

PREPARING YOUR HOME FOR SALE

A few great tips on creating an atmosphere that will charm buyers and make them want to buy your home. Remember that you'll never get another chance to make a first impression. And first impressions are what count!! Follow these simple tips and create the competitive edge that may help your sell your home more quickly.

Drive-up Appeal

- Trim trees and shrubs; keep the lawn mowed & edged; weed all rock bed areas; clean out flower beds and invest in a few flats of seasonal flowers; paint the front door; make sure doorbell is working properly; wash the mailbox; keep the porch swept and get an attractive mat for people to wipe their feet.

Absolute Basics

- Start by airing out the home. Most people are turned off by even the smallest odor. Odors must be eliminated, especially those caused by dogs and cats; soiled diapers and/or cigarettes.
- Wash all the windows in the home, inside and out.
- If it has been over a year since the carpets have been cleaned, now is the time to have them cleaned. Bare floors should also be waxed or polished.
- Put bright light bulbs in every socket. Buyers like bright & cheery.
- Clean out closets, cabinets and drawers. Closet should look like they have enough room to hold additional items. Get everything off the floor and don't have the shelves pile to the ceiling. Rent a storage bin, if necessary.
- Make sure rooms are not overcrowded with furniture. Select pieces that look best, and store the rest.
- Keep the kitchen sparkling clean. Statistics show this may be the most important room to a potential buyer, make sure it is clean and shows well! Make sure all appliances are clean at all times. Straighten cupboards that appear cluttered and keep floors gleaming.
- Bath tubs, showers and sinks should be freshly caulked. The grout should be clean and in good condition. There should be no leaks in the faucet or traps. Remove all fuzzy toilet seat covers and toilet rugs, leave toilet seats down and replace any seats that are chipped or worn looking. Remove plungers, toilet brushes and small garbage cans in bathrooms (or hide under the sink) clean any soap residue on glass shower fronts—replace any old/tired/musty curtain liners.
- Open all blinds or curtains to allow natural light in every room—unless there is a “glare” issue in that room

A few more suggestions...

- If you have limited counter space in the kitchen, keep unnecessary items put away.
- Keep children's toys out of the front yard, sidewalks and front porch.
- Clean the ashes out of the fireplace.
- The pool needs to be sparkling and free of leaves.
- Wipe/clean around doorknobs and light switches.
- Wipe down scuffs and/or black marks on walls—"Mr. Clean Magic Eraser" works well.
- Touch-up paint on trim, moldings and baseboards.
- Remove all personal photos—because people are naturally drawn to photographs and this tends to distract a potential buyer too much from the house.
- It is important that the temperature of your home is comfortable for potential buyers, summer 73-79 degrees and 68-74 degrees during winter months.
- If there's snow on the ground, make sure that driveway and walkways are shoveled and graveled or sanded; in warm weather, run the sprinkler for 10-20 minutes to make the lawn sparkle (as long as it doesn't violate any water restrictions).
- Organize all kitchen cupboards by item and size—tall glasses together, stemware together; canned goods separate from boxed cereal, etc.
- Set out "show towels" in baths.
- Make beds; clean up dishes; empty wastebaskets.
- Arrange fresh flowers throughout.
- Play soft background music.
- Make beds; clean up dishes; empty wastebaskets.
- Remove anything on top, front of or face of the refrigerator—magnets, drawings, photos will distract a potential buyer as framed photos do, and appliances that are totally clear look more modern.
- Fresh paint on interior and/or exterior where needed.
- Make sure that the pull-down staircase is working correctly. Be sure there is a light in the attic.