driveway and walkways
- Clean gutters and downspouts
- Wash front door, update hardware if tarnished
- Replace burned-out exterior bulbs
- Add potted annuals by front door

Entry & Living Spaces

- Declutter surfaces (remove 50% of decor)
- Deep clean floors, baseboards, windowsills
- Touch up paint scuffs and marks
- Maximize natural light — clean windows, open blinds
- Arrange furniture for flow and space perception
- Eliminate odors (pets, cooking, smoke)

Kitchen

- Deep clean everything — cabinets, appliances, grout
- Organize cabinets (buyers open them)
- Clear countertops completely
- Update cabinet hardware if dated (\$50-\$100)
- Polish fixtures, replace if tarnished
- Add fresh caulk around sink

Bathrooms

- Re-caulk tub and sink
- Deep clean grout and tiles
- Replace toilet seat if stained or worn
- Update mirror and light fixture if dated (\$100-\$200)
- Fix dripping faucets and running toilets
- Ensure exhaust fan works

Bedrooms & Closets

- Reduce closet contents by 50%
- Neutral bedding, minimal personal items
- Ensure all light fixtures work
- Touch up paint, especially near light switches

Basement & Utility

- Run dehumidifier, ensure dry environment
- Organize storage, eliminate clutter
- Change furnace filter
- Ensure water heater and furnace are operational
- Label electrical panel clearly
- Disclose any known issues in writing

Remember: The goal is not perfection. The goal is maximizing buyer response and net proceeds. A \$1,500 investment in paint, cleaning, and minor repairs consistently outperforms a \$30,000 renovation in both sale price and speed.

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