



THE VALUQ HOMEOWNER SERIES

The Pre-Listing Home Preparation Checklist

Room by room, every change worth making before the photographer arrives. Designed for a single weekend of focused work.

SECTION 1

The whole-house pass

Do this walk-through first. It uncovers the items the room-by-room sweep will miss.

- Walk every room with a notebook.**
Note anything a stranger would judge: scuff marks, dated fittings, broken handles, missing bulbs.

- Open every door, drawer, and cupboard.**
Buyers will. Sticky drawers and broken hinges register more than people realise.

- Stand in each doorway and photograph the room.**
The camera shows what the eye stops seeing. Use the photo as your room-prep checklist.

- Smell every room as you enter.**
You will be nose-blind to your own house. Ask a neighbour to walk through and report honestly.

SECTION 2

Kerb appeal

The front of the house decides whether anyone walks in. Spend a disproportionate amount of attention here.

- Mow the front lawn and edge it cleanly.**

- Trim hedges, weed paths and borders, sweep the front path.**

- Wash the front door or repaint it.**
Most underrated lift in any listing photo.

- Polish the door furniture.**
Knocker, letterbox, house number, doorbell.

- Replace any blown porch or external bulbs.**

- Clear bins out of sight.**
Roll them behind a gate or fence.

- Add one plant or planter near the door.**

Something seasonal and alive.

- Park your cars off the drive on viewing days.**

SECTION 3

Living room

The first interior space most buyers see. Make it feel calm and bright.

- Declutter every surface.**

Two or three deliberate items on each table. Nothing more.

- Remove or hide personal photos in clusters.**

One framed family photo on a shelf is human. Twelve on the mantelpiece reads as crowded.

- Hide TV remotes, chargers, and cables.**
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- Plump cushions, straighten throws, vacuum under furniture.**
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- Wash windows inside and out.**
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- Clean light fittings and lampshades.**
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- Touch up paint scuffs.**

Mid-tone whites and warm greys photograph best.

- Add a fresh throw or rug if the existing one looks tired.**

SECTION 4

Kitchen

The room that sells the house. Worth twice the prep time of any other space.

- Clear every counter to the bare minimum.**

A kettle, a fruit bowl, perhaps a coffee machine. Everything else goes into a cupboard.

- Deep-clean the oven, hob, and extractor.**
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- Clean inside the fridge and freezer.**
Buyers will look. If they look and find food residue, it lingers in their memory.

- Polish all stainless steel and chrome.**

- Replace torn or stained tea towels.**
Cheap fix, large impression.

- Re-seal silicone around the sink if discoloured.**

- Empty bins immediately before each viewing.**

- Open windows for 10 minutes before viewings.**
Cooking smells are the most common reason a kitchen viewing turns negative.

SECTION 5

Bathrooms

Buyers always check the bathrooms. Cleanliness here disproportionately affects the offer.

- Deep clean every surface.**
Especially grout, taps, shower screens, behind the toilet, under the rim.

- Re-seal silicone around the bath and shower if discoloured.**

- Replace any cracked tiles.**

- Polish chrome taps and showerheads.**
Use a limescale remover. The difference is visible immediately.

- Hide toothbrushes, razors, soaps, and toiletries.**
In a basket or drawer.

- Hang fresh white towels on viewing days.**
Buy a single set you only use for viewings.

- Close the toilet seat.**
Always.

- Light a low-perfume candle 30 minutes before viewings.**

SECTION 6

Bedrooms

Aim for hotel-room calm. Buyers project their own life into bedrooms more than any other space.

- Make every bed properly.**
Tight sheets, plumped pillows, smooth duvet.

- Clear bedside tables to two or three items.**
A lamp, a book, perhaps a glass of water.

- Empty wardrobes by at least 20 percent.**
Wardrobes that look full read as not big enough.

- Hide laundry baskets out of sight.**

- Hide all wires and chargers.**

- Open curtains and blinds fully before viewings.**

- Light each bedroom warmly.**
Bedside lamps on, even in daylight.

- If you work from home in a bedroom, soften the office look.**
A throw over the office chair, a closed laptop, papers in a drawer.

SECTION 7

Hallway, stairs, and landings

The connecting spaces buyers pass through repeatedly. Small touches here register more than people expect.

- Clear shoes, coats, and bags from the hallway.**
Hide in a cupboard or move upstairs.

- Touch up scuff marks on stair walls.**
Most-touched walls in the house.

- Polish bannisters and handrails.**

Replace any worn or stained stair carpet runners.

Light every landing.

Even small wattage bulbs lift the photographer's results.

SECTION 8

Garden and outdoor space

Whether a small balcony or a quarter-acre garden, treat outdoor space as a room.

Mow the lawn and edge cleanly.

Weed borders and patios.

Clear leaves, dead branches, and garden debris.

Power-wash decking, patios, and paths if available.

Tidy the shed inside and out.

Buyers will open shed doors.

Replace dead or dying plants.

Cheap bedding plants from a garden centre buy meaningful kerb appeal.

Stage one outdoor seating area.

A small table with two chairs implies use.

Hide bins, hosepipes, and garden tools.

SECTION 9

The day-of-listing pass

Right before the photographer or any viewing. The final two-hour sweep.

Empty every bin in the house.

Wipe every surface in the kitchen and bathrooms.

- Hoover or sweep every floor.**

- Open every curtain and turn on every light.**

- Set the heating to 21 degrees in winter, leave windows cracked in summer.**

- Hide pets and pet bowls during viewings.**
Even buyers who own pets can react badly to other animals in a sale viewing.

- Lock away valuables and personal documents.**

- Park your own car off the drive.**

- Light a candle or use a low-perfume air freshener.**

- Leave the house if possible.**
Buyers speak more freely when the owner is not present.

THE ROI RULE

Spend money on the things that lift the photos. Skip the things that only the buyer in the house would notice. A 30-pound paint job on the front door earns more than a 3,000-pound replacement boiler in listing impressions.

Find out what your prepared home is worth

Once the house is ready, see what competing local agents would value it at. ValuQ shows multiple valuations side by side, anonymously, so you can pick the right agent before any of them has your phone number.

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