

FSBO Prep Checklist

47 things to do before the sign goes in the yard.

The 47-point list of what to do before the sign goes in the yard. Work through this top to bottom — every item you skip costs you on price or speed.

1 - Paperwork & Pre-Listing

- Pull current mortgage payoff figure from your lender
- Locate property tax records and most recent statement
- Find HOA documents, CC&Rs, and dues records (if applicable)
- Gather any survey, plat map, or septic/well documentation
- Compile receipts/warranties for major improvements (roof, HVAC, windows)
- Check for any open permits with the county
- Set up a separate email/phone for buyer inquiries (Google Voice works)

2 - Pricing Research

- Pull 3–5 sold comps from the last 90 days within 0.5 miles
- Identify 2–3 active listings competing with yours
- Identify what is currently under contract (the leading edge of the market)
- Adjust comps for square footage, beds/baths, lot, condition, garage
- Decide on your starting list price (pricing worksheet helps)
- Set your "walk away" price — the floor you won't go below

3 - Curb Appeal & Exterior

- Mow, edge, weed, fresh mulch in beds
- Trim trees and shrubs away from house and roof
- Power-wash siding, walkways, driveway
- Paint or touch up the front door
- New welcome mat, polished house numbers, working porch light
- Clean gutters and exterior windows
- Remove or stage any RVs, trailers, junk vehicles

4 - Interior Prep

- Declutter — remove 50% of items from counters, shelves, closets

- Depersonalize — pack family photos, religious items, diplomas
- Deep clean kitchen (inside oven, fridge, microwave)
- Deep clean every bathroom — grout, tile, fixtures
- Steam clean carpets or refresh hardwood
- Touch up paint on trim, baseboards, walls
- Replace any burned-out bulbs (use same color temp throughout)
- Fix sticky doors, loose handles, dripping faucets
- Wash all windows inside and out
- Remove bold or dated wallpaper if budget allows

5 - Staging & Showings

- Arrange furniture to show off room flow, not your favorite seating
- Add fresh flowers or a fruit bowl in the kitchen
- Make every bed with crisp, neutral linens
- Set the dining table with simple place settings
- Open all blinds, turn on every light before showings
- Remove pet bowls, toys, litter boxes during showings
- Bake cookies or use a clean, neutral scent — no air fresheners
- Set thermostat to 68–70°F (winter) or 72°F (summer)

6 - Listing Materials

- Hire a real estate photographer (\$150–300 in Billings)
- Optional: drone shots, walkthrough video
- Order a professional yard sign with rider for QR code/phone
- Print property flyers (1-page, color, with floor plan if possible)
- Sign up with a flat-fee MLS service (\$300–600)
- Write listing description: facts + lifestyle, no clichés
- Set up Facebook Marketplace + Zillow FSBO listing
- Plan first weekend open house

The 80/20 rule for FSBO prep: Curb appeal, deep clean, declutter, and pro photos solve 80% of why FSBOs underperform. Skip those four and you'll leave more on the table than the commission you're trying to save.

Stuck? Need a recommendation?

Text Damian at **406-697-3282**. He keeps a list of trusted Billings cleaners, painters, photographers, and stagers — and he'll send names, no listing pitch attached.