

SOLD BY SILVANA

Preparing Your Home

SELLER RESOURCE GUIDE

A room-by-room guide to getting your Calgary home market-ready on the inside — so it photographs beautifully and impresses every buyer who walks through the door.

Decluttering and Depersonalizing

This is the most impactful step you can take, and it costs nothing but time. Buyers need to envision themselves living in your home, and that is nearly impossible when they are surrounded by someone else's personal belongings.

What to Remove

- Family photos, children's artwork on the fridge, personal collections
- Excess furniture — if a room feels crowded, remove pieces until it breathes
- Countertop appliances (toasters, coffee makers, knife blocks) — clear kitchen surfaces sell
- Bathroom toiletries — replace with a few coordinated items (new soap dispenser, folded white towels)
- Closet overflow — pack away at least one-third of your clothing so closets appear spacious
- Garage and storage room clutter — buyers will look in these spaces and judge capacity

The rule of thirds: Pack away one-third of your belongings before listing. This applies to closets, bookshelves, kitchen cabinets, and storage areas. It makes every space feel larger and signals to buyers that the home has ample storage.

Where to Put It All

Rent a temporary storage unit or use a portable storage container in your driveway (check Calgary bylaws — most communities allow them for a limited time). Do not simply shift clutter to the basement or garage. Buyers will open every door.

Walls, Ceilings, and Paint

Fresh paint is the single best investment you can make when preparing to sell. It makes rooms feel clean, bright, and move-in ready.

- **Colour choice:** Stick to warm neutral tones — soft whites (Benjamin Moore's "Simply White" or "White Dove"), light warm greys, or gentle greiges. Bold accent walls and dark feature colours should be painted over.
- **Ceilings:** Look up. Discoloured, cracked, or yellowed ceilings make a room feel neglected. A fresh coat of flat white ceiling paint brightens the entire space.
- **Touch-ups:** At minimum, address scuff marks, nail holes, and worn areas around door frames and light switches.
- **Trim and baseboards:** Bright white semi-gloss trim against neutral walls creates a crisp, polished look. Clean or repaint any yellowed or chipped woodwork.

Flooring

Flooring is one of the first things buyers notice and one of the factors that most influences their perception of a home's condition and value.

- **Hardwood:** If you have hardwood under carpet, consider exposing it. Clean and refinish if needed — this is consistently one of the highest-ROI improvements for Calgary homes.
- **Carpet:** Have all carpets professionally cleaned. If carpet is heavily stained, worn, or dated, replacement with a neutral broadloom or luxury vinyl plank is worth considering.
- **Tile:** Clean and re-grout bathroom and kitchen tile. Stained or mouldy grout is an immediate turnoff for buyers.
- **Consistency:** A patchwork of different flooring types throughout the home can feel disjointed. Where possible, create continuity — especially on the main level.

Kitchen Updates

The kitchen is the most scrutinized room in the house. You do not need a full renovation to make it shine, but it needs to feel clean, functional, and current.

- **Cabinet hardware:** Replacing dated knobs and pulls with modern brushed nickel or matte black handles transforms the look of existing cabinets for under \$200.
- **Countertops:** Clean thoroughly and remove all items except one or two decorative pieces. If countertops are severely damaged, laminate replacement is affordable and effective.
- **Appliances:** Ensure all appliances are clean and in working order. Mismatched appliances are a turn-off; if replacing, stainless steel remains the preferred finish.
- **Backsplash:** A clean, simple backsplash (even peel-and-stick tile) can modernize a dated kitchen quickly.
- **Sink and faucet:** A new faucet is inexpensive and immediately noticeable. Ensure the sink is spotless and the drain is clear.

Bathroom Refresh

Bathrooms are the second most important rooms for buyers. They should feel spa-like — clean, bright, and fresh.

- Re-caulk the tub, shower, and sink — old caulking is one of the most common eyesores
- Replace the toilet seat if it is stained or worn
- Update the vanity mirror and light fixture if they are dated
- Install a new shower curtain or clean the glass enclosure until it sparkles
- Display fresh white towels, a new soap dispenser, and a small plant
- Ensure the exhaust fan works — moisture and mildew are red flags

Lighting and Windows

Bright homes sell faster. Calgary's abundant sunshine is an asset — let it in.

- Open all blinds and curtains for showings
- Clean windows inside and out (both glass and frames)
- Replace any burned-out bulbs — use consistent colour temperature (warm white, 2700K–3000K)
- Swap outdated fixtures for modern options — flush mounts, pendant lights, and vanity bars are affordable upgrades
- Add lamps to dark corners, especially in basements and north-facing rooms
- Consider the Calgary advantage: south-facing rooms with large windows are a major selling point — stage them to highlight the natural light

Calgary basement tip: Many Calgary homes have developed basements that can feel dark and closed-in. Maximize lighting with multiple light sources (overhead, floor lamps, table lamps), use light-coloured paint, and ensure window wells are clean and unobstructed. A bright basement adds significant perceived square footage.

Odour Elimination

You may not notice the smells in your own home, but buyers will. Odour is one of the fastest ways to lose a potential offer.

- **Pet odours:** Deep-clean carpets and upholstery. Wash pet bedding. Consider enzymatic cleaners for any areas with accidents.
- **Cooking odours:** Avoid cooking strong-smelling foods before showings. Clean the range hood filter. Wipe down kitchen surfaces.
- **Smoke:** If anyone has smoked in the home, this requires aggressive treatment — washing walls, replacing filters, cleaning ductwork, and potentially sealing surfaces with a primer before repainting.
- **Musty basement:** Run a dehumidifier, clean any visible mould, and ensure the sump pump is functioning. Address the source, not just the symptom.
- **General freshness:** Open windows when weather permits. Avoid plug-in air fresheners or scented candles — many buyers are sensitive to synthetic fragrances. Clean is the best scent.

Calgary-Specific Preparation Tips

- **Furnace and hot water tank:** Have them serviced and keep the inspection sticker visible. Calgary buyers know these are significant expenses and feel reassured by recent maintenance.
- **Humidifiers:** Calgary's dry climate means many homes have whole-house humidifiers. Clean and service them — and clean any mineral buildup on surrounding surfaces.
- **Window condensation:** In winter, condensation or frost between window panes signals failed seals. Address this before listing, as it will come up in every inspection.
- **Garage heating:** If you have a heated garage, ensure the heater works. This is a valued feature in Alberta.
- **Sump pump:** Test it. Buyers in many Calgary communities (especially those in flood-prone areas near the Bow and Elbow rivers) will ask about it specifically.

The goal: When a buyer walks through your front door, they should feel like they are entering a home that has been cared for, is move-in ready, and could be theirs tomorrow.