

# THE AGENCY



Think Preparation.  
Think Profit.

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A guide to preparing your home for sale

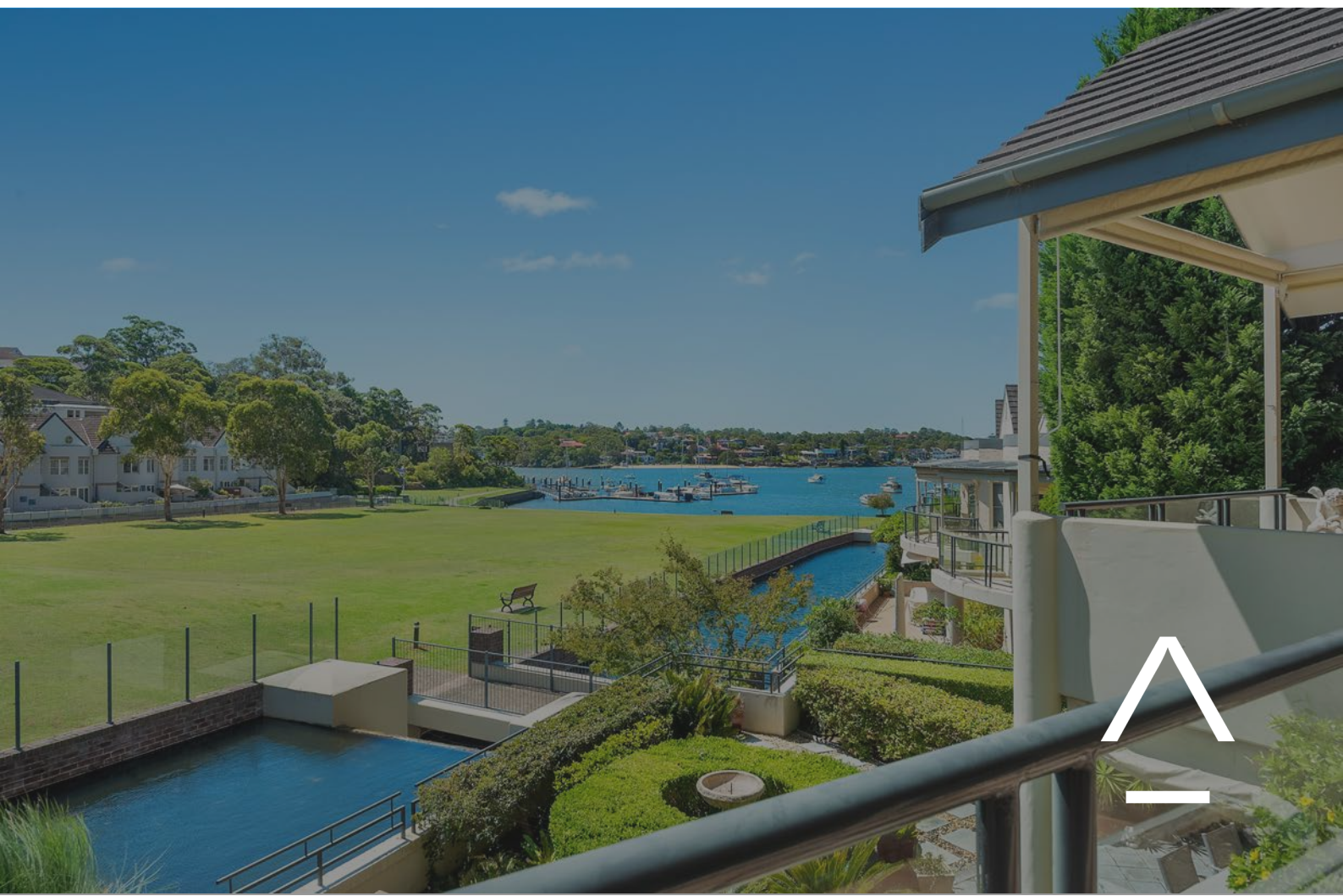
[theagency.com.au](https://theagency.com.au)

**The best price comes from the best preparation.**

**As your real estate partner, we want to help maximise your price and make the sale of your property an enjoyable and rewarding experience.**

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This booklet presents proven recommendations for maintaining and preparing your home for sale.



# The Stakes.

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## **Your home is your greatest asset.**

It is often said that your principal place of residence is your biggest asset in life (after your family of course). As a passionate industry professional, I'm fortunate to have represented many wonderful people in the local community and find this to be the case for the majority of my clients.

So, how do we ensure we maximise your asset? As a property owner, you need to do all you can to maintain your property throughout its lifetime. Protecting and safeguarding your asset will help you achieve the best possible cash profit from your investment at the time of sale.

## **Your home could deliver you a tax-free windfall**

Unlike other financial investments, your principal place of residence is free from capital gains tax and stamp duty so selling your home is a valuable opportunity for wealth and profit.

## **Selling is a one-off opportunity for cash**

Typically, every dollar your home sells over the perceived market value is worth two dollars of your hard earned labour.

For example, securing a price \$10,000 over reserve saves you having to earn \$20,000 pre-tax to have that \$10,000 in your hand.

Secure the dollars you deserve for the property you own. You only get one chance to sell for profit and then the value is passed on to the next owner...make the most of it while you can!

## **Clean and sparkling homes sell well**

People will pay more for a property that is well-finished, neat and well maintained. Offer the potential buyer a clean, crisp and complete property by ensuring it's freshly painted, has manicured lawns, clean gutters, in-tact downpipes and spotless eaves.

By taking the perceived hard work out of the equation, you could earn tens to hundreds of thousands of dollars over reserve!

## **A home that doesn't require work is an attractive prospect**

Maintaining and preparing your home for profit is a successful strategy for everyone involved. Often incoming purchasers are stretched to their limit and would not qualify for a renovation loan. This is the reason why people will pay more for a finished, neat and well-maintained property.

A bank will loan on a property's actual current value. A bank does not favour lending on unfinished or damaged properties. However, if the property has a clean bill of health – the new purchaser is effectively getting a renovation loan on a product with no risk. It's a win, win.





## Planning for profit.

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Keep your eye on the prize. Create the best possible home to attract the best possible buyer for the best possible price.

When preparing their home for sale, some people redraw on the current loan to complete repairs quickly. Other people take a longer-term approach. We suggest making a list and spending the months ahead of time of a possible sale, project managing the repairs with a slow and steady budget approach.

A photograph showing a person's legs and feet in brown pants and boots, walking on a green lawn. They are holding a long metal detector pole. The detector is positioned on the grass, and the person appears to be searching for something. The background is a blurred green lawn.

Think Preparation.



# Think Preparation.

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## 1 Buy a hard cover notebook and allow two pages per area and start making a to-do list of repairs

- |                       |             |                     |
|-----------------------|-------------|---------------------|
| - Front entry         | - Laundry   | - Gutters           |
| - Driveways & gardens | - Decks     | - Downpipes         |
| - Bedrooms            | - Pergolas  | - Roof              |
| - Lounge              | - Verandahs | - Lighting          |
| - Kitchen             | - Garages   | - Electrical points |
| - Bathrooms           | - Pool      | - Paintwork         |

## 2 Think like a purchaser

The golden rule of thumb is – if something needs to be repaired – fix it! Walk through and be picky – try and see what a potential purchaser will see – not what you have overlooked for years. Make a list of repairs and improvements that need to be made.

Buyers will mentally add up their perceived costs of repairing all those minor flaws and end up with an amount that is generally much higher than your actual costs will be. You may believe the repairs are insignificant, however the buyer may question the maintenance and upkeep of the rest of the property. Necessary, noncritical minor repairs and perceived owner neglect will either lower the price or lengthen the time to sell.

Look at the colour palette that you have used in your home. If you have used striking, bold colours, it might be time to neutralise them. Your objective is to make your home appeal to the largest possible segment of the market. Ask yourself, “How many prospective buyers would feel able to move into my home with their own furniture and not want to replace the carpet or repaint the walls?” Position your property on the market to be as liveable as possible to as many people as possible.

The market is always driven by buyer demand and the average buyer will have difficulty looking beyond bright carpeting, bold wallpapers and/or paintwork.





## Think Repairs.

### 3 **Take photos of the repairs and stick them in your book**

Your repair and maintenance book will become your profit bible. Take the book with you to your home improvement store (e.g. Bunning's) to save time, money and energy.

### 4 **Dedicate four pages to your trades' service directory**

At the back of your notebook, list the contact numbers and details for all the plumbers, plasterers, painters and associated trades you will need.

### 5 **Walk through again**

Once you have done the walk through, walk through again and see what you may have missed.

### 6 **Create a to-do list**

Look at your book and see what needs to be done and create your to-do list. This will become your go to guide for maximising profit.

### 7 **Invite all the trades needed to quote on the repairs**

Including the materials cost, it's worth getting everything priced to give you a factual guide to the investment.

### 8 **Repair or outsource**

Make a decision on what repairs you can do and what jobs will be outsourced.







## 9 **Research**

Before starting, get on the web and research the latest products that can save you time & money (profit). For example there is great tile paint for old tiles - amazing products are now available.

## 10 **Look at DIY**

Visit Bunning's and investigate what 'do it yourself' products are available to you. You will be amazed by the ready to install options now available.

## 11 **Do one room at a time**

Start your list by committing to the discipline of doing one room at a time. This avoids turning the house into an unlivable war zone.

## 12 **Declutter, declutter, declutter**

As you are working through your rooms, it is imperative you also sort through your 'stuff'. Decluttering a home can also be a life cleansing process. Box up the valuables and hire a skip for the end of the road items. Be ruthless, space is everything, a home shines when it can actually breathe.

## 13 **Complete general maintenance**

Stay on top of your regular home maintenance tasks to avoid costly repairs in the future. Spending time now saves you hassles later. Ensure that minor repairs don't turn into major expenses.



# General Maintenance.

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## Inside

- Check smoke detectors
- Clean and disinfect the dishwasher
- Vacuum under the fridge and empty the waste container
- Dust the tops of cupboards
- Vacuum under furniture
- Check doors and windows for cracked seals and peeling paint – repair as needed
- Inspect walls and ceiling for cracks, leaks, mildew or water stains – repair as needed
- Check sinks, taps and tiles – reseal where needed
- Clean curtains and blinds and wash all windows
- Clean light fittings and skylights, use ‘warm-white’ bulbs for a bright appearance
- Clean debris from ceiling fan blades and air conditioner filters
- Clean kitchen exhaust and filter
- Clean door and window tracks, especially for built-in wardrobes
- Repair loose knobs, latches or handles on doors
- Ensure wardrobes are neat and tidy – hang an air freshener and ensure lights are working
- Remove any items from the floor area – this will make a wardrobe seem more spacious
- Consider using battery lights to illuminate wardrobes to make them appear bigger





# General Maintenance.

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## Outside

- The front of your home should be beyond reproach. It's one of the first things a buyer sees.
- Sweep and wash driveways and walkways to remove debris, dirt and stains
- Repair and patch cracks on driveways and paths
- Check your fence for loose or broken posts and replace rotted wood
- Check gutters for leaks or damage and remove debris
- Lawn care: Mow high and often, fertilise, weed and aerate the lawn in high traffic areas.
- Trim plants, pull out weeds or spray with weed killer
- Clean irrigation systems (twice yearly) to ensure filters aren't blocked
- Mulch garden beds to hinder weed growth and prevent soil drying out too quickly
- Inspect exterior paint – touch up as needed
- Clean and reseal decks and concrete areas to prevent cracking and deterioration
- Cut back overhanging trees
- Inspect walls and ceilings for cracks, leaks, mildew or water stains
- Inspect roof for damage





## Building and Pest Reports.

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### **Make a pre-emptive strike and pay for a building and pest inspection.**

As part of due-diligence, most keen buyers will get a building and pest inspection before purchasing the property. However, it can be advantageous for sellers to have their home inspected for structural and termite damage, prior to going on the market.

### **Why?**

The reports give you control over the selling and negotiation process. If no issues are found, you'll have peace of mind knowing the purchaser won't be able to use any problems as a means to negotiate the price down. If issues are found, you can take action to resolve them before listing the property for sale.

### **Forewarned is forearmed.**

Don't rely on what you can see – there could be hidden problems lurking in the foundations, roof, plumbing or walls that only a professional can identify. If there are issues to address, it's better to know before you put your property on the market.





# Building and Pest Reports.

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## A building and pest inspection report empowers you.

Whilst many buyers will still insist on having their own pre-purchase building and pest inspections carried out, showing them the reports you have had prepared shows them you have nothing to hide. Building and pest inspections are rarely deal breakers, however the reports can contain vital information that may be used in a negotiation. By being prepared you could save your sale and protect your profit.

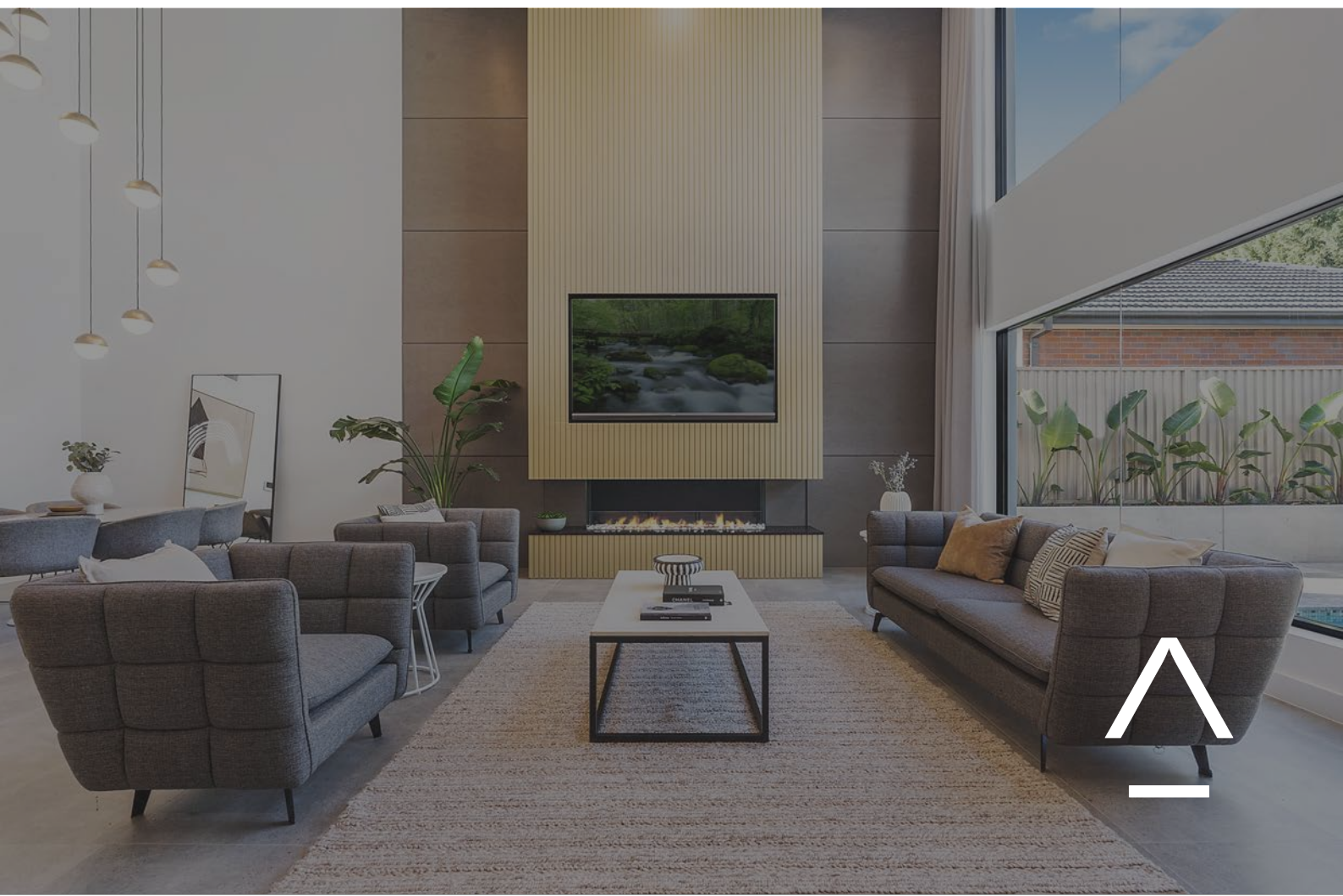
## Brace yourself

Please note that a building and pest inspection report, and the photos within, are a complete list of the defects of the home. Many people are shocked with the report and misinterpret what has been noted. Remember, the report has been written by someone who only sees bricks and mortar, whereas you see the home you love. Take it at face value rather than becoming defensive about it.

## For example – the report may say:

**“The home is 24 years old and... is in need of new roof tiles.”**

Roof tiles last approximately 25 years and need replacing on every home of that age. The point to remember here is that all homes at one time or another require maintenance, and that this is known as a capital improvement on the property. You would have to make a decision if you think that it is necessary to re-roof for sale, however generally it would be something that would be regarded as normal for a property of that age.





# Example report.

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## Example of a report on a home that was in good condition:

<b>Building Style</b>	Two-storey dwelling
<b>External Walls</b>	Brick veneer, timber frame with texture-coated fibre cement sheets
<b>Roof Construction</b>	The roof is of pitched and skillion construction
<b>Internal Walls</b>	Plaster render
<b>Windows</b>	Aluminium
<b>Footings</b>	The building is constructed on concrete slab footings
<b>Estimated Age</b>	Between 40 and 50 years old

### Roof System External

#### Gutters & Downpipes

Details appear to be in serviceable condition. Some downpipes appear to be missing. These should be installed. Leaves and debris are present in gutters. These should be cleared. Box gutters need to be monitored, water is ponding and realignment may be required.

### Walls

#### Internal Walls Condition

The condition of the walls is generally fair. Defective or poor surfaces were noted to wall materials and will need repair prior to next painting. Moderate moisture readings were detected throughout internal surfaces, a higher than normal moisture reading was detected above skirting level - further investigation and repairs are required.

### Interior

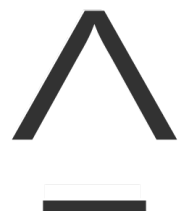
#### Ceilings

The condition of the ceilings is generally fair. Defective surfaces were noted and maintenance will be required. Moderate settlement cracks were noted. Some repairs or maintenance will be required. Repairs are required to ceiling linings. Paint deterioration was noticed. Previous repairs have been made. Silicon has been installed where cornice cracking occurred. Lights need to be fitted to the ceiling - we recommend getting a licensed electrician to fix some light fittings.

### Decks, Pergolas, Balconies, Verandas, Awnings

#### Balcony

The condition of the ceilings is generally fair. Defective surfaces were noted and maintenance will be required. Moderate settlement cracks were noted. Some repairs or maintenance will be required. Repairs are required to ceiling linings. Paint deterioration was noticed. Previous repairs have been made. Silicon has been installed where cornice cracking occurred. Lights need to be fitted to the ceiling - we recommend getting a licensed electrician to fix some light fittings.



## Services

### Details

Hot water system overflow needs to be diverted away from house. Smoke detectors are fitted however; the positioning, operation or adequacy was not tested and is not commented on. Air-conditioning is installed in the premises (to the study) but has not been inspected.

## Roof System External

### Roof Style & Condition

The overall condition of the roof coverings is fair. Chipped/cracked tiles were noticed and repairs are required.

## Bathrooms

### Ensuite Bathroom

**Basin & Taps** - The basin & taps appear serviceable. Drainage appears slower than normal. A licensed plumber should investigate this.

### Ensuite Bathroom 2

**Basin & Taps** - The basin & taps appear serviceable. Drainage appears slower than normal. A licensed plumber should investigate this.

## Exterior

### Windows

The condition of the exterior of the windows is generally fair. Storm moulds are not present and need to be fitted to ensure water does not penetrate through this area.

## Interior

### Windows

The condition of the windows is generally fair. Adjustment is required to some windows to ensure smooth operation. Some windows were locked and the operation was not checked at the time of inspection.

### Doors

The condition of the doors is generally fair. The sliding doors bind and need adjustment and/or repair. Paint deterioration and wear and tear was noticed. Covers for door hardware are missing to some doors. We recommend installing a fixed handrail for safety reasons.

### Floors

The condition of the floors is generally fair. Squeaking flooring was noted. This will require refixing preventing movement. Previous repairs have been made; repairs/maintenance is required, as floors are not finished in some areas.

## Site

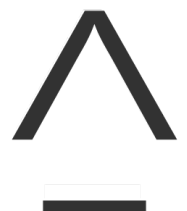
### Fences & Gates

The fences are mainly constructed from timber, also timber and texture coated cement seeping. The fences are generally in fair condition but some repairs or maintenance is required.

## Swimming Pool

### Pool Fencing

We recommend installing a fixed handrail for safety reasons.



### Major Defects in this Building

The incidence of major defects in this building in comparison to the average condition of similar buildings of approximately the same age and construction and that have been reasonably maintained is considered to be TYPICAL. The frequency and/or magnitude of major defects are consistent with the inspector's expectations when compared to similar buildings of approximately the same age, construction that have been reasonably well maintained.

### Minor Defects in this Building

The incidence of minor defects in this building in comparison to the average condition of similar buildings of approximately the same age and construction and that have been reasonably maintained is considered to be TYPICAL. The frequency and/or magnitude of minor defects are consistent with the inspectors expectations when compared to similar buildings of approximately the same age, construction that have been reasonably well maintained.

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### Overall Condition

A comparison of this and other dwellings of similar age, construction and level of maintenance would rate this building as AVERAGE. There may be areas/elements requiring minor repairs or maintenance.

### Important Note

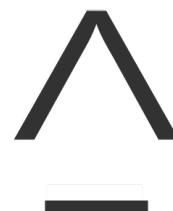
The building rating noted above is only a generalisation taking into account numerous factors and should be read in conjunction with the notable items and main report.

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This sample report is a good guide to how an incoming purchaser will view your home. The inspector also takes photos of each defect and they are very different from the photos that we as your agent would take for marketing purposes. If you do the report after your initial clean up and repairs the building report will definitely be a negotiation asset.

As your agent, if we felt it to be beneficial, we would release the report prior to the offer. We would clearly explain that prior to marketing, a full inspection was conducted and the maintenance performed has been built into the marketing price or price guide.

When it comes time to sell, and more importantly negotiate the final profit price for your property, you would want to ensure you had done all you could to protect your final profit position. In selling real estate, the worst feeling is to lose the best buyer who is emotionally engaged with your home on the surface but turns increasingly cold due to becoming alarmed by issues that are normal, but seem worrying to them.





## Do's and Dont's List

Now that you have gained full visibility of the property with the building & pest report, you will have the benefit of a detailed visual checklist. This will allow you to make decisions that will form your to do and to don't list.

For example the report may say your roof tiles are up for replacement as the home is 24 years old and is therefore in need of new roof tiles.

Roof tiles last approximately 25 years and need replacing on most homes of that age. The point to remember here is that all homes at one time or another require maintenance, and that this is known as a capital improvement on the property, so as your agent we would recommend you don't replace the roof as you won't get the benefit and chances are wherever you buy may also need a new roof. In short when selling or buying a property you take it on warts and all.

## Price Update

Once you have completed your property maintenance program, it's the perfect time for us, as your agent, to go right back through the property and take into account all repairs and improvements and re-establish your new marketing price. Once your house is looking ship shape, it's a great time to get the photo's done so we can store them for marketing and start to prepare the selling list and best features of your property.

Together as a team we will capture every little delightful detail and list them in our property specification pages of our detailed property booklet.



# Preparing for Photography.

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## When it comes time to market a property, there are no shortcuts to a great price

Images of your property are one of the main ways to draw in a buyer. They are the first point of contact a buyer has with your property, so it's essential you present your property in the best possible way. When preparing your property for photography, remember that's exactly the way it should also appear for every inspection.

- 1 Declutter and clean – let your pristine, glowing home tell buyers you care about it, have looked after it and given it the appropriate attention throughout your ownership.
- 2 Think about who you're appealing to – think about who will want to buy the home and make the surroundings appeal to them.
- 3 Present the home to suit the purchaser – minimise furniture and utilise what you have to make an impact. Create the scenario for the kinds of emotions you're targeting in your buyer, e.g. if marketing a home to a family, create a family ambience.

### Front of home

Create a strong first impression – what buyers see in images has to match what they'll see in person. Make sure the front yard is clean, lawns are manicured and hedges are trimmed. Wash the gutters, eaves, fascias and external facade.

### Kitchen

Remove personal items, add a fruit bowl or fresh flowers and clean everything. Remove magnets, phone chargers and pet bowls. Don't leave dirty dishes in the sink and move rubbish bins out of sight.

### Lounge room

If you have a view – maximise it. Clean the windows and remove/tie-up curtains to maximise what the photographer can capture. Pack away electrical cords, gaming consoles, DVD's etc. to maximise space and accentuate clean lines.







## Bathroom

Bathrooms need to be almost clinical – it's a good idea to have them cleaned by professionals prior to photography. Polish the mirror, remove cobwebs and dust from the exhaust fan, polish any chrome items and remove marks and grease from tiles. With so many shiny, reflective surfaces, any failure to catch grime or dirt will show up in the photo. Above all – declutter. Hide all personal items like toothbrushes, hair products, soap and toilet rolls. Keep towels neutral of of a colour that compliments the surrounds.

## Bedrooms

Assess the view out of bedroom windows. If it's a nice outlook, remove any objects that will distract the eye from the window. If it isn't great, use a big artwork to draw the attention away. Consider the bed linen and how it contrasts with the wall treatments and turn on the bedside lamps to create a glow.

## Entertainment areas

Use entertainment areas to create ambience, depending on who you're appealing to. Whether it's the deck, veranda or balcony, show how it integrates with the rest of the property. For example, show a BBQ on a balcony or outdoor furniture on a deck.

## The pool

It has to be sparkling before it's photographed (and for every inspection). Make sure all pool equipment, toys, utensils and chemicals are packed away.

## Lighting

Even in daytime, you'll be shooting with lights on. Photographers will create an ambience by using their flash equipment, utilising available sunlight and lighting. Make sure to replace all faulty globes and if the property is empty, that the electricity is on.

# Property Checklist.

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## Living areas

- Remove all unnecessary furniture and clutter to create an impression of space
- Turn on lamps and ensure they are working
- Replace any faulty light globes
- Ensure all curtains are hooked up properly and blinds open
- Remove sheer curtains all together if possible
- Add fresh flowers

## Kitchen

- Remove all items from the bench tops, including appliances
- Remove all dishes from the sink, including drying racks
- Remove tea towels
- Clear off all fridge magnets
- Add a bowl of fresh fruit or a vase of flowers to the kitchen bench for colour
- Ensure rubbish bins are out of sight
- Remove pet bowls and litter trays

## Bedrooms

- Make beds
- Turn on lamps
- Clear all items off bedside tables
- Reduce items on dressing tables and drawers
- Light candles
- Organise cupboards to demonstrate the most efficient use of space. Cupboards should look as though there is room to add more.

## Bathroom

- Put fresh fluffy matching towels in the bathrooms
- Scrub and clean shower screens, basins and mirrors
- Remove all bottles and other hanging items from the shower
- Remove all items except for decorative bottles from the basin
- Remove waste and linen baskets
- Light candles

## Entertaining areas

- Add cushions, a pot plant or fruit bowl
- Light candles
- If you have a pool make sure it's sparkling clean
- Make sure the BBQ is clean and presentable

## In the garden and street front

- Mow the lawns
- Store toys out of sight
- Remove pet droppings
- Keep cars out of sight (including the garage)
- Clear out the cobwebs, get rid of peeling paint and grime
- Sugar soap or wash the gutters, eaves, fascias, weatherboards and Colorbond roof





# Thinking of Selling? Think The Agency.

We hope this brochure has given you valuable insights into preparing your home for the best outcome at sale time.

We look forward to the opportunity of working with you and continuing to provide guidance to allow you to profit from our knowledge.

**Feel free to contact your local The Agency property partner for a free appraisal on your home and market insight into your area.**

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## Get in touch

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