



1 Hour Preparing the Home for
Sale
VREB Approval #: 58079

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Instructions for the 1 Hour Preparing the Home for Sale Correspondence Course

You have chosen to take the 1 hour Preparing the Home for Sale course by correspondence. You may either read it online or print it. After you complete the course, take the quiz. A blank answer sheet is provided for you to record your answers. The Virginia Real Estate Board requires a passing grade of 75% or higher.

Complete the Certification Sheet. **Have the Student Declaration notarized.** The Virginia Real Estate Board has given you the option of either sending the notarized affidavit to us or keeping it with your records.

Mail, fax, or scan and email the completed answer sheet, certification sheet and Student Declaration to us. Our mailing address is Box 494, Oakton, Virginia 22124. Our fax number is 703-758-0044. Our email address is info@PotomacRESchool.com.

Your information will be held in the strictest of confidence.

You will not be charged unless you pass the exam. If you do not pass, you will be notified immediately.

Once we have received the required paperwork from you and you have been charged, we will report your hours to DPOR and email your certificate to you. The Real Estate Board requires that we report your hours to DPOR within 5 days of receipt of your paperwork. If you need reporting in less than 5 days, please let us know.

If you have any questions, please call or email us. Our phone number is 703-758-0034. For questions of a general nature, you can call or email us at info@PotomacRESchool.com. If you have questions about the content of the course, you can call or email me at patti@PotomacRESchool.com.

Thank you.

Patti Chapell

Patti Chapell
Director

Linking Learning To Success®

Preparing the Home for Sale

Part 1 - Why and When?

- What is preparing the home?
 - Preparing the home (also referred to as staging) is packaging the home for profit
 - Just as department stores package items for sale at the Holidays, a home should also be packaged before it goes on the market.
 - Once a home goes on the market, it becomes a product for sale
- What does preparing the home accomplish?
 - Preparing the home gives it an advantage over other homes in the market that might not show as well.
 - Homes that are prepared/staged sell faster and for more money.
 - Agents are more likely to show staged homes than homes that are not staged.
 - Appraisers are more likely to appraise staged homes for more.
- When should preparing the home take place?
 - Preparing the home should be accomplished before the home goes on the market because
 - You don't get a second chance to make a good first impression.
 - If you work on preparing the home while the home is on the market, buyers don't see the home at its best.
 - Buyers see things as they are, not as they might be. It's very difficult for most buyers to visualize improvements that have not yet been made.
 - When a seller offers to give buyers a closing cost credit for repairs and/or cosmetic improvements, there might be problems with the lender. The lender wants everything to be in perfect condition at settlement.
- Can't the home be sold "as is" or as a "handyman special"?
 - Yes, but it will cause the home to be sold at a significantly lower price.
 - Purchasers tend to overestimate repairs and improvements by approximately double what they would cost.
 - Even purchasers looking for a "handyman special" often choose the home that shows well because they become overwhelmed with the work needed to bring the "handyman special" up to standard.

Part 2 - Repairs

- First, repair as necessary.
 - Having a home inspection before putting the house on the market can be advantageous.
 - The repairs can be completed before the home goes on the market ensuring that once the home does go on the market, it shows well.
 - The seller can leave the home inspection report out on the dining room table along with receipts for the repairs. This will give prospective purchasers coming through a sense of ease.
 - The down side is that if the seller chooses not to make repairs, the needed repairs will need to be disclosed by the agent, if the agent has actual knowledge of the home inspection report.

- Why should the seller make repairs?
 - Granted, the home is not new construction; however, the closer to perfection that the home can be, the faster it will sell, and the more money it will net.
 - A properly functioning home will give the purchasers confidence that the home was well cared for.
 - Buyers expect everything in their new home to operate safely and properly.
 - Repairs left undone can lead buyers to question whether or not the seller has taken good care of the home.
- Will all repairs net more money?
 - Most often, it's not that the sellers will net more money than the competition; rather, the sellers will not net less than the competition.
 - An example of this is a new roof. Sellers will not net more money than the competition for a new roof because a new roof is considered to be a maintenance item. When a new roof is installed, or a new furnace is installed, those repairs are considered to be "bringing the home up to standard."
 - In other words, a well maintained home will at least put the home on a level playing field with the competition.

Part 3 – The Exterior

➤ The first impression

- The very first impression will be the front exterior of the house as the buyer drives up.
- If the exterior is not appealing, there is a good chance that the buyer will ask the agent to skip that house.
- As a part of the listing process, the listing agent will need to walk across the street and look at the house with a critical, buyer's eye.
 - Does the landscaping need a boost?
 - Is the front door freshly painted with gleaming hardware? Does it have a welcome feeling?
 - If there is a screened door, is it in good condition or is it torn?
- One can tell a lot about the level of maintenance of a house just by looking at the exterior.
- In preparation for the market, the agent should give a checklist to the owner, review it with him, and the home should not go on the market until everything on the checklist is marked off. The following checklist is recommended for the exterior of the home:
 - If necessary, touch up paint on doors, trim, window frames.
 - If necessary, paint the outside of the house.
 - Mow and edge the lawn frequently before and while the house is on the market.
 - If the grass is brown, water, fertilize, and if necessary, reseed.
 - Cut back overgrown shrubbery. Trim trees; it is difficult to sell a house if it can't be seen!
 - Weed lawns and flowerbeds.
 - Have chimney inspected and cleaned.
 - Repair and repaint loose siding and caulking.
 - Keep walks clear of snow and ice. If the buyer cannot get in easily, the house won't sell.
 - Flowers and/or ground cover add to the appeal of a home.
 - Replace missing shutters.
 - Repair gutters and downspouts as needed.

- Properly grade the area under the downspouts and around the house so rainwater flows away from the foundation.
- Replace any missing shingles on the roof.
- Repair cracks in the driveway and sidewalks. If necessary, reseal asphalt driveway.
- Sweep the driveway and walkway.
- Use a mild bleaching agent to repair stucco water stains.
- Repair and paint fences, if necessary.
- Wash the outside of all windows.
- Remove any junk or clutter from the yard.
- Store toys, bicycles, roller skates, gardening equipment out of sight.
- Remove any tree limbs and leaves from the yard.
- Place a new doormat at the entry.
- If the mailbox and post have aged, purchase new ones.
- Make sure outdoor furniture is clean and orderly.
- If the exterior of the house is dirty or moldy, power wash it.
- Power wash deck, then seal or stain.
- Clean pool and spas.
- Check all exterior lights and make sure that they are working.
- Add mulch to planting beds and around trees. This freshens the look of the yard.
- Keep the garage door closed.

Part 4 – The Interior

- General
 - Remove family pictures. Buyers cannot picture their family in the house if there are pictures of another family on the walls.
 - Remove and pack away anything of value.
 - Remove and pack away anything that is breakable.
 - If necessary, refinish hardwood floors.
 - Clean fans.
 - Clean all mirrors.
 - Remove any cobwebs.
- Painting
 - When it comes to getting a house ready to put on the market, painting results in the best return for money spent.
 - New paint always gives the home a fresh look.
 - Keep colors neutral. This way, the home will appeal to more buyers, who can move right in without having to make changes.
- Carpeting
 - If carpet is acceptable, a good steam cleaning is recommended.
 - If the carpet is worn, it should be replaced.
 - A carpet allowance is not recommended. Again, buyers do not generally have vision and lenders do not like decorator allowances.
- Safety
 - Pay particular attention to safety.
 - Loose railings should be fixed.
- Clutter
 - Eliminate clutter entirely.
 - Pack up and store or discard. Everything will need to be packed up anyway, so now is as good a time as any.
 - If necessary, rent a storage bin.
- Living Room

- Keep furniture at a bare minimum to ensure easy traffic flow, also to make the room appear larger.
- If the living room is being used for some other purpose, consider changing it back. Most buyers relate better to rooms that are used for the builder's intended purpose.
- Organize bookshelves and remove excess clutter.
- Family Room
 - Make this room look like it is comfortable and inviting but not overly lived in.
 - Keep furniture to a minimum.
 - A fire in the fireplace provides a warm and inviting atmosphere.
- Dining Room
 - Set the dining room table with your best dishes.
 - Splurge and purchase fresh flowers.
- Kitchen
 - Clean the oven.
 - Clean the outside of all appliances so they sparkle.
 - Clean the stove hood filter.
 - Clean and shine cabinets.
 - Clean all countertops and backsplashes thoroughly.
 - Remove all clutter from countertops.
 - Clean floor thoroughly.
 - If there is ceramic tile, clean or whiten grout.
 - Remove all magnets and other items, including children's pictures, from the front of the refrigerator.
 - Do not cook foods with strong odors while the house is on the market.
 - New cabinet knobs and curtains can spruce up an otherwise dated kitchen.
 - Place an attractive bowl with fresh fruit on the kitchen island.
- Bedrooms
 - Remove all clutter.
 - Pay close attention again to traffic flow.
- Bathrooms
 - Clean all ceramic tile and grout.
 - Use the highest wattage available in light fixtures.
 - Make sure that faucets do not drip. If they do, fix them.
 - Thoroughly clean sinks and tubs and caulk.
 - Remove any evidence of mildew from shower and bathtub.
 - Towels should be fresh and clean.
 - Open shower curtain completely. This makes the bathroom look more spacious.
 - Keep all toilet seat lids closed.
- Closets
 - Discard items not used or worn.
 - Organize.
 - Hang all items of clothing in the same direction.
- Doors and Windows
 - Be sure that all doors and windows are operational.
 - Replace broken glass or glass with broken seals.
 - Wash all windows and doors with glass.
- Basements
 - Place a dehumidifier in basement if damp or musty.
 - Remove clutter.
 - Replace furnace filter.
 - If necessary, seal the walls.
- Garages

- Remove clutter, showing that house has enough storage without having to use the garage for that purpose.
- Clean oil marks on floor or repaint floor.
- Clean
 - Clean the house thoroughly.
 - Wax floors.
 - Replace or wash light bulbs.
 - Pay particular attention to keeping the kitchen and bathrooms spotless.
- Smells
 - The sense of smell is our strongest scent.
 - Smells can kill everything; a buyer who smells an unpleasant odor upon entering a house will leave without going beyond the front door..
 - Air the house out every day.
 - Do not use potpourri. Potpourri makes buyers think that the sellers are trying to cover up an odor.
 - Spray Fabreze, which neutralizes odors, everywhere.
 - Dry clean the draperies.
 - Empty trash cans frequently.
 - Do not smoke in the house.
 - The best smell is a clean smell.
 - Cleaning supplies with a lemon scent are appealing.
 - Baking cookies is a nice touch.
 - If the seller has cats, the litter box should be cleaned every day and changed often.
 - If the seller has dogs, the dogs should be washed frequently.
- The Vacant Home
 - Hire a professional stager.
 - A stager will bring furniture and accessorize the house in order for the buyer to better imagine how each room functions.
- When Showing the Home
 - Be sure to set the thermostat at a comfortable temperature. This is conducive to buyers lingering.
 - If possible, take pets outside.
 - Turn lights on when showing the house.
 - Open all window treatments to add brightness.
 - Wash, fold and put away all laundry.
 - Play soft, relaxing music.
 - Display a vase of fresh flowers in the foyer.
 - Be sure that all dishes are washed and put away.
 - Make all beds.
- Selling During the Holidays
 - There are some definite advantages to marketing the home during the winter holidays.
 - The inventory of available homes is lower during this time of year so there is not as much competition.
 - Use the season to your advantage. The holidays lend themselves to atmosphere.
 - Decorate tastefully for the holidays.
 - Keep a fire in the fireplace as long as someone is home to watch it.
 - Bake or simmer hot mulled cider, allowing the aromas to travel throughout the house.
 - Take advantage of any views that might be hidden when the leaves are on the trees.
 - Take advantage of the leaves being off the trees and the natural light coming in the windows.

Preparing the Home for Sale

Final Quiz

1. What is preparing the home to sell?
 - a. Packaging the home for profit
 - b. Pricing the home
 - c. Filling out the listing forms
 - d. None of the above

2. What is the justification for spending time and money preparing the home to sell?
 - a. The home will sell for more.
 - b. The home will sell more quickly.
 - c. The home that shows well will beat the competition.
 - d. All of the above

3. Wouldn't it be easier to just sell the home "as is"?
 - a. Absolutely, and that's how it should be sold.
 - b. Yes, but the seller will get significantly less for the house.
 - c. It doesn't matter one way or the other.
 - d. None of the above

4. When should repairs to a home be made?
 - a. Before the home is put on the market
 - b. While the home is on the market
 - c. After a contract is accepted.
 - d. None of the above

5. Will repairs net the seller more than the competition?
 - a. Probably not
 - b. Definitely
 - c. Neither a nor b

6. Why should a home be functioning properly when it is on the market?
 - a. It gives purchasers a sense that the home was well cared for.
 - b. It will cost less to make the repairs before the home is put on the market than afterwards.
 - c. Neither a nor b

7. What will likely happen if the home has poor curb appeal?
 - a. The buyers will not stop at an open house.
 - b. The buyers will ask the agent to drive by the house and not stop.
 - c. The buyers will definitely want to see the inside.
 - d. a and b

8. If the exterior of the home is in poor condition, the buyers will probably think that
 - a. The rest of the house will be alright.
 - b. The sellers did not have enough time to fix up the outside.
 - c. The entire home was not well maintained.
 - d. None of the above

9. Why can the Holidays be a good time to sell a house?
 - a. The seller can take advantage of the Holiday atmosphere.

- b. More homes sell at this time.
 - c. There is a smaller inventory of homes and less competition.
 - d. Both a and c
10. All rooms should be neat and clean but two rooms, in particular, need to absolutely shine. They are
- a. Bedrooms
 - b. Kitchens
 - c. Bathrooms
 - d. Both b and c

Name _____ Date _____

PREPARING THE HOME FOR SALE FINAL QUIZ

Please circle the correct answer for each question.

1. A B C D
2. A B C D
3. A B C D
4. A B C D
5. A B C D
6. A B C D
7. A B C D
8. A B C D
9. A B C D
10. A B C D

Potomac Real Estate School Certification Sheet for Correspondence Course

Please fax to (703) 758-0044, scan and email to info@PotomacRESchool.com, or mail to Potomac Real Estate School, Box 494, Oakton, Virginia 22124

Print Name _____ **Course: 1 Hour Preparing**
 Billing Address _____ **the Home for Sale CE**
 _____ (VREB Approval #58079)

 RE License # _____ (10 digits)
 Expires _____
 Phone # _____
 Email _____
 Company Affiliation _____

Payment by Check

_____ I enclose a check payable to Potomac Real Estate School LLC in the amount of \$15.00

OR

Payment by Credit Card

_____ Please charge \$15.00 to my ___Visa___Master Card___American Express___Discover

OR

Card # _____ Expiration Date _____

Security Code _____ Signature _____

Did you find the material well organized?	Yes	No
Was the material well written?	Yes	No
Was the course material relevant?	Yes	No

Suggestions _____

How did you find us? Please circle

Internet Postcard Referred by _____ Email
 Personal Note/Letter Ad VREB NVAR L&F
 Other



Student Declaration: I hereby certify that I completed this continuing education course (1 Hour Preparing the Home for Sale) on my own without assistance.

Signed _____

Date _____

Name (Print) _____

Notary Public Declaration: Taken, subscribed, and sworn before me this ____ day of _____, 20____
In the City/County/Town of _____
In the State/Commonwealth of _____
My commission expires ____/____/_____

Notary Public _____

Notary Signature Required

But Seal NOT Required