

Should I fix it before I sell?

A practical guide to repairs, updates, and deciding what can wait. For homeowners in Arizona's East Valley.

Before you spend \$5,000, start here.

A long project list does not mean every project belongs in your selling plan. Start with condition, presentation, your timeline, and the homes buyers will compare with yours.

1 Understand the issue.

Is it a maintenance problem, a safety concern, or simply a style you no longer love? Unknown causes need evaluation before cosmetic work.

2 Get the full cost.

Include labor, materials, cleanup, and time. Get written estimates for significant repairs, even if you are still deciding whether to do them.

3 Choose a plan for your home.

Review the project with your agent in the context of competing listings, your budget, and your target date. A nicer finish does not guarantee a higher net return.

Use this guide: check the items that apply, flag questions for a professional, then complete the project planner on page 4.

Make the home feel cared for.

Walk through your home as though you are seeing it for the first time. Check only the items that apply.

☐ **Clean before replacing.**

Deep clean kitchens, bathrooms, floors, windows, and reachable fixtures. Assess the result before deciding a finish needs replacement.

☐ **Create room to see the space.**

Clear crowded counters, simplify shelves, and arrange furniture so rooms and walkways are easy to navigate.

☐ **Handle small, straightforward repairs.**

Consider loose cabinet pulls, sticking interior doors, damaged screens, and burned-out bulbs. Use qualified help where the work requires it.

☐ **Touch up thoughtfully.**

Test the paint match in daylight. If a touch-up looks patchy, consider repainting the wall after discussing the scope and cost.

☐ **Freshen the arrival.**

Sweep the entry, remove debris, tidy planting areas, and clean the front door. Keep paths clear and the entrance easy to access.

☐ **Find the source of odors or stains.**

Investigate persistent smells, water marks, or recurring discoloration. Fragrance and fresh paint are not substitutes for addressing the cause.

A useful first step

Take photos of each room and the entry. Review them for visual distractions, visible wear, and areas that need a closer look before making a shopping list.

Arizona details. Bigger decisions.

Use these prompts to decide what to investigate and where to get advice.

ARIZONA WALK-THROUGH

Cooling and sun exposure

Note cooling concerns, damaged screens, weatherstripping, and sun-worn exterior finishes. Gather service records; ask an HVAC professional about performance concerns.

Water, roof, and irrigation

Look for visible leaks, staining, ponding, or broken irrigation. Have unexplained moisture, roof concerns, or stucco cracks evaluated before covering them.

Outdoor spaces and special features

Check patios, shade structures, gates, and pool equipment if present. Gather available records for solar, septic, or a private well and flag questions for the appropriate specialist.

DISCUSS BEFORE COMMITTING

Full kitchen or bathroom remodels

Compare a refresh with a renovation. Factor in cost, disruption, and whether the work fits the likely buyer expectations for your price range.

Whole-home flooring or major landscaping

Review condition and alternatives first. Cleaning, limited repair, or a smaller scope may be enough for your selling plan.

Replacing an older but working system

Age alone does not tell the whole story. Get an assessment and discuss options before deciding to replace it.

Address urgent safety concerns promptly with qualified help. Do not hide known problems with cosmetic work; discuss condition and disclosure questions with your agent.

Build a plan before a budget.

Print this page and bring it to your pre-listing walkthrough.

Property: _____

Target listing date: _____ **Spending limit:** _____

Project / concern	Estimate	Next step / who	Decision*

*Do now / Get advice / Hold off. Estimates are planning figures, not promised returns.

Want a second set of eyes?

Request a free pre-listing walkthrough. We can review your home, discuss your timeline, and build a practical list of priorities.

Connect with Kaitlyn at [Kaitlynbjornsson.com](https://kaitlynbjornsson.com)

General planning guidance, not an inspection, contractor estimate, or guarantee of sale price. Every property and selling situation is different.

Further reading: National Association of REALTORS® - Preparing to Sell Your Home.