

The Pre-Listing ROI Guide

Ten projects that actually pay off before you sell in Southwest Florida, with real cost ranges and the ones that are a waste of money. From an agent who built homes before he sold them.

Former contractor · One missed list price in a career

Most sellers either do nothing and leave money on the table, or over-improve and never see it back. The trick is knowing exactly which dollars a buyer will pay you back for, and which ones they won't. Here is where I'd spend, and where I'd stop.

01. Fresh, neutral interior paint

\$2,000 to \$5,000

Nothing returns more per dollar. Warm whites and greiges photograph well and let a buyer picture their own life in the home. Skip bold accent walls.

02. Deep clean, declutter, depersonalize

\$200 to \$800

The highest ROI on this list. A spotless, half-empty home feels bigger and newer. Pack the family photos and the countertop clutter before the first photo is ever taken.

03. Curb appeal that earns the click

\$500 to \$2,500

Pressure wash the drive and roof, fresh mulch, trimmed hedges, and a painted front door. In SWFL, the listing photo buyers stop on is almost always the front of the house.

04. Roof check + wind mitigation report

\$150 to \$1,500

This is the Florida difference. A clean roof inspection and a wind-mit certificate lower a buyer's insurance and kill the number-one objection before it starts. Handle small repairs now, not in negotiation.

05. Service the AC and document it

\$150 to \$500

A serviced, receipted air handler removes a favorite inspection bargaining chip. Buyers in this heat scrutinize the AC harder than almost anything else.

06. Kitchen refresh, not remodel

\$1,500 to \$5,000

New hardware, a modern faucet, painted cabinets, and a tidy backsplash read as updated for a fraction of a remodel. A full gut rarely returns what it costs right before a sale.

07. Bathroom refresh

\$500 to \$3,000

Re-caulk, replace dated fixtures and mirrors, swap a tired vanity. Clean and current beats trendy and half-finished every time.

08. Swap worn carpet for LVP

\$3,000 to \$8,000

Luxury vinyl plank in the main living areas looks great, survives Florida life, and erases the biggest visual red flag: stained or dated carpet.

09. Lighting and fixtures

\$300 to \$1,500

Brighter, warmer bulbs and a few updated fixtures modernize a whole home cheaply. Replace yellowed switch plates and outlet covers while you're at it.

10. A pre-listing inspection

\$300 to \$500

Know what a buyer's inspector will find before they do. It lets you fix the small stuff on your terms and price with no surprises. This is how you protect your list price.

Where I'd stop

The fastest way to lose money before a sale is to over-improve. I'd skip these:

- × A full kitchen or bathroom gut remodel right before selling
- × Adding a pool weeks before you list
- × High-end smart-home systems the next owner may not want
- × Highly personalized or bold design choices
- × Expensive landscaping overhauls beyond clean and tidy

Want to know which of these your home actually needs?

That is exactly what I do on a walkthrough. With a contractor's eye, I can tell you the handful of projects worth doing for your specific home and price point, and the ones to leave alone, so you spend only where it comes back to you at the closing table.

- ✓ A value built from real, recent local comps
- ✓ A room-by-room, dollar-smart prep plan
- ✓ Your information is never sold or shared

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