

Best Home Buy (BHBSM) Checklist for Spokane

❑ 1. Clear All Clutter

When a buyer walks through your home, they have to “see and feel” themselves moving into the house. If the house is cluttered and messy, nobody is going to see themselves enjoying the home. If a buyer can't see or feel themselves moving in, they aren't buying.

- a. At the very minimum, you want all top surfaces to be free and clear, including paperwork from desks, toothbrushes in the bathroom, or small appliances/utensils in the kitchen counters.
- b. With all the devices we have today, don't forget to hide them, especially any cords or wires that go along with them. If you cannot hide the power cords from your bigger appliances, use some zip ties to tuck them neatly away.
- c. Since you're moving out anyway, consider renting a storage space to put away things like dining chairs, a love seat, or exercise equipment. Perhaps have a garage sale, or seek the help of a professional home stager.
- d. Always be cleaning. You have to clean constantly when your home is on the market. You may get only an hour's notice (or less!) for a showing.
- e. If at all possible, clear your closets as well. Buyers look for storage, whether they're moving up, or downsizing. See if you can take half the stuff out of your closets, and neatly organize what's left. Buyers will snoop, so be sure to keep all your closets and cabinets clean and tidy.
- f. Speaking of snoopers, be sure to secure your valuables and other important items, not just hidden away, but locked. You might even consider an offsite location in a security deposit box.
- g. Consider using display towels and decorative pillows in your bedrooms and bathrooms.

❑ 2. Conceal The Critters

Would a cuddly dog warm the hearts of potential buyers? Most likely it wouldn't sway them to make an offer. Not everybody is a dog- or cat-lover. Buyers don't want to walk in your home and see a bowl full of dog food, smell the kitty litter box or have tufts of pet hair stuck to their clothes.

It will give buyers the impression that your house is not clean. If you're planning an open house, send the critters to a pet hotel for the day.

Smells, fur, scratch marks on furniture or carpeting ... all a potential repellant of a good buyer. Not because they don't love pets, but because your home must feel pleasant and "move-in ready". You don't know what kind of allergies, scent sensitivity, or otherwise a good buyer might have. Not a hard fix.

❑ 3. Get Rid of Evidence of Kids

We're not saying to change their bedrooms and send them away to the grandparents (though that might be a nice break). What you want to get rid of is anything that looks like a tornado just came through with toys, games, shoes, blankets, dolls, and so forth. The only rooms that kids should be obvious in, are their bedrooms. Keep their things out of the living room, and even the family room. Everything in the house needs to present itself in a tidy fashion.

❑ 4. There's Only One Impression: The First One

When a buyer pulls up, the first thing they look at is curb appeal. I can't tell you how many times I've driven up to a house with my buyers, they look at the curb appeal and quickly ask me to drive away. Game over for the seller.

The problem is ... in today's world, that's not where the first impression occurs.

The curb appeal starts online ... the virtual world!

When a buyer pulls up a bad, unprofessional photo taken with a phone under poor lighting conditions, the seller clicks away to the next property.

Game over for the seller. If you want to attract the best buyers, you want impeccable photos from a professional.

You don't have a second chance to make a first impression.

Now let's go back to the real world ... your curb appeal.

No matter how good the interior of your home looks, buyers have already judged your home before they walk through the door.

It's important to make people feel warm, welcome and safe as they approach the house. This doesn't take much effort and can pay big dividends.

Spruce up your home's exterior with inexpensive shrubs and brightly colored flowers. You can typically get a 100-percent return on the money you put into your home's curb appeal.

Entryways are also important. You use it as a utility space for your coat and keys. But, when you're selling, make it welcoming by putting in a small bench, a vase of fresh-cut flowers or even some cookies.

❑ 5. Restrict Access To Yourself To Some Areas of Your Home

For example, consider spending most, if not all your time in the basement family room, or other secluded area. This keeps the messes confined, and it could be cleaned up fairly quickly.

This is especially applicable to our kids and pets, to minimize scratching or dirtying up the new carpet that you just installed in the family room.

If it's unavoidable, you may designate a specific room as a storage area for all the items you've put away after decluttering. A lot of people use their garage for this purpose.

However, an offsite storage space is preferable. You'll never know when a buyer might be specifically looking for a garage to indulge in their hobby, or expand their home business. For this type of buyer, it is very important to see that you keep a tidy garage.

❑ 6. Paint Rooms That Need It

Dark, dreary colors can shrink the size of your rooms. Old, stained paint makes rooms look dated, and perceived with less value. Contemporary colors can change the whole feel of your home.

Paint is the single best improvement that will give you more bang for your buck, because colors introduce the ambience to your room. From a selling standpoint, it is important to stick with neutral colors.

Remember selling your home is not about personal preferences but appealing to the masses. Stick with off white and light creamy colors for maximum benefit. Sherwin-Williams offers some excellent [interior home painting tips](#) that are worth a look.

❑ 7. Let There Be Light

This is a real pro tip here... upgrading your lighting fixtures for a styling refresh if they're more than 20 years old.

At the very least, use "Daylight" instead of "Soft White" bulbs in all your living areas, especially the darker ones. The bright white (vs. warm yellow) will make your home way brighter and make it feel "higher quality".

Especially when competing against other homes on the market, this is a detail very few homeowners know about that pays big dividends. It doesn't have to cost much, yet makes an immediate impact on buyers.

❑ 8. Change the Faucets and Spouts

Just like #7, this is another real pro tip. It doesn't cost much and doesn't take a lot of time, but it sure can make a big difference. Invest in modern, nice faucets or spouts to make the entire house stand out and feel "higher quality".

❑ 9. Provide Flowers and Greenery

This simple tip goes a long way towards making your house feel warm, inviting, and "move-in ready".

Put fresh flowers once per week on your dining table, kitchen table, and possibly your bathroom vanity. Putting a few green plants throughout the house can really go a long way to making it feel like a buyers' next home. It's unrealistic to put fresh flowers and plants in every room of your home. Some rooms may not have the right light or temperature conditions, or you might not have a green thumb to keep plants looking healthy. In that case, it's okay to use a few quality faux plants in strategic places.

❑ 10. Provide Some Aromatherapy

Simplest solution? A few candles around the house. Nothing to sweet smelling. Go for natural scents like lavender. Pro tip: get soy candles, they burn waylonger. So you'll get more bang for your buck. Our sense of smell is one of our strongest senses - if your home smells pleasant, that pleasant feeling will be linked to your house.

❑ 11. Bonus Tip: It's All About The Kitchen

You're not actually selling your house, you're selling your kitchen – that's how important it is.

Note: An exception may be a unique feature that your property provides; such as a larger lot, a spectacular view, or desirable location.

The benefits of remodeling your kitchen are endless, and the best part of it is that you'll probably get 85% of your money back. It may be a few thousand dollars to replace countertops where a buyer may either

- a. Knock \$10,000 off the asking price if your kitchen looks dated, or
- b. Make a \$20,000 offer above your asking price, with a fresh remodel.

The fastest, most inexpensive kitchen updates include painting and new cabinet hardware. Use a neutral-color paint so you can present buyers with a blank canvas where they can start envisioning their own style.

If you have a little money to spend, buy one fancy stainless steel appliance. Why one? Because when people see one high-end appliance they think all the rest are expensive too and it updates the kitchen.

Another possibility to consider is instead of an expensive quartz or granite countertop, there are concrete or epoxy alternatives that can be applied easily on top of your existing laminate counters. It will provide the same luxurious appeal, for about half the cost.

As a final note, be careful NOT TO OVER-UPGRADE. The top value of your home is usually limited by the comparative homes in your neighborhood. We can provide this information using our exclusive **Best Home Buy Analytics ReportSM**.

SELLING QUICKLY FOR TOP DOLLAR (THE BHBSM SYSTEM)

To get top dollar in the sale of your home, there are 2 ingredients:

1. Get multiple offers (the more the merrier)
2. Be the **Best Home BuySM** in the market.

You'd want several buyers knocking on your door, pleading that you accept their offer and ignore everyone else's.

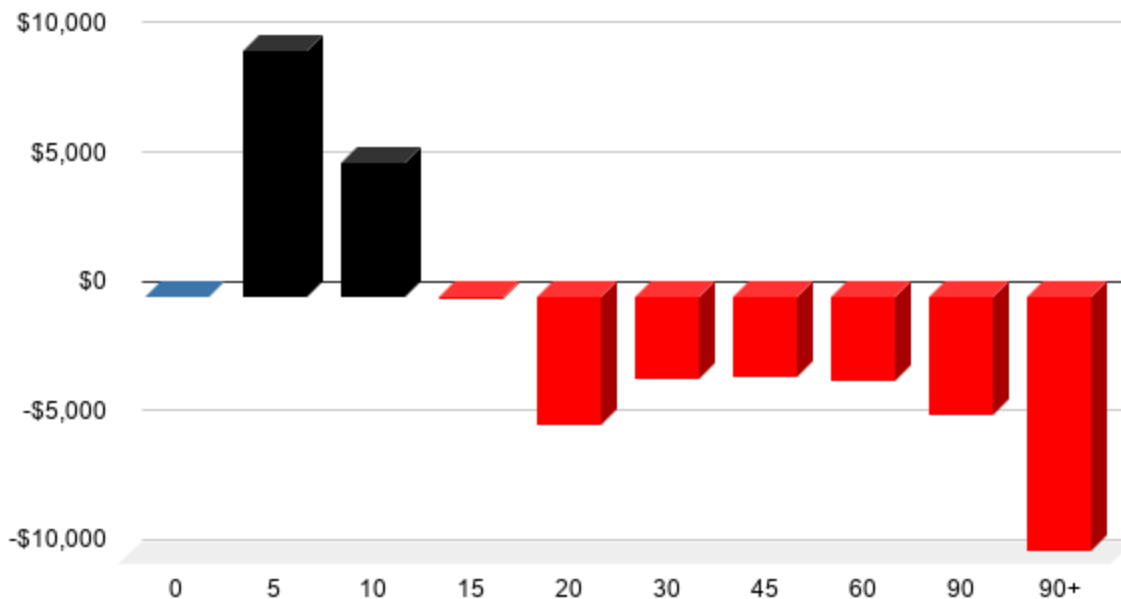
Buyers shop based on comparison. They will look at your house (and what you're asking for it), and compare that to another house and its listing price.

One of the items in the checklist in your house, will trigger them emotionally, or drive them subconsciously, to give you the highest price that they can afford.

They will make an offer and fight over the property that they perceive (according to their personal lifestyle and financial situation) as the **Best Home BuySM** in the market.

In fact, they will be willing to make an offer above your asking price, if they consider that your house provides the best bang for their buck.

Spokane 2020 SOLD vs LIST Price by Days on Market



The graph above summarizes why it's important to close quickly in 10 days or less. The black columns represent offer amounts above the listing price, while the red columns indicate actual offers below the asking price.

The only reason buyers make an offer above the list price, is because they want to beat other buyers who are competing for the same property. If they don't have competition, then they will offer less.

After 10 days on the market, the listing becomes stale. Buyers are asking: "What's wrong with that property? Why is it still on the market?"

The strategy behind the **Best Home Buy**SM system is to make your home so compelling that multiple buyers are willing to make an offer.

BHBSM HOME INSPECTION

In our collective experience working with hundreds of motivated sellers and hungry buyers, a house qualifies as the **Best Home Buy (BHBSM)** with a score of 75 or better.

We've developed a preliminary home inspection process, which assigns a numerical score to your specific home.

A preliminary inspection is comparable to a soft credit check inquiry. The **BHBSM Home Inspection** will be good enough to get the homeowner started, but it will not be formally recognized by an appraiser or a lending institution.

This is a complimentary service that we provide, where we walk through your home with a 33-point inspection list in our exclusive **Best Home Buy Report CardSM**.

We will be brutally honest, to assess the selling condition of your house, comparing that to the best (and the worst) homes for sale in the current Spokane market, that we see week after week.

At the end of the 1-2 hour walkthrough, we will leave you with:

1. Our numerical assessment of your home (100+ is the perfect score).
2. A list of home improvements to increase your score to at least 75 or better.
3. A list of 3rd party optional resources to help you accomplish the necessary repairs or improvements.

To schedule a free, no obligation **BHBSM Home Inspection**, you can schedule a phone call or an online meeting at <http://MeetDennis.net>. You can also text me at 509-795-0202.