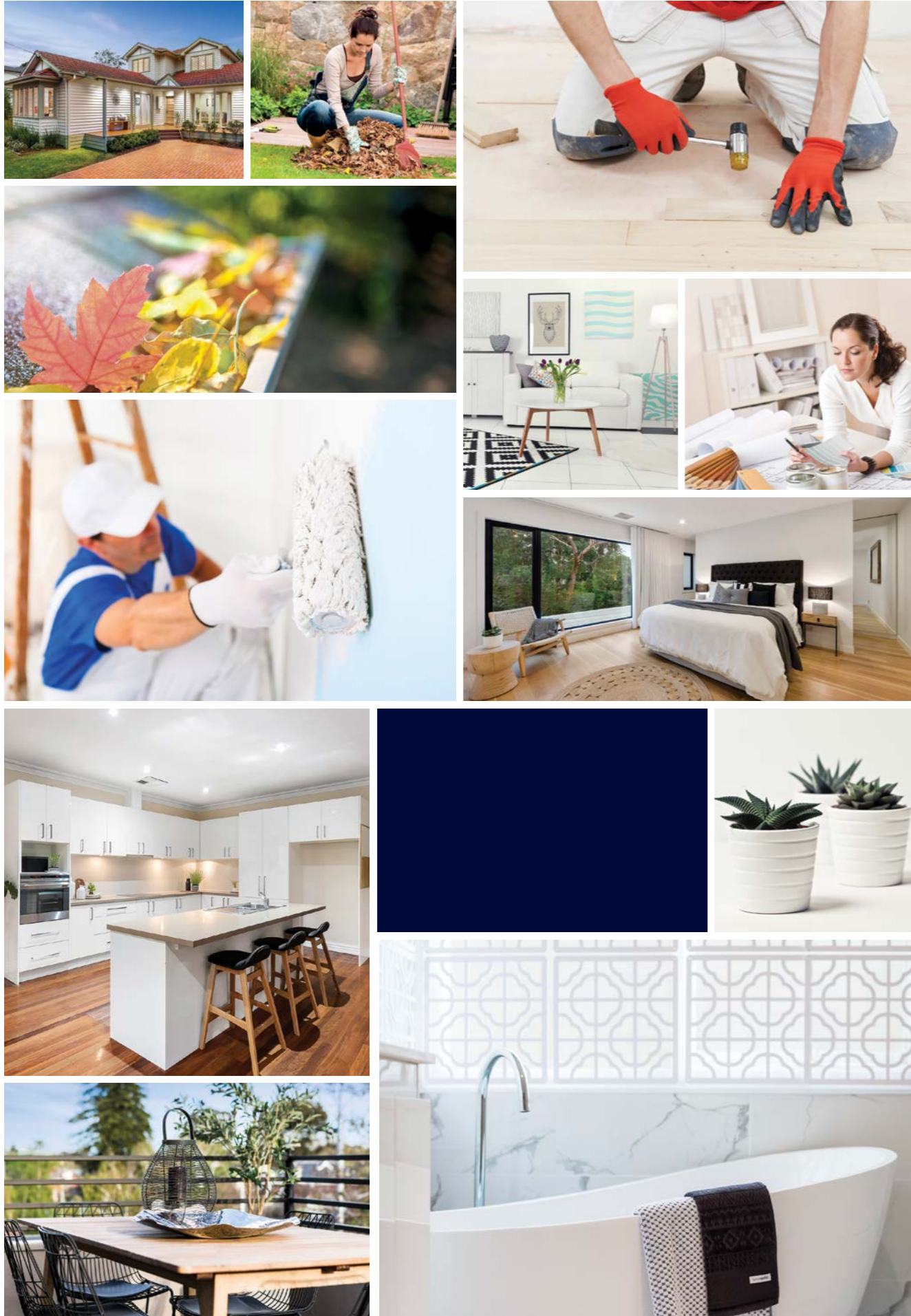


Knowledge  
Commitment  
Innovation  
Reliability

# MAINTAIN AND PREPARE YOUR HOME FOR **PROFIT**





Whether you're considering putting your home on the market in future or you've made the decision to sell, it's never too soon (or too late) to begin preparing your home for sale.

Securing the best price from the sale of your home is often a result of good maintenance, pre-sale preparation and a quality marketing campaign with an experienced real estate agent.

This booklet covers the following essential steps to get your home ready to sell:

- Assess what needs to be done .....3
- Plan and prepare..... 4
- Repair and maintenance checklist.....7
- Professional inspection report .....10
- Prepare your home for marketing .....16

We help people buy and sell homes year round making us experts at the best way to prepare and market your home with the goal to achieving maximum profit when it comes time to sell.

Regards,  
The Noel Jones Team



### Your home is a valuable asset

Depending on your circumstances, your principal place of residence is likely to be your biggest asset and thus, should be looked after so it grows in value.

Selling your home is a one-off opportunity for profit. Unlike other financial investments, your principal place of residence is free from capital gains tax and stamp duty making it a fantastic opportunity to come out of a sale with 'extra' money for your next home or for your savings account.

In an effort to protect your asset and increase your chances of making a profit, we recommend you carry out regular property maintenance. With good upkeep and repairs being taken care of as they present themselves you won't have much to do when it comes time to sell.

### A home that requires no work is an attractive prospect

Purchasers typically look for the best house they can buy within their budget and often have no money left over for renovations or repairs. It makes sense buyers will compete for, and stretch their budget to purchase a well maintained home to avoid having to save for upgrades or apply for a renovation loan.

Banks loan on a property's actual current value and rarely favour lending on unfinished or damaged properties. If your property needs extensive work or upgrades you will be eliminating a large number of potential buyers so take the time to go through your house with fresh eyes to see where you can improve or upgrade in order to attract plenty of buyers.

## Assess what needs to be done

### Clean and tidy homes sell quickly

Buyers typically want to move into their new home and start living without a long list of chores to do and they are likely to be put off by properties that look neglected or require too much work.

Completing obvious maintenance or upgrades before you put your home on the market can have a significant impact come sale time.

It may seem daunting to begin with but keep your eye on the end-goal. By investing time and money and presenting your home at its best you'll increase your chances of achieving maximum price.

When preparing your home for sale it's likely you'll need to inject some funds into it to complete repairs and upgrades. Depending on the level of upgrades/repairs you may need to redraw on a current home loan or dip into your savings.

### Assess what needs to be done

Start by making a list of what needs to be done. If the work consists of mainly aesthetic changes then allocating a budget toward managing them over a few months might be the way to go. Larger or more extensive changes can be discussed with your home lender.

It's also a good idea to have your home appraised before you complete repairs/renovations so you can compare it to the market average in your area. If you think you may have to do major repairs it's advisable to pay for a professional building inspection.

You will need to assess:

- condition of the building exterior
- state and aesthetics of the garden
- condition of the home interior
- aesthetics of the home interior
- condition of fixtures i.e. heating, hot water service.

## Plan and prepare

### 1. Purchase a notebook and start a to-do list for the areas of your home:

- Front - Driveway, paths, garden
- Front entry, door
- Lounge
- Family room
- Kitchen
- Bedrooms
- Bathrooms
- Laundry
- Deck/patio
- Pergolas
- Verandahs
- Garage/shed
- Pool
- External building
- Back garden

See the full checklist on pages 7 and 8/

### 2. Think like a purchaser

The golden rule of thumb is—if something needs to be repaired, fix it! Walk through your home and look at every detail in order to see what a potential purchaser will see. Make notes as you go.

We typically top seeing minor issues in our homes so ask a friend, family member or neighbour to walk through your home with a notebook making notes as they go.

Buyers will mentally add up perceived costs of repairing all those minor flaws and end up with an amount that is generally much higher than what it would actually cost to repair. You may believe the repairs are insignificant, however the buyer may question the maintenance and upkeep of the rest of the property and ultimately be put off.

Obvious items in need of repairs and perceived owner neglect can lower the final sale price and potentially lengthen the time it takes for your property to sell.

### 3. Consider a neutral palette

Take a look at the colour palette of your home. If it features bold colours it might be time to neutralise them. The average buyer will have difficulty looking beyond bright carpeting, bold wallpapers, old fashioned tiles and long-forgotten feature wall trends.

Make your home appeal to the largest possible segment of the market by researching which neutral tones are on trend and start painting or replacing soft furnishings. Position your property on the market to be as liveable to as many people as possible.

### 4. Take photos of the problem areas

Use your mobile phone or camera to take photos of the areas that need repairing or upgrading.

Take them with you when you go shopping to the hardware or other store.

### 5. Make a trades' service directory

Use your notebook to make a list of tradespeople you will need. i.e. plumbers, plasterers, painters, gardeners, etc along with their contact details.

### 6. Conduct another walk through

A day or two after your initial walk through, go through again. Jot down anything you missed. Ask a friend or neighbour to do their own walk through.

### 7. Create a to-do list

Look at your list of problem areas and break down the tasks that are required to complete the job. Make sure you write them in your notebook so you can tick them off as they are completed.

### 8. Book tradespeople to quote on the repairs

Get every major job quoted even if you think you'll tackle it yourself. You may discover some jobs aren't worth doing yourself when you consider the cost of materials and time spent to get the work done.

### 9. Repair or outsource

After you have your quotes decided which repairs you'll tackle and which you'll outsource.

### 10. Research

Take time to research the latest products that may result in saving time and money. New and innovative products are coming out all the time. For example, there are plenty of tile paint options which can be used on kitchen and bathroom tiles instead of replacing with new tiles.

### 11. Consider DIY

Visit your nearest hardware store or research online to discover 'do it yourself' products. The market is plentiful with y-to-install or do-it-yourself kits.

### 12. Tackle one room at a time

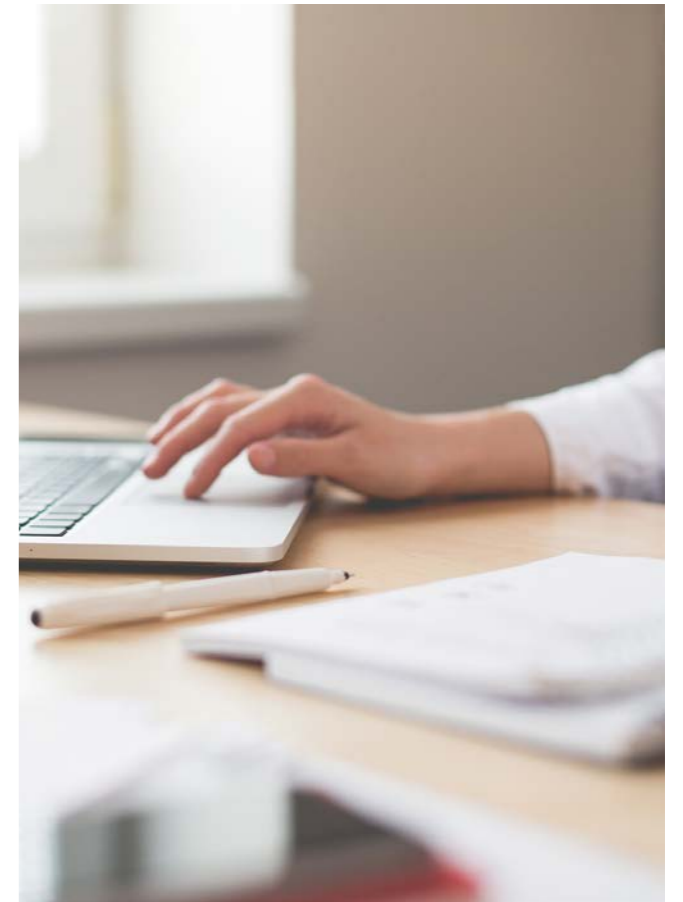
Break the work into manageable chunks by tackling one room at a time. While this may seem to take longer, you will avoid turning your home into a construction zone that inconveniences family members and house mates.

### 13. De-clutter

Before you begin each room, conduct a thorough inspection of items and cupboards. If you're unlikely to want an item in your new home then now is the time to decide its future. It will be one less thing to deal with come packing day. Donate, recycle or sell any items you no longer want.

### 14. Stay on track

Keep your 'profit' end goal in mind and stay on top of your do-to list. Tick off items as they're completed so you'll know how you're progressing. If things stall reassess the situation and consider hiring extra tradespeople to get the work done.







## Professional inspection reports

### Consider getting a building and pest inspection

It's common practice for buyers to get a building and pest inspection before they purchase a property. Many property owners assume the reports are only relevant to purchasers who have them done as part of the buying process. However, having your home inspected for structural and termite damage can be highly advantageous when it comes to selling.

A building and pest inspection report typically costs less than \$1,000. A reputable building/pest inspector will examine all accessible parts of the property—both interior and exterior. Sub floors, ceiling space, roof, walls, garages, carports, granny flats, fences, steps, pathways, driveways should all be checked and documented during the inspection.

Once completed the inspector should take the time to verbally go over what they've inspected and what, if anything, they've found.

### An inspection report empowers you

Although your property may appear to be structurally sound and there are no visible indications that termites, subsidence or mould are present, there could be hidden problems lurking in the foundations, roof, plumbing or walls that only a professional can identify.

You may be concerned that having an inspection completed will uncover some less-than-ideal truths about your property. Don't let this deter you from having one done. Being aware of issues with your property before you put your house on the market will place you in a strong position when it comes to negotiating the sale price of your home—particularly if nothing major is found.

If the inspection reveals issues with your property you can take action to resolve them before your home is listed for sale, putting you in a strong position to get the maximum price possible in the current marketplace.

### The benefits of transparency

While many buyers will still insist on having their own pre-purchase building and pest inspections conducted, showing them any professional reports you have will indicate you have nothing to hide when it comes to the condition of your property. This will give them less room to negotiate when it comes to price.

### Be prepared

A building and pest inspection report and the photos that accompany it are a complete list of defects of the home, as seen by an objective professional.

Remember, a building and pest inspection is not a deal breaker and by paying for one yourself you will be able to make the decision about whether or not to deal with anything that is found. All homes require maintenance, it doesn't necessarily mean that every issue must be actioned in order for a buyer to purchase it.

For example – the report may say:

**The home is 24 years old and ... is in need of new roof tiles**

Roof tiles last approximately 25 years and may need replacing at that point in time to ensure the roof doesn't leak. If you're not prepared to undertake the repairs recommended in the report then be prepared for buyers to negotiate a better price.

### Next steps

Once you have a complete picture of the state of your property according to the building and pest inspection you need to decide what you'll repair and what you won't.

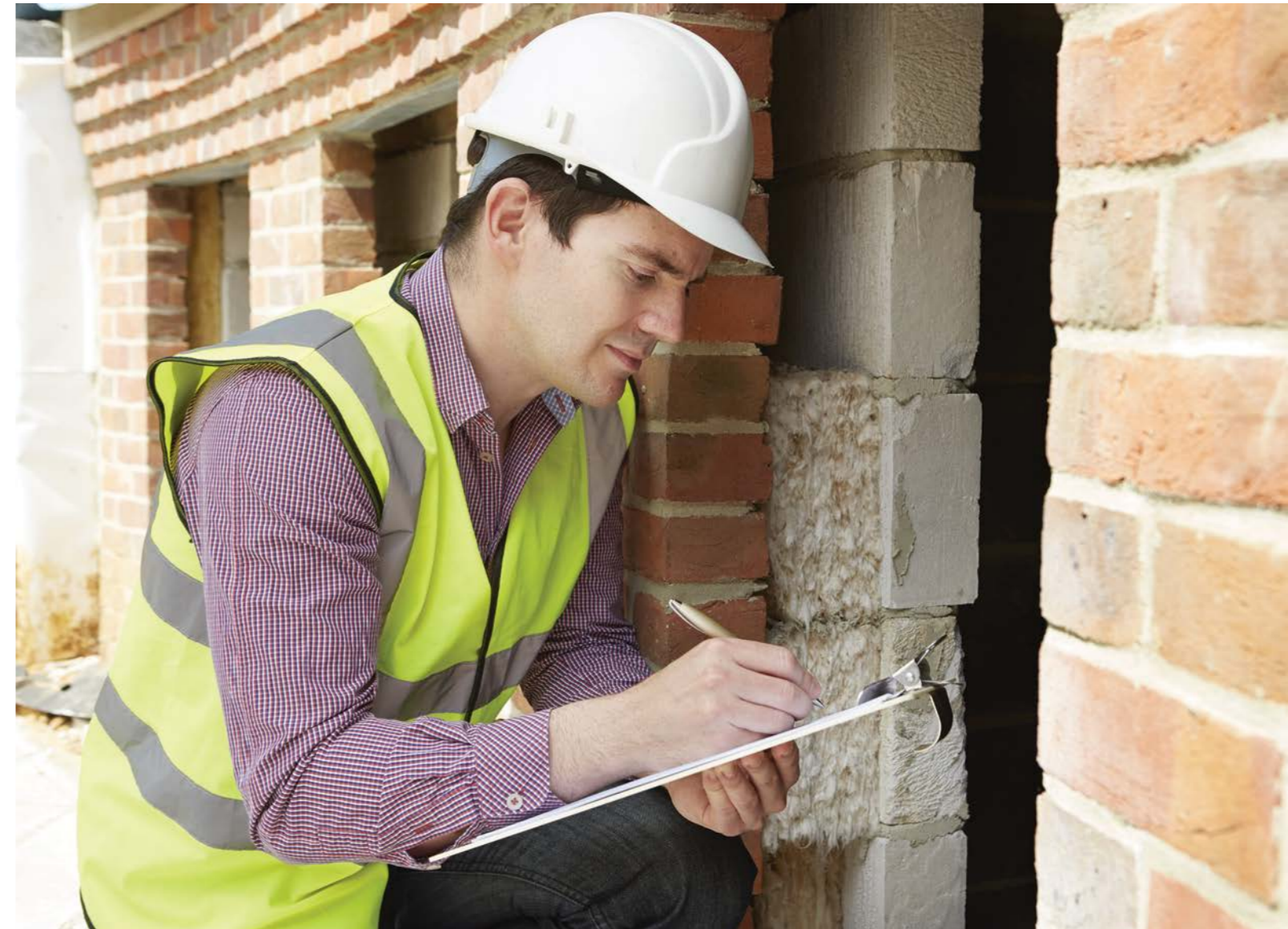
### Property appraisal

Once you have completed repairs and made updates to your home, it's time for a real estate agent to give you an appraisal of your property.

Noel Jones Real Estate offers a free, no obligation service where one of our expert agents will visit your property, assess it and discuss recent sales that have taken place near your home. By conducting a comparison of what the current market is paying for homes similar to your own, the agent will be able to give you an idea of the price your property could attract.

### Sample report

The sample report on the following pages is similar to what you might receive after having a building inspection completed. This is what a potential purchaser will see should they have one completed on your home. The report may also include photos of defects.



## Report on a home in good condition

<b>Building Style:</b>	Two-storey dwelling
<b>External Walls:</b>	Brick veneer, timber frame with texture-coated fibre cement sheets
<b>Roof Construction:</b>	The roof is of pitched and skillion construction
<b>Internal Walls:</b>	Plaster render
<b>Windows:</b>	Aluminium
<b>Footings:</b>	The building is constructed on concrete slab footings
<b>Estimated Age:</b>	Between 40 and 50 years old

### Roof System External

- **Gutters and Downpipes**

Downpipes appear to be in serviceable condition. Some downpipes appear to be missing—these should be installed. Leaves and debris are present in gutters—these should be cleared. Box gutters need to be monitored, water is ponding and re-alignment may be required.

### Interior

- **Ceilings**

The condition of the ceilings is generally fair. Defective surfaces were noted and maintenance will be required. Moderate settlement cracks were noted. Some repairs or maintenance will be required. Repairs are required to ceiling linings. Paint deterioration was noticed. Previous repairs have been made. Silicon has been installed where cornice cracking occurred. Lights need to be fitted to the ceiling - we recommend getting a licensed electrician to fix some light fittings.

- **Walls**

The condition of the walls is generally fair. Defective or poor surfaces were noted to wall materials and will need repair prior to next painting. Moderate moisture readings were detected throughout internal surfaces. A higher than normal moisture reading was detected above skirting level. Further investigation and repairs are required.

- **Doors**

The condition of the doors is generally fair. The sliding doors bind and need adjustment and/or repair. Paint deterioration and wear and tear was noticed. Covers for door hardware are missing to some doors. We recommend installing a fixed

handrail for safety reasons.

- **Floors**

The condition of the floors is generally fair. Squeaking flooring was noted. This will require fixing to prevent movement. Previous repairs have been made; repairs/maintenance is required, as floors are not finished in some areas.

- **Windows**

The condition of the windows is generally fair. Adjustment is required to some windows to ensure smooth operation. Some windows were locked and the operation was not checked at the time of inspection.

### Bathrooms

- **Ensuite Bathroom 1**

Basin and taps - The basin and taps appear serviceable. Drainage appears slower than normal. A licensed plumber should investigate this.

- **Ensuite Bathroom 2**

Basin and taps - The basin and taps appear serviceable. Drainage appears slower than normal. A licensed plumber should investigate this.

### Exterior

- **Windows**

The condition of the exterior of the windows is generally fair. Storm moulds are not present and need to be fitted to ensure water does not penetrate through this area.

- **Decks, Pergolas, Balconies, Verandahs and Awnings**

- **Balcony - Defects or Maintenance items**

The loose handrail requires securing and additional support. Balustrade wires need to be tighter and we recommend checking to see if it meets regulation for safety reasons.

### External Roof System

- **Roof style and Condition**

The overall condition of the roof coverings is fair. Chipped/cracked tiles were noticed and repairs are required.

### Services

- **Details**

Hot water system overflow needs to be diverted away from house. Smoke detectors are fitted; however the positioning, operation or adequacy was not tested and is not



## Sample report

commented on. Air-conditioning is installed in the premises (to the study) but has not been inspected.

## Swimming pool

- **Pool fencing**

We recommend installing a fixed handrail for safety reasons.

- **Fences and gates**

Repairs to fences are required. The fences are mainly constructed from timber, also timber and texture coated cement seeping. The fences are generally in fair condition but some repairs or maintenance is required.

## Overall property condition

A comparison of this and other dwellings of similar age, construction and level of maintenance would rate this building as AVERAGE. There may be areas/elements requiring minor repairs or maintenance.

## Major defects in this building

- **Overall condition**

The incidence of major defects in this building compared with the average condition of similar buildings of approximately the same age and construction and that have been reasonably maintained, is considered to be TYPICAL.

The frequency and/or magnitude of major defects are consistent with the inspector's expectations when compared with similar buildings of approximately the same age, construction that have been reasonably well-maintained.

## Minor defects in this building

- **Overall condition**

The incidence of minor defects in this building compared with the average condition of similar buildings of approximately the same age and construction and that have been reasonably maintained, is considered to be TYPICAL.

The frequency and/or magnitude of minor defects are consistent with the inspector's expectations when compared with similar buildings of approximately the same age, construction that have been reasonably well-maintained.

## Important Note:

The building rating noted above is only a generalisation taking into account numerous factors, and should be read in conjunction with the notable items and main report.





## Prepare your home for marketing

### Avoid taking shortcuts when marketing your home

When it comes time to put your home up for sale you've likely spent time and money to ensure problems are rectified, imperfections have been dealt with and the property looks immaculate. Now is not the time to be frugal with your marketing. Your goal is to have potential buyers think "That's the one!" when they first see your property.

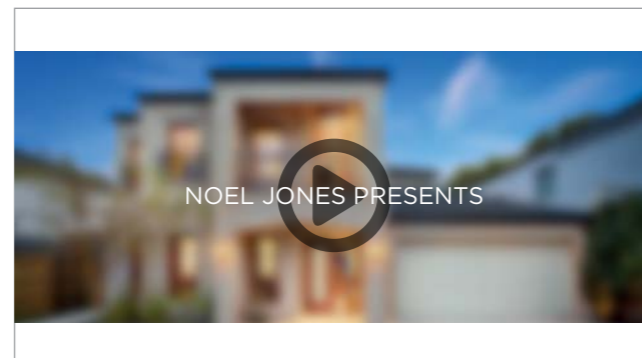
One of the first things buyers will see is the photographs of your property. Therefore, it is essential that you have quality photos taken that show off your property and its best features. Noel Jones works with experienced photographers who know how to present your property in the best possible light and highlight your home's best features

Homes that are unique or stand-out from the crowd can warrant having a video taken for marketing purposes. These videos can be especially useful for potential buyers who may not be able to get to an Open for Inspection or to give them a room-by-

room sneak peek which will entice them to come and experience the 'real thing'.

Before preparing your home for photography or video talk to your real estate agent as they will be able to give you tips on presenting your home or put you in touch with a property stylist.

Remember once you've had your photos taken your home should remain the same for every open home, and buyer inspection throughout the marketing campaign.



### Steps to prepare:

#### 1. De-clutter and clean, clean, clean

A pristine, sparkling clean home says, 'I care about this home. I've looked after it.' Buyers will be scrutinising your home closely and will notice clutter, dirt, dust and cobwebs. While this may not put them off, a well presented home translates to a home that is loved and well maintained.

#### 2. Think about who you are appealing to

Think about your type of house or unit and the buyer it might appeal to. You may need to make temporary adjustments to ensure your home reflects the buyer's needs. For example if you've been using the spare bedroom as a sewing/hobby/playroom it would be beneficial to present it as a guest room.

Things to consider:

- Is it a single person's apartment?
- Is it designed for couples?
- Is it a first home buyer's home?
- Or is it a family home?

#### 3. The front of the home must create a strong first impression

There's no doubt buyers will be discouraged from inspecting a home with poor kerb appeal. If you've mowed the lawn, tidied the garden and swept the driveway for the photo shoot but buyers turn up to an overgrown jungle they may not get out of the car.

For both the photo shoot and while on the market, the front of your property should be clean and tidy. Lawns should be manicured and lush, hedges and edges trimmed, dead plants or branches removed, paths and driveways free of leaves and debris. Clear cobwebs, remove peeling paint and grime. Wash gutters, eaves, fascias, weatherboards and your roof.

Remove/replace old pot plants, worn furniture and doormats from verandahs and porches and check the front door and door trims are clean and the paint in good condition.





#### 4. Present the home

Remove all personal items from display including photos, trophies, awards, certificates, any religious icons, memo boards, pictures and magnets on the fridge, calendars and children's artwork.

If possible minimise the amount of furniture in each room—put items in storage or ask a neighbour to store them in a garage or shed. Replace old or worn furniture or consider having your home styled by a professional.

Restore rooms back to their original purpose. If you're using your dining room as a home office it's time to pack your computer and paperwork away and set up an inviting area where potential buyers can envisage cosy family gatherings taking place.

Try to match your home to suit the potential buyer. If your home is designed to suit a family with small children then play up the areas and features that make it a perfect family home.

#### 5. Kitchen

De-clutter! A fridge should not be noticeable—remove photos, magnets and any other items that have made their way on to it.

Remove all items from kitchen counter tops—pens, sunglasses, phone chargers, magazines and newspapers, small appliances. Put the bin way out of sight, remove any pets bowls and tea towels. Add one or two items only such as a fruit bowl, a vase with flowers or some herb pots.

Clean every nook and cranny—surfaces, cupboards (inside and out), ceiling fans, oven and stove top, exhaust hood and filter, dishwasher, flooring.

#### 6. Lounge room

If you're lucky enough to have a nice view from your lounge room, maximise it. You can do this by arranging furniture to take full advantage of the scenery whether it be greenery in your backyard, a nearby park or a distant mountain.

Clean the windows and soft furnishing such as blinds and curtains. Remove lace curtains as they date the home and minimise what the photographer can do to show the view. A good photographer will move blinds and curtains out of the way to show off the features of your home, particularly if living areas flow through to outside entertaining areas or windows look over lush green gardens or pools.

#### 7. Bathroom

The bathroom is one of the most scrutinised areas of the home; buyers will expect a sparkling clean and spacious bathroom. Consider hiring a professional to clean your bathroom while it's on the market as they are experts and will have your bathroom sparkling in no time.

If you decide to tackle the cleaning yourself, polish mirrors, clean out cupboards, clear away cobwebs and dust and clean the exhaust fan. Check skirting boards, tops of shower screens, behind the door and around the bath.

Polish chrome items and scrub tiles. After using your cleaning products check surfaces from different angles to ensure they haven't left a residue behind. Because the bathroom features bright, reflective surfaces, imperfections and dirt and grime will show up in the photos.

Finally, remove all personal items from display, put away the toilet roll and add a fresh, new towel and a small vase of flowers.

#### 8. Bedrooms

De-clutter the bedrooms, remove all personal items from view. Consider purchasing fresh bed linen and ensure your bed is perfectly made up both for the photo shoot and during Open for Inspections. Add a throw rug in the chillier months and turn on the bedside lights to create a beautiful glow.

Assess the view from all bedroom windows—if the view is ordinary, take the focus away from the window by drawing the attention elsewhere. This might be achieved by adding a nice print on a blank wall.

If your home features nice views keep your bedroom furniture and furnishing neutral and let the scenery do the talking.

#### 9. Entertainment areas

These days, entertainment areas come in all shapes and sizes and are high on the list of important features when buyers are looking at homes.

The trick is to work with what you have and who your buyer is likely to be. If you're selling a small

city apartment with a balcony boasting views of the city skyline then spend time and money styling this area. Buyers will imagine themselves relaxing there after a long day in the office or entertaining friends on lazy summer days.

Clear all clutter and ensure the furniture fits the purpose of the room. Consider hiring furniture if needed.

#### 10. The pool

If you have a pool get it professionally cleaned before the photo shoot. Remove all pool cleaning products and accessories from view and clean leaves and other debris from the pool each day. Ensure the tiles and paving area and furniture around the pool is clean and in good condition.

#### 11. Keep the lights on

During your photo shoot and Open for Inspections keep the lights on, they will help create a nice ambience and will mask any poorly lit areas of your home. Consider buying extra floor lamps if required.

#### 12. Replace all the faulty globes

Check all lights are working, the globes are giving off plenty of light for the area they're servicing, and none of them are flickering. Cool and warm globes are available for purchase so make sure you're using the right globe in the right area. While a cool globe will work well in the bathroom, a warm globe will be better in living areas.



## Marketing preparation checklist

With a little preparation and work before your photo shoot you'll be rewarded with photos that show your home at its best. Use this checklist to get your property 'magazine ready'.

### General and Lighting

- Remove all unnecessary furniture to create an impression of space
- Clear all surfaces and floorspace of clutter
- Turn on all interior and exterior lights and lamps
- Ensure all doors are accessible
- Put your own vehicles out front to prevent anyone from parking there
- Remove pets, pet beds and bowls

### Front and backyard

- Remove vehicles from driveways and carports
- Mow lawns, trim hedges and trees
- Sweep courtyards and entertaining areas
- Put all bins out of sight
- Remove hoses, brooms, mops, etc
- Remove bikes and toys
- Ensure pool is clean and remove cover, hoses and cleaner (creepy crawly)
- Remove BBQ covers
- Clean and dress outdoor furniture with table settings and cushions
- Ensure that all external lighting, including garden and pool lights are working and on

### Lounge/Living & Study

- Remove remote controls and newspapers
- Arrange books, DVDs and CDs in an orderly fashion
- Remove gaming consoles etc and associated leads
- Remove all clutter from coffee tables
- Remove pedestal fans
- Clean open fireplaces
- Pillows to be full and fluffy
- Ensure curtains and blinds are open and hanging neatly

### Kitchen

- Remove clutter from bench tops and shelves
- Keep kitchen appliances to a minimum
- Ensure rangehood light is working
- Remove all magnets and papers from fridge door
- Add an item such as a vase of flowers, a fruit bowl or a pot of herbs
- Remove dishcloths, washing detergent, dish rack, plugs, tea towels etc
- Remove bins and any floor mats

### Bedroom

- Ensure bedside tables are clutter free and lamps are on
- Remove any objects from underneath and beside the bed
- Make beds with fresh linen in neutral solid colours, compliment with cushions or a throw
- Pillows to be full and fluffy

### Bathroom

- Remove all personal items including toothbrushes, hair products, etc from benches, baths and showers
- Remove bins and any bath mats
- Hang fresh towels neatly on rack

# Noel Jones office locations

If you'd like to speak to a property agent about preparing your home for sale with a view to maximising profit, or for an appraisal contact your nearest office.

**Balwyn**

289 Whitehorse Road  
(03) 9830 1644

**Box Hill**

532 Station Street  
(03) 9899 6466

**Croydon**

38 McAdam Square  
(03) 9879 4422

**Doncaster**

702 Doncaster Road  
(03) 9848 7888

**Mitcham**

560 Mitcham Road  
(03) 9837 4444

**Blackburn**

67-69 Railway Road  
(03) 9877 1855

**Camberwell**

883 Toorak Road  
(03) 9809 2000

**Glen Iris**

58 High Street  
(03) 9885 2444

**Ringwood**

265 Maroondah Hwy  
(03) 9879 4422

**Wantirna**

10/322 Mountain Hwy  
(03) 8720 6333

