

# PREPARING YOUR HOME FOR SHOWING



Once you've decided to sell your home, there are a number of things which you can do to help get the best possible price in the shortest amount of time.

Your Realtor is an expert in marketing homes. However, selling your home is a joint effort with you playing an important role in the final results. Your major goal is to make your home as attractive as possible to potential buyers.

Remember that first impressions count. You should do everything you can to make that first impression a positive one. People who consider buying your home will be as critical as you are in searching for your new home.

Take an inspection tour of your home, try to look at your house "Through The Buyer's Eyes" as though you've never seen it or been there before. Take note of any minor repairs and painting that needs to be done.

Here are some tips from your Realtor which have proven valuable to homeowners in preparing their homes for showing.

## Exterior

Since the exterior of your home will be the first thing a prospective buyer sees, it is very important to create a good first impression.

- Keep the lawn trimmed and edged. Weed and cultivate flower gardens. Trim shrubs and eliminate dead trees or branches. Pick up any debris, toys and lawn equipment.
- Repair any fences or gates. Give them a fresh coat of paint, if necessary.
- Is the exterior well painted, the roof in good repair, as well as gutters and downspouts?
- Wash down driveways and sidewalks. Check them for cracking and crumbling.
- Replace any cracked windows and torn screens.
- The entrance should be clean and in good repair. The doorbell and front light must be in good working condition.

## Interior

Start with a full housecleaning from top to bottom. Don't let dirt and clutter obscure your home's good points. Discard unused and unnecessary items in storage areas and closets. Eliminating clutter will give your home a more spacious look.

- Arrange furniture to make each room appear more spacious and attractive. If a piece of furniture is badly worn, store it temporarily in the attic or at your neighbors.
- Walls should be clean and free of smudges, fingerprints and dents. Consider a fresh coat of paint if a good washing doesn't do the trick. Inspect woodwork and wallpaper for problem areas.

- Wash windows and sills until sparkling clean. Curtains and drapes should be freshly laundered.
- Shampoo rugs and carpets. Floors should be waxed.
- Repair loose doorknobs, sticking doors and windows, and warped drawers.
- Fix leaky faucets and eliminate water discoloration in sinks.
- Tighten loose stair banisters, and be sure steps are free of objects.
- Light fixtures should be in good repair. Replace discolored or cracked switchplates.
- Clean out closets to display their roominess. Be sure clothes are hung neatly and shoes and other objects tidily arranged.
- Bathrooms should be sparkling clean. Repair caulking in tubs and showers.
- Bedrooms should appear neat with attractive spreads and curtains.
- Clean and organize the basement, attic and garage.

### **Don't Over Improve**

Many families tend to learn to live with a broken doorknob and a cracked window. All of these little things should be fixed because no prospective buyer wants to do the things you have let stack up.

Use caution in planning major improvements that you think will enable you to get more for the house than you paid for it. Of course, an investment in a paint job where it's obviously needed will be well worth the cost. The same is true with carpeting that is shabby enough to be a turn-off.

Most people out shopping for a house would rather plan their own major changes, and you are usually wiser to sell them the potential at a price they can afford.

### **Showing the House**

- The television and radio should be turned off. Let the salesperson and buyer talk, free of disturbances.
- Send children and pets outdoors to play. This will eliminate confusion and keep the prospect's attention focused on your home.
- Leave drapes open for light and airiness. If it's evening, all lights should be turned on to give the rooms a large appearance and a cheerful effect.
- Be sure the kitchen sink is free of dishes and rooms are uncluttered.
- Be courteous but don't force conversation with the potential buyer. They want to inspect your house, not pay a social call.
- Never apologize for the appearance of your home. After all, it has been lived in. Let the trained salesperson answer any objections.
- The salesperson knows the buyer's requirements and can better emphasize the features of your home when you don't tag along. You will be called if needed.
- Let your Realtor discuss price, terms, possession and other factors with the customer. Your Realtor is better qualified to bring negotiations to a favorable conclusion.

Your Realtor is an experienced professional who will be able to view your home objectively and make suggestions that will improve the appearance of your home and its saleability.



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