



THE COMPLETE HOME SELLER'S SYSTEM

Don't leave money on the table —

SHOW READY

in 7 Days



SELL FASTER · NET MORE MONEY · STAY SHOW-READY

S

SIMPLIFY

H

HIGHLIGHT

O

ORGANIZE

W

WOW

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7 Days. 7 Chapters. One offer-ready home.

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Why Most Homes Leave Money on the Table

"Buyers decide how they feel about a home in the first 8 seconds. Everything that happens after that is them looking for reasons to justify — or override — that gut reaction."

— MARIA MARTINEZ, LICENSED REAL ESTATE AGENT

The Real Cost of "We'll Just List It"

After 10+ years working with sellers in the Elgin area, I've seen the same pattern over and over. Homeowners put their house on the market as-is — maybe they run a vacuum and light a candle — and then wonder why buyers are low-balling them or not making offers at all.

Here's what they don't realize: buyers don't see your home the way you do. They see every scuff on the wall. Every overcrowded shelf. Every bathroom product lining the tub. And in their mind, each one becomes a negotiating chip — "we'll need to repaint... we'll need to update... we'll need to declutter."

That mental math adds up — and it comes out of YOUR pocket at closing.

WHAT THE RESEARCH SHOWS

+8% Staged homes sell for 8–10% MORE than unstaged homes (National Association of Realtors)

73% of buyer's agents say staging makes it easier for buyers to visualize the property as a future home

3× Staged homes spend 3× LESS time on the market than non-staged competition

How to Use This Workbook

This workbook walks you through 7 focused days that transform how buyers experience your home — without a full renovation. Each day has a specific focus, a checklist, and clear "why it matters" context.

1

Read ahead before starting

Scan the whole workbook first so nothing surprises you on Day 1.

2

Work the system, not the house

Focus each day on ONE area. Don't try to do everything at once.

3

Use the Pomodoro method

25 min on, 5 min break. Prevents burnout and keeps you moving.

4

Photograph your progress

Before/after photos help you see what buyers will see and keep you motivated.

5

Don't do it alone

Recruit one helper for Day 1 (declutter day). Fresh eyes see what you've stopped seeing.

You don't need to spend thousands. You need a system. That's exactly what the next 7 days will give you.

The SHOW Method™

Use this in every room, every day of your 7-day plan

S

Simplify

STEP 1

Remove everything that distracts a buyer from imagining their life in the space. Every personal photo, excess piece of furniture, and decorative item that competes for attention must go. Buyers can't fall in love with *your* home — they need to fall in love with *their future home*.

Declutter

Depersonalize

Remove Excess Furniture

H

Highlight

STEP 2

Draw every buyer's eye to your home's best features — natural light, architectural details, spacious floors, beautiful views. Furniture arrangement, lighting, and focal point placement all work together to make buyers stop and say, "Oh wow."

Natural Light

Focal Points

Furniture Flow

O

Organize

STEP 3

Every storage space will be opened — closets, cabinets, pantry, medicine cabinet. Buyers equate organized storage with a well-maintained home. Create systems that look intentional, not just tidy. One organized closet is worth more than five clean rooms.

Closets

Cabinets

Storage Systems

W

Wow

STEP 4

Add the one moment of beauty per room that makes buyers pull out their phone and take a photo. Fresh flowers. Crisp white towels in the bathroom. A bowl of lemons on the kitchen counter. These are the details that live in listing photos and in buyer conversations. One "wow" per room is all you need.

Fresh Flowers

Finishing Touches

Photo-Ready Details

73%

LESS TIME ON MARKET

6–10%

HIGHER SALE PRICE

7 Days

TO SHOW-READY

Your 7-Day Game Plan

25 min on · 5 min break · repeat

THE POMODORO METHOD:

Set a 25-minute timer → work with complete focus → take a 5-minute break → after 4 rounds, take a 20-minute break. You can do ANYTHING for 25 minutes.

1 DECLUTTER DAY

4–6 hours · recruit a helper

- ▶ Walk every room with 4 boxes: Keep / Donate / Storage / Trash
- ▶ Apply S.P.A.C.E. formula to every closet and storage area
- ▶ Remove all personal photos from walls and surfaces
- ▶ Cut surface items to max 3 decorative pieces per area
- ▶ Box up seasonal items, kids toys, pet gear — out to garage or storage

Goal: Make every room feel 30% larger

2 DEEP CLEAN DAY

6–8 hours · top to bottom

- ▶ Wash all windows inside and out (biggest buyer WOW factor)
- ▶ Deep clean oven, microwave, and all appliances
- ▶ Scrub bathrooms — grout, caulk, fixtures, mirrors
- ▶ Clean baseboards, ceiling fans, light fixtures
- ▶ Steam clean carpets or rent a machine

Goal: Smells and looks like a hotel

3 REPAIRS & TOUCH-UPS

4–5 hours · fix what buyers will notice

- ▶ Replace ALL burned-out light bulbs with LED daylight bulbs
- ▶ Replace every cracked/yellowed light switch and outlet cover
- ▶ Fix dripping faucets, running toilets, squeaky doors
- ▶ Patch nail holes and small wall dings with spackle
- ▶ Replace toilet seats, update cabinet hardware if dated

Goal: No deferred maintenance visible

4 PAINT DAY

If needed · highest ROI single upgrade

- ▶ Priority: front door (deep navy or charcoal = instant curb appeal)
- ▶ Any room with bold/dated wall colors — repaint neutral
- ▶ Touch up all scuffs and marks with original wall color
- ▶ See Ch. 4B for Maria's exact Sherwin-Williams palette
- ▶ Use SW Pure White or Extra White for ALL trim throughout

Goal: Fresh, move-in-ready feel

5 STAGE & STYLE

4–6 hours · where buyers fall in love

- ▶ Arrange furniture to create clear conversation areas and traffic flow
- ▶ Add fresh white towels (hotel fold), new shower curtain
- ▶ Make beds with crisp neutral duvet — hotel style
- ▶ Add 1 statement plant or vase of fresh flowers per main room
- ▶ Ensure every lamp has working bulb, every room has 3 light sources

Goal: Buyers want to move in TODAY

6 CURB APPEAL DAY

3–4 hours · first impression = money

- ▶ Power wash driveway, walkway, and front of house
- ▶ Add fresh mulch to all bed areas (2–3 inches, dark color)
- ▶ Edge lawn and trim all overgrown bushes and trees
- ▶ Add seasonal flowers in 2 large planters flanking front door
- ▶ Replace entry mat, update house numbers if faded/dated

Goal: Buyers excited before they open the door

7 PHOTO DAY PREP

2-hour final checklist

- ▶ Open ALL blinds and curtains — maximize light
- ▶ Turn on every single light in the house
- ▶ Set the dining table with placemats and dishes
- ▶ Put cut flowers in kitchen and living room
- ▶ Remove ALL cars from driveway
- ▶ See Ch. 5 for complete 2-hour checklist

Your Show-Ready Shopping List

\$75–\$150
TOTAL BUDGET

Cleaning Supplies

- ☐ Magic Erasers (multi-pack)
- ☐ Microfiber cloths (12 pack)
- ☐ Grout cleaner + stiff brush
- ☐ Bar Keepers Friend (sinks/tubs)
- ☐ Windex (windows inside/out)
- ☐ Clorox wipes (bulk)
- ☐ Oven cleaner
- ☐ Pledge / wood polish
- ☐ Carpet spot remover
- ☐ Mop + bucket + floor cleaner
- ☐ White caulk + caulk gun

Repair & Touch-Up

- ☐ Spackle + putty knife
- ☐ Sandpaper (220 grit)
- ☐ Touch-up paint (your wall color)
- ☐ Small paint rollers + brushes
- ☐ WD-40 (squeaky hinges/doors)
- ☐ LED light bulbs (daylight, 10pk)
- ☐ White outlet/switch covers (10pk)
- ☐ Smoke + CO2 detectors
- ☐ Cabinet hardware (if updating)
- ☐ New toilet seats (if stained)
- ☐ Mulch (2-3 bags for beds)

Staging & Styling

- ☐ White cotton bath towels (2 sets)
- ☐ New shower curtain (white/cream)
- ☐ White/cream linen dish towels
- ☐ Large glass vase (for florals)
- ☐ White bowl + lemons/limes (kitchen)
- ☐ New welcome mat (front door)
- ☐ 2 large matching planters (porch)
- ☐ Seasonal flowers for planters
- ☐ Neutral throw blanket (couch)
- ☐ Tray for coffee table styling
- ☐ Small plant (succulents work great)

Maria's Tip: Shop Target's "Threshold" or IKEA for staging items — then return or resell after closing. Many sellers recoup the full cost. Dollar Tree works perfectly for lemons, bowls, and small baskets.

The Declutter Decision System

The goal isn't to have less stuff — it's to make your home feel bigger, brighter, and easier for buyers to imagine as theirs.

USE THIS SYSTEM WHEN DECLUTTERING

THE S.P.A.C.E. FORMULA

S SORT

Go through every item in the space and create 4 piles: Keep, Donate, Store (off-site), Trash. Don't edit — just sort.

P PURGE

Remove the Donate and Trash piles immediately. Box and label Store items and move them to the garage or a storage unit.

A ASSIGN A HOME

Every item that stays needs a specific home. If you can't assign it one, it goes in the Store or Donate pile.

C CONTAINERIZE

Group like items in matching baskets or bins. Uniform containers in closets make them look larger and more organized to buyers.

E EQUALIZE

The final edit — step back and look at the space. Remove anything that feels "extra." Less is always more when selling.

FOR EACH ITEM — ASK THIS QUESTION

THE W.A.S.T.E. TOOL

W **Worthwhile?** Does it add beauty, function, or joy to the space?

A **Again?** Have you used it in the last 12 months?

S **Someone else's?** Return it, or let them know it's here.

T **Trash?** Broken, expired, or truly unwanted — toss it.

E **Elsewhere?** Belongs in storage, garage, or a different room?

THE O.H.I.O. METHOD

Only Handle It Once

When you pick something up, decide its fate RIGHT NOW. Don't put it in a "maybe" pile or set it aside to decide later. The "maybe" pile always becomes clutter. Make the decision: Keep, Donate, Store, or Trash — and act on it immediately.

CLOSET RULE THAT SURPRISES SELLERS

Closets should be **50% full** when listed. Buyers open every door. A packed closet signals "not enough storage." A half-full closet signals "plenty of room." Rent a storage unit if needed — it is absolutely worth it.

The Cleaning & Repair Hit List

Top Priority Cleans

Buyers notice these **FIRST**

- ☐ **Windows — inside AND out**
Dirty windows make rooms look dark. Clean glass = instant brightness.
- ☐ **Grout lines in kitchen & bathrooms**
Pink/black grout = deal killer. Use a grout pen if scrubbing isn't enough.
- ☐ **Stove hood & burners**
Grease buildup signals poor maintenance throughout the home.
- ☐ **Baseboards throughout**
Dusty baseboards make the whole house feel dirty. Use a damp cloth.
- ☐ **Ceiling fans & light fixtures**
Buyers look UP. Dusty blades are a red flag in photos and showings.
- ☐ **Inside of oven & microwave**
Buyers open appliances. A clean oven = owner who cares for their home.
- ☐ **Front door & entry area**
First and last impression. Wipe door, polish hardware, sweep entry.
- ☐ **Carpets — steam clean**
Rent a machine or hire a pro. Nothing signals "fresh start" like clean carpet.

Repairs That Pay Off

High ROI — always worth doing

- ☐ **Replace every cracked outlet/switch cover**
\$0.50 each — highest ROI item in this workbook
- ☐ **Fix dripping faucets & running toilets**
\$10–\$50 fix prevents \$2,000+ in buyer concession requests
- ☐ **Recaulk tubs, showers, sinks**
Black caulk = mold in buyers' minds. Fresh white caulk = clean home.
- ☐ **Patch nail holes & wall dings**
Spackle, sand, touch-up paint. Takes 30 min, looks like \$1,000.
- ☐ **All LED daylight bulbs (100W equiv.)**
Bright, consistent lighting makes every room look bigger in photos.
- ☐ **Update cabinet hardware (if brass/dated)**
Brushed nickel or matte black pulls: ~\$100, perceived value +\$2,000

The "Don't Bother" List

Low ROI — buyers will customize anyway

- ✗ Full kitchen remodel (\$15K–\$50K cost, minimal return)
- ✗ New carpet if original is in decent shape (buyers may want hardwood)
- ✗ New appliances unless completely broken/unusable
- ✗ High-end landscaping or pools (personal taste, can't price in)
- ✗ Bathroom tile replacement (unless cracked/broken)

Maria's Rule

If you'd be embarrassed for a buyer to see it, fix it. If you're fixing it because YOU like it — stop and ask if a buyer will actually care. Spend money on what buyers notice, not what you wish you'd done for yourself.

The Paint Playbook

The single highest-ROI upgrade
Source: Zillow Research

What Zillow Research Found — Paint Color & Sale Price



+\$2,277

Warm Brown

Bedroom - caramel/greige tones



+\$1,723

Pale Blue

Living room - periwinkle/sky



+\$1,547

Tuxedo Kitchen

Dark lower + white upper cabs



+\$1,373

Dark Charcoal

Kitchen accent wall



+\$1,283

Soft Blue Bathroom

Powder blue / dusty blue



+\$1,100

Warm White / Greige

Most universally safe color



-\$7,971

Bold Red — Anywhere

Repaint before listing

Paint Priority Order

- 1** **Front door** — Deep navy, charcoal, or forest green. #1 ROI exterior item.
- 2** **Any bold/dated color walls** — Red, hunter green, royal blue = repaint neutral.
- 3** **All trim throughout** — SW Pure White or Extra White. Unifies the entire home.
- 4** **Touch-up scuffs & marks** — Takes 2 hours, looks like a fresh paint job to buyers.

The Golden Rule of Paint

You are not painting for yourself. You are painting so that the maximum number of buyers can picture themselves living there. Your job is to get OUT of the way and let them fall in love.

Avoid: White-white (too cold/clinical), yellow, pink, or any highly saturated color on main walls. When in doubt — greige (gray + beige) wins every time.

Maria's Sherwin-Williams Color Palette

These are the exact colors I recommend to my sellers in Elgin — tested, buyer-approved, and proven to photograph beautifully.

SW 7015

Repose Gray

Trim: **Extra White / Pure White**

The most popular neutral in America right now. A true greige — sits right between warm gray and cool beige. Looks different in every light, which keeps buyers intrigued.

Living Room ✓

Bedroom ✓

Whole Home ✓

SW 9547

Vessel

Trim: **Pure White**

A warm greige with visible brown undertones — cozy and inviting. Used in D.R. Horton model homes in the Bartlett, IL area. Photographs beautifully and appeals to move-up buyers.

Living Room ✓

Dining ✓

Primary Bed ✓

SW 7008

Alabaster

Off-white with warm undertones — softer than stark white and feels more luxurious. Pairs beautifully with BM Simply White or White Dove trim. Perfect for smaller homes where true white might feel cold.

Whole Home ✓

Kitchen ✓

Trim Colors — Use These Everywhere



SW 7005 Pure White

Slightly warm — use on trim, doors, and ceilings in warm-toned homes. Pairs with Repose Gray, Vessel.



SW 7006 Extra White

Crisp, bright white — use throughout on all trim and ceilings for a clean, modern feel. Most universal trim color.

Maria's Tip: Pick ONE trim color and use it on every door, every baseboard, every window casing throughout the home. Consistency is what makes a home feel like a model home.

Your 7-Day Game Plan

One focused task per day — follow the order exactly

DAY

1

PURGE — The Whole House SATURDAY

Walk every room with 3 boxes: Keep / Donate / Trash. Remove ALL personal photos and family portraits. Remove seasonal decor. Target: 30–40% less stuff in every room. Buyers need space to imagine their life, not yours.

DAY

2

DEEP CLEAN — Top to Bottom SUNDAY

Hire professional cleaners OR commit the full day. Windows inside and out, baseboards, ceiling fans, inside appliances (fridge, oven, microwave). Clean what buyers will photograph — and everything they will open.

DAY

3

REPAIRS — Patch, Caulk & Fix MONDAY

Patch every nail hole and wall ding. Recaulk tubs, showers, and kitchen sink. Fix dripping faucets and squeaky doors. Replace burnt-out bulbs and cracked switch plates. Every unaddressed repair is a price-reduction argument.

DAY

4

EXTERIOR — Curb Appeal Day TUESDAY

Power wash driveway, walkways, and exterior surfaces. Mow, edge, and trim all landscaping. Paint touch-ups on walls indoors. Front door: bold color + new hardware + updated house numbers. The outside sells the inside.

DAY

5

STAGE — Furniture & Flow WEDNESDAY

Rearrange furniture to maximize flow and visual space. Create conversation areas, clear all pathways (36" minimum). Remove pieces that crowd rooms. Set each room's focal point — fireplace, view, architectural detail.

DAY

6

ORGANIZE + WOW — The Details THURSDAY

Organize every closet and cabinet — buyers WILL open them. Fresh flowers in living room and kitchen. White towels in bathrooms, folded hotel-style. Bowl of lemons on kitchen counter. One WoW moment per room.

DAY

7

PHOTO DAY — Final Walk-Through FRIDAY

Open all window treatments — maximize natural light. Turn on every light including lamps. Make beds with crisp linens, fluff pillows. Hide daily items: dog bowls, trash cans, chargers, toiletries. This is your buyers' first impression — make it count.

Follow the order. Don't skip days. The system works because of the sequence.

MARIA MARTINEZ · MARI VENDE CASAS

Staging Checklist

Check each item before photos & showings



Living Room

- ☐ Remove ALL family portraits & personal photos
- ☐ Clear surfaces to 3 decorative items max
- ☐ Remove excess furniture (keep 36" walkways clear)
- ☐ Hide remote controls, cables & electronics clutter
- ☐ Fluff, arrange & edit down throw pillows
- ☐ Add fresh flowers or greenery as focal point
- ☐ Clean windows inside & out — open blinds fully
- ☐ Replace worn or busy area rugs



Kitchen

- ☐ Clear countertops completely — nothing on top
- ☐ Remove magnets, photos & papers from refrigerator
- ☐ Hide toaster, coffee maker & small appliances
- ☐ Deep clean oven, microwave & dishwasher inside
- ☐ Polish hardware, faucet & sink until they shine
- ☐ Remove dish rack, sponges & soap from view
- ☐ Style with 3 lemons or limes in a white bowl
- ☐ Replace worn dish towels with fresh linen ones



Primary Bedroom

- ☐ Remove all personal items from nightstands
- ☐ Make bed with crisp white or neutral duvet
- ☐ Clear dresser surfaces — one mirror or tray max
- ☐ Hide charging cables, medication & personal care
- ☐ Closet must be 50% full — remove off-season items
- ☐ Add matching lamps on both sides of bed
- ☐ Remove family photos — buyers need to picture themselves
- ☐ Open window treatments — maximize natural light



Bathrooms

- ☐ Remove ALL personal products from shower & tub
- ☐ Recaulk tubs, showers & sinks if any discoloration
- ☐ Replace toilet seat if worn or stained
- ☐ Hang fresh, white towels only — hotel fold
- ☐ Clear vanity completely — store under sink in bins
- ☐ Polish all chrome fixtures until they gleam
- ☐ Add small plant, candle or single stem flower
- ☐ Replace toilet paper & fold the end neatly



Exterior & Curb Appeal

- ☐ Power wash driveway, walkway & exterior walls
- ☐ Mow, edge & trim all shrubs and hedges
- ☐ Add colorful flowers at entry & in pots flanking door
- ☐ Paint front door a bold, welcoming color
- ☐ Upgrade door hardware, address numbers & mailbox
- ☐ Touch up exterior paint on trim & shutters
- ☐ Clean gutters & downspouts — fix any visible damage
- ☐ Add new welcome mat & check porch light works



Garage

- ☐ Remove excess boxes & items to storage unit
- ☐ Sweep floor & treat any oil stains
- ☐ Organize tools on wall — bikes hung up
- ☐ Park cars outside during all showings & photos

SHOWING DAY — 30 MINS BEFORE

- ☐ Turn on ALL lights — every switch, every room
- ☐ Open all window treatments — max natural light
- ☐ Hide daily-use items: toothbrushes, pet bowls, shoes
- ☐ Set temperature to 68–70°F — comfortable, not cold

Listing Photo Day — Final Prep

2 hrs

BEFORE PHOTOGRAPHER



Lighting — The Most Critical Factor

75% of buyer appeal comes from light

- ☐ Open EVERY blind, curtain, and shade — full open, no exceptions
- ☐ Turn on EVERY single light in the house (overhead, lamps, under-cabinet)
- ☐ Replace any dim/yellow bulbs today — all daylight 5000K LED
- ☐ Schedule photographer for mid-morning (9–11am) for best natural light
- ☐ If dark/overcast day — reschedule. Photos make or break listing views.



Exterior First Impression

Hero shot = front of house

- ☐ Remove ALL cars from driveway and in front of house
- ☐ Move trash cans, hoses, toys, sports equipment to garage
- ☐ Mow, edge, and blow the lawn — do morning of photo day
- ☐ Make sure planters and flowers are freshly watered
- ☐ Wipe down front door and polish door hardware



The 2-Hour Room Checklist

Final walk-through before photographer arrives

Every Room

- ☐ All surfaces clear — nothing "extra" anywhere
- ☐ Trash cans hidden (in cabinets, closets, or garage)
- ☐ All closet doors fully shut (or fully open if styled)

Kitchen

- ☐ Set out: 1 cookbook, 3 lemons in white bowl, fresh dish towel
- ☐ Coffee maker and dish rack hidden in a cabinet

Primary Bedroom

- ☐ Bed made with hotel precision — all pillows fluffed
- ☐ Nightstand: 1 lamp + 1 book or small plant only

Bathrooms

- ☐ Hotel-folded white towels only — no bath mats
- ☐ Toilet seat down. Shower curtain fully closed.



Don't Forget

- ▶ Take pets, pet beds, and food bowls out of the home
- ▶ Set dining table with placemats and simple place settings
- ▶ Fresh flowers in living room AND kitchen — day of
- ▶ You and family: leave the house during the shoot

Staying Show-Ready During Active Listing

Once you're listed, your job is to keep the home showing-ready every single day — because the next showing could be the one that brings your offer.

15
MIN

The Showing Reset

Run this every time you leave the house

MINUTES 1-5 · KITCHEN & COMMON AREAS

- ☐ Clear and wipe kitchen counters completely
- ☐ Dishes in dishwasher — run if full
- ☐ Fluff couch pillows, fold throw blanket
- ☐ Straighten dining table/chairs

MINUTES 5-10 · BEDROOMS & BATHROOMS

- ☐ Make every bed (use hotel-fold technique)
- ☐ Put away everything on nightstands and dressers
- ☐ Wipe bathroom mirrors and sinks
- ☐ Rehang towels hotel-style, close toilet lids
- ☐ Toss any products left out into cabinet

MINUTES 10-15 · EXIT SWEEP

- ☐ Open all blinds/curtains — max natural light
- ☐ Turn on all interior lights
- ☐ Take pets, pet bowls, litter box OUT
- ☐ Quick sweep/vacuum entry and main areas

17 Daily Habits That Keep You Show-Ready

Morning

Make beds before breakfast. Clear kitchen counters before leaving. Put shoes away.

Evenings

Do dishes before bed. Straighten all living areas. Do a 5-minute kid/pet patrol.

Weekly

Deep clean bathrooms and kitchen. Refresh flowers. Vacuum everything. Wipe mirrors.

The Mindset Shift

During listing, you are living in a product, not a home. This is temporary — and every showing is a chance for someone to fall in love and pay your price. The slight inconvenience of staying show-ready is worth far more than any price reduction you'd accept after 45 days on market.

The "Holding Box" System

Keep one large laundry basket or box in your car during active listing. When a showing is called, sweep the house — grab anything out of place (kids' toys, mail, shoes, medications) and put it in the box in your car. Done in 5 minutes. Retrieve it when you get home.

The Fresh Flowers Rule

Budget \$10–\$15/week for fresh flowers at the grocery store. Put them in the kitchen or dining area. Fresh flowers trigger an emotional response in buyers — they feel cared for, warm, and alive. It is the best \$10 you will spend during your listing.

The \$500 Upgrade Plan

High ROI · Under \$1,000 · Non-Negotiable Before Listing

SWITCHES & OUTLETS

Light Switches & Covers

\$40–80
WHOLE HOUSE

Yellow, cracked covers scream "outdated." Replace every switch plate with crisp white Decora-style covers. Buyers notice. Inspectors note it. Takes one afternoon.

- ROI: 10–20× cost · Top buyer complaint

SAFETY

Smoke & CO Detectors

\$60–120
WHOLE HOUSE

Yellow, expired detectors are an inspection flag and a liability red flag. Brand-new white units signal a well-maintained home — and may be required by local code to close escrow.

- Inspection flag eliminator · Required in most states

SMART HOME

Smart Thermostat

\$130–250
INSTALLED

Nest or ecobee signals modern, move-in-ready. Studies show 70% of buyers prefer smart home features. Adds listing description value and justifies higher price perception.

- 70% buyer preference · Adds listing bullet point

HARDWARE

Door Handles & Knobs

\$80–200
WHOLE HOUSE

Brass builder-grade knobs from the 90s age a home instantly. Swap for brushed nickel or matte black hardware — consistent finish throughout. Buyers feel quality before they consciously notice it.

- Subconscious quality signal · Photo-worthy detail

REPAIRS

Caulk & Grout Refresh

\$20–60
MATERIALS ONLY

Yellowed caulk around tubs, showers, and kitchen sinks reads as dirty even when it's not. Fresh white caulk + grout pen transforms the look in 2 hours. One of the highest return tasks per dollar spent.

- Highest ROI per dollar · 2 hrs · ~50× return

CURB APPEAL

Front Door Refresh

\$50–150
PAINT + HARDWARE

The front door is the first thing a buyer touches. A bold color (navy, black, red) + new house numbers + updated lock set creates an instant wow moment before they even step inside. Zillow: adds up to \$6,449.

- Zillow: up to \$6,449 value · First impression

Total Investment: \$330–\$860

Every item above addresses a buyer objection, an inspection flag, or a first impression — before you spend \$1 on staging furniture

\$10K+
EST. RETURN

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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by Mari Vende Casas



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"I've walked through hundreds of homes and seen sellers leave thousands on the table — not because their home wasn't beautiful, but because no one gave them a system."

Maria Martinez is a licensed real estate agent specializing in helping buyers and sellers in the Elgin, Illinois area. With expertise in technology-driven marketing, GoHighLevel automation, and Facebook advertising, Maria brings a modern approach to every transaction — focused on getting sellers the best possible outcome with the least possible stress.

This workbook is the result of everything she's learned watching sellers prepare — what works, what doesn't, and exactly what transforms a lived-in home into a buyer's dream in just 7 days.

Get In Touch

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📍 Elgin, IL & Surrounding Area



CERTIFIED BY
GoHighLevel
CRM & Automation Admin

My Promise To You

Follow this system exactly and your home will show better than 90% of the competition. That's not a slogan — it's what the data says about staged, prepped, and photo-ready homes.

You've Got This — Now Go Get That Listing!

Your next steps to a faster sale & higher offer



**The sellers who net the most don't spend the most —
they prepare the smartest.**

— Maria Martinez, Real Estate Agent & Home Staging Expert

YOUR ACTION PLAN

What to Do Right Now

1

Print This Workbook

Keep it on your kitchen counter as your daily guide. Check off each task as you go — the physical act of checking a box builds momentum.

2

Pick Your Start Date

Count back 7 days from when photos are scheduled. Block Day 1 on your calendar right now. Tell your family the plan.

3

Grab the Supplies

One trip to Target or Home Depot. Aim for the \$75–\$150 budget. The right tools make every task 3x faster.

4

Schedule a Walk-Through

Call Maria on Day 4 or 5. A 30-minute walk-through catches what you've gone "nose-blind" to. Fresh eyes = higher offers.

5

Trust the System

Sellers who complete all 7 days sell for an average of \$15,000+ more. Every small step compounds. You're already ahead.



Maria Martinez

Licensed Real Estate Agent
Staging Expert · Illinois & surrounding areas

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day 17

Book a Free Home Prep Strategy Call

30 minutes · No pressure · Just a plan that gets results

FREE BONUS

What's Included When You List With Maria

- ✓ Personal staging walk-through
- ✓ Professional photography
- ✓ 3D Matterport virtual tour
- ✓ MLS + Zillow + Realtor.com
- ✓ Social media marketing
- ✓ Open house coordination
- ✓ Negotiation & contract support
- ✓ Closing coordination



READY TO SELL?

Let's Get Your Home SOLD.

You've done the work. Now let's put it in front of the right buyers — with the marketing strategy it deserves.

6–10%

MORE AT SALE

73%

FASTER CLOSE

Facebook

ADS MARKETING

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📍 Elgin, IL & Surrounding Communities