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## House Hunting Checklist: What You Actually Need

by [homewarranty.com](http://homewarranty.com)

Buying a home is exhilarating, but if you don't know what to look for, it can be overwhelming. Once you've settled on your budget, kick off your home-buying journey with our house hunting checklist.

### The Neighborhood

The neighborhood is one of the most important items on your checklist. It determines your commute, access to public transportation, schools, hospitals, and grocery stores. Drive through the neighborhood to get a glimpse into what your possible future could look like. Stop by at night to check out the parking situation, noise level, and street lighting.

### The Rooms

Factor in your current family size when looking at the bedrooms. If you're a big entertainer, make sure there's enough space in the living area for hosting guests. Check the walls and flooring to make sure they're in good condition — make sure the home meets these basic necessities before moving onto your wants.

### The Major Systems

When you buy a home, you get every issue that comes with it. Before you take the leap, have all the home's major systems inspected by a professional — plumbing, electrical, and heating & cooling.

### The Kitchen

Make a list of the things you and your family need in a kitchen. First functionality, then design. Check the countertops for any damages. Kitchen floors get heavy foot traffic. Examine the floors to see what kind of condition they're in. Lastly, look over the cabinets to make sure all knobs and handles are properly attached.

### The Bathrooms

You may have a dream bathroom in mind, but don't forget to cover the basics. Check the toilets, faucets, and lighting to make sure they're all in good working order. Confirm that there aren't any issues with the water pressure — this could cause some big problems later on. Once you have these items covered, you can examine the drawers and cupboards to make sure there's enough storage space.

### The Lot

Take into consideration how many vehicles you own or plan to acquire when looking at the garage and driveway. Don't fret too much about a driveway that has cracks in the asphalt — that's an easy fix.

Being realistic with your expectations doesn't mean you have to pop your dream home bubble. Just cover the basics and the rest will fall into place.

## March Calendar

3/10 - Daylight Saving Time begins

3/17 - St. Patrick's Day

3/20 - Spring Begins

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## Breathe New Life into a Stale Listing

Stale listings happen — sometimes properties sit on the market too long and buyers lose interest. It could be a shifting consumer taste, a changing market, or pricing. Whatever it is, you can transform your home from “meh” to “marvelous” with these two strategies.

**Staging** - Home staging can completely transform your home from dreary and uninviting to breathtaking and livable. Staging emphasizes your home’s best features and minimizes its weak points. It improves the sense of livability and helps the buyer envision the property as their own. The home should be nicely furnished — not empty but not overflowing.

**Pricing** - The market ultimately determines what someone is willing to pay for a property, so if you’ve taken all the right steps with minimal stumbles, it usually comes down to price. We tend to think very highly of our homes and get attached to the memories associated with them, so reducing the asking price can be difficult. But buyers can usually tell when a home is priced unreasonably high, so look at comparable properties in your area.

You can also make small renovations such as painting and replacing faded shutters to entice buyers while still staying within your budget.

Contact me today for more listing strategies!



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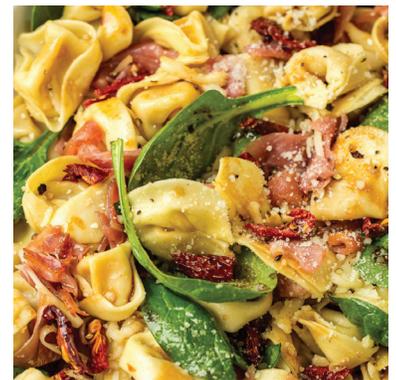
## Tuscan Tortellini Salad

### Ingredients:

- 1 lb. fresh cheese tortellini
- 1/4 c. extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp. balsamic vinegar
- 1/2 tbsp. honey
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 3/4 c. chopped salami or prosciutto
- 1/2 c. baby spinach
- 1/2 c. oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, chopped
- 1/4 c. freshly grated Parmesan

### Directions:

1. In a large pot of salted boiling water, cook tortellini according to package directions. Drain and transfer to large serving bowl.
2. Make dressing: Whisk together olive oil, balsamic vinegar and honey and season with salt and pepper.
3. To bowl, add prosciutto, spinach, sun-dried tomatoes and dressing and toss until well combined.
4. Garnish with Parmesan.



*Photo & recipe courtesy of delish.com*