

# Exterior Paint Red Flag Checklist for Realtors

A listing-walkthrough tool for spotting exterior paint issues before buyers, inspectors, and price-reduction conversations do it for you.

## How to Use This Checklist

Use this during the first listing walkthrough, before photos are scheduled and before the seller spends money in the wrong order. The goal is not to diagnose every exterior problem on-site. The goal is to flag the issues that could scare buyers, weaken curb appeal, trigger inspection questions, or create negotiation pressure.

## Exterior Paint Red Flags Buyers Notice Fast

- Peeling paint on siding, trim, fascia, railings, porch posts, or window trim.
- Bubbling or blistering paint, especially after rain or near lower siding.
- Exposed raw wood, bare siding, cracked trim, or open end grain.
- Failed caulk around windows, doors, trim joints, siding seams, and transitions.
- Mildew, moss, dark staining, or moisture discoloration on shaded sides of the home.
- Chalking or faded paint that makes the exterior look neglected in photos.
- Soft-looking trim, swollen boards, or paint failure near gutters and rooflines.
- Patchy DIY exterior repairs that create more questions than confidence.

## Realtor Walkthrough Scoring System

Score	What It Means	Recommended Next Step
Green	Normal wear, no obvious buyer-scare issue.	Mention only if seller asks. Usually not a listing blocker.
Yellow	Visible wear or limited failure that could affect photos or buyer perception.	Get quick painter feedback before photos or seller prep decisions.
Red	Peeling, exposed wood, moisture staining, failed caulk, or obvious failure.	Review before listing. This may become an inspection or negotiation issue.

## Must-Review Before Listing

Issue	Why Buyers Care	Agent Note
Peeling trim	Looks like deferred maintenance and possible moisture exposure.	Flag early, especially around windows and fascia.
Failed caulk	Suggests water may be getting into vulnerable joints.	Ask for review before inspection guesses start.
Exposed wood	Signals loss of protection and possible future repair cost.	Do not bury this under "just needs paint."
Mildew / staining	Can read as a moisture problem even when cosmetic.	Clarify cause before buyers make assumptions.
Bubbling paint	Often raises adhesion or moisture concern.	Needs professional eyes, not seller panic touch-up.

## Seller Conversation Scripts

Do Say	Avoid Saying
"This area may raise maintenance questions for buyers. Let's review it before photos or inspection."	"The exterior looks bad."
"This may be a small fix, but it is visible enough that buyers may notice it."	"You need to repaint the whole house."
"Let's separate curb-appeal touch-ups from paint failure concerns."	"It is probably fine. Buyers can deal with it."
"A painter can tell us whether this is cosmetic or needs more prep."	"Just touch it up real quick."

## Photo-Day Exterior Punch List

- Front door looks clean, intentional, and not chipped.
- Entry trim and porch railings do not show obvious peeling.
- Curb-facing siding does not have buyer-visible paint failure.
- Mildew or dirt streaks are cleaned where appropriate.
- Garbage areas, utility walls, gates, and side-entry paint issues are checked if they appear in photos.
- No rushed touch-ups are drying right before photography. Fresh bad touch-ups are not "character." They are evidence.

## Lightmen Listing Prep Next Step

For exterior paint issues that may affect curb appeal, buyer confidence, inspections, or negotiation pressure, send photos or request a listing-prep paint review with Lightmen Painting.

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