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HOW TO PREP YOUR HOME FOR SALE GUIDE

**Follow this guide for everything
you need to prep your home to sell**

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Getting ready to sell your house? Then it's time to roll up your sleeves and get to work! Selling a home, after all, entails a whole lot more than just planting a "For Sale" sign on your front lawn or uploading a few random photos of your place, especially if you're angling for the most cash.

So before you put your house on the market, peruse this guide of things to do in preparation. Some of these tips are surprisingly easy, while others might require a bit more elbow grease. But they're bound to pay off once buyers start oohing and ahing over your place—and hopefully write up a great offer.



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STEP #1

HIRE A REALTOR®

5 REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD HIRE A REALTOR



PAPERWORK They help with all disclosures & paperwork necessary in today's heavily regulated environment.



EXPERIENCE They are well educated and experienced with the entire sales process and what to expect, every step of the way.



NEGOTIATIONS They act as a buffer in negotiations with all parties throughout the entire transaction and can advise you through the process.



PRICING They help you understand today's real estate values when coming up with a strategic plan to pricing your listing.



UNDERSTANDING OF CURRENT MARKET CONDITIONS

They simply & effectively understand today's real estate market & decipher what they mean to you and how they can affect you.

Think you can sell your home yourself and pocket the cash you would otherwise pay a real estate agent? It can be tempting, especially in a hot market, but resist the urge. I have found that a "for sale by owner" transaction is almost always a disaster, leading you to sacrifice both money and time. That said, don't just blindly hire the real estate agent who most recently sent you a flyer or the one your uncle's friend's co-worker's cousin used. Do some research to find a real estate agent who is knowledgeable about your specific market, and then interview them to make sure they are a good fit. Your real estate agent should be someone you feel comfortable working with trust to sell your house for top dollar. Don't be afraid to talk to a few real estate agents before picking one.

STEP #2

CONSIDER YOUR CURB APPEAL



Yes, for better or worse, buyers do tend to judge a book by its cover. You want to make sure potential buyers' first impression of your home is a good one—and inspires them to schedule a private showing so they can see more! By investing some effort in relatively easy fixes, like planting colorful flowers and repainting your front door, the outside of your house can beckon prospective buyers to come on in. If you're not sure how to improve your home's curb appeal, ask your real estate agent for advice on how others in your area have improved the exterior before selling their houses. And when in doubt - add fresh mulch or pine straw! A little effort goes a long way!

STEP #3

DECLUTTER YOUR LIVING AREAS

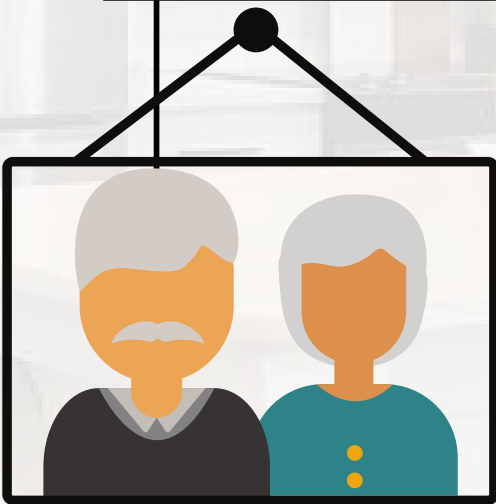


Less is definitely more when it comes to getting your house ready to show. Do a clean sweep of counters, windowsills, tables, and all other visible areas, and then tackle behind closed doors: closets, drawers, and cupboards—since virtually nothing is off-limits for curious buyers. If the house is overflowing with stuff, buyers might worry that the house won't have ample space for their own belongings. They won't sign up to pay a mortgage if they think they'll also have to rent a storage space. Take your excess stuff and donate it, or pack it up to be stored off-site. Not only will clearing clutter help your house look more appealing to buyers, it will also help you once you've accepted an offer and it's time to move into a new home. Moving out will be easier if some of your stuff is already be packed.

STEP #4

DEPERSONALIZE YOUR SPACE

The next step on your declutter list? Sellers should remove any distractions so the buyers can visualize themselves and their family living in the property. It's such an emotional element for potential buyers. Once they start dreaming of their personal belongings, and living their life in your home, you may just have sealed the deal! That is something hard for buyers to do when they see hundreds of photos of Grandma Bobbie on your walls.



Sellers should remove personal items and family photos, as well as bold artwork and furniture that might make the home less appealing to the general public. The goal is to create a blank canvas on which buyers can project their own visions of living there, and loving it.

STEP #5

REPAINT WALLS TO NEUTRAL TONES & TOUCH UP SCUFF MARKS

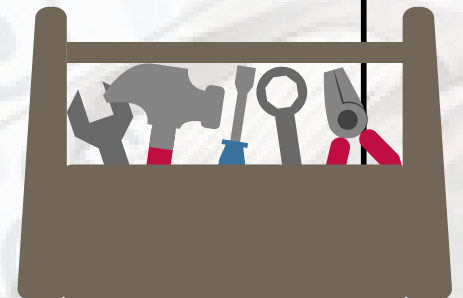


You might love that orange accent wall, but if it's your potential buyer's least favorite color, that could be a turnoff. You're pretty safe with a neutral color because it's rare that someone hates it, but the other benefit is that a light color allows [buyers] to envision what the walls would look like with the color of their choice. It's the seller's job to help buyers picture themselves in the house. If they don't feel at home, they'll probably look at other real estate options. Also remember to touch up any scuff marks. Even if you're not doing a full-on repainting project, pay special attention to scrubbing and then touching up baseboards, walls, and doors to make the house sparkle and look cared-for.

STEP #6

FIX ANY MINOR REPAIRS

Selling almost any home can be tricky, but selling a home with lots of little problems and small repair needs can be downright difficult. When buyers walk into an open house, or go on a home tour, they want to fall in love with the house, not add a bunch of small repairs to their to-do list. In order to impress buyers (and sell your house quickly), fix up your house before putting it on the market. With a home that is fixed up and move-in ready, you will probably see more interest, and may even see multiple offers. It's a small thing, sure, but you'd be surprised by the negative effect a loose handle or missing lightbulb can have on a buyer. It can make them stop and think 'What else is broken here?' For a buyer, submitting an offer, and later committing to a mortgage, it is a big deal. When you're selling your home, you don't want to give buyers any doubt that your house will make a great home. So take the time and effort to repair all the little things you have been meaning to fix. A few minor repairs may end up saving you more money in the long run!



STEP #7

ADD SOME GREENERY

When staging your house, remember that green is good: Plants create a bright and more welcoming environment. You might also want to consider a bouquet of flowers or bowl of fruit on the kitchen counter or dining table. Some plants and natural elements will impress buyers by bringing some extra color and life to your decor. If you don't have a green thumb, there are plenty of faux plants that look great too! Just make sure you are dusting them. Nobody wants to see dust collecting on faux greenery!



STEP #8 ELIMINATE ODORS

Foul odors, even slight ones, can be a deal breaker, and the problem is that you might not even notice them. I recommend inviting an unbiased third party in to try to detect any pet smells or lingering odors from your kitchen. If the smells are pervasive, prepare to do some deep cleaning as many buyers are on to seller's "masking techniques" such as candles or plug-in room deodorizers. Plus, covering up odors with a stronger scent might backfire if the buyer doesn't like the smell of lavender or artificial citrus.



Undetected or masked odors can make a buyer leave your house, just as quickly as they showed up!

STEP #9

HIRE A PROFESSIONAL CLEANER

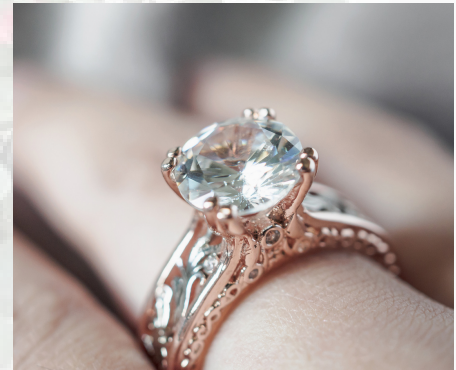
Once you're done cleaning your house, clean some more. Even if you're not worried about what buyers will think of your home's scent, you want your property to look spotless. I always recommend having your home professionally cleaned. It's worth every penny! Think of it this way: You'll probably have professional photos taken of your house when it looks its best. Naturally, you'll want your house to always look like it does in those pictures. When selling your home, it's important to keep everything tidy for buyers, and you never know when a buyer is going to want to schedule a last-minute tour. Remember to take special care with the bathroom, making sure the tile, counters, shower, and floors shine.



STEP #10 HIDE VALUABLES

From art to jewelry and firearms, make sure your treasures are out of sight, either locked up or stored off-site. You can't trust everyone who comes into your house, even when you're trying to sell it. Sometimes things disappear during an open house, and there's little the seller can do to get those things back. Take care to hide your valuables or move them to a safe space away from your home. Besides, if you're decluttering and packing stuff up to store off site already, might as well take these special valuable items there too!

If you have any heirloom items, antique furniture or high end jewelry you should consider storing them off site.



STEP #11

HAVE YOUR PROPERTY STAGED

Does your house scream 1985? Nothing invigorates a house like some new furnishings or a perfectly chosen mirror. The key is getting your home staged by a professional. Home stagers will evaluate the current condition and belongings in your house and determine what elements might raise the bar. They might recommend you buy or rent some items, or they might just reorganize your knickknacks and bookshelves in a whole new way. Stagers know the real estate market, and what sells, so it's important to take their advice and not take offense when they make big changes. Their job is to help drum up interest from potential buyers, which is always good news to the seller. Once your house hits the market it is no longer your home but a commodity! It needs to be price, packaged and marketed correctly in order to get top dollar. Staging adds that extra element to take your listing to the next level! Pro staging has been proven to help homes sell faster and for more money! Did you know when you list your home with me, I offer home staging for FREE? I will come up with a game plan for staging your home, and making sure we show it off to its fullest potential! I have many years of experience in the home staging industry. With a degree in interior design, 9 years of experience in real estate, and having previously owned a staging company, I know what works to get your home sold quickly, and for top dollar!



Did you know??

According to a survey done by the National Association of Realtors, once staged, homes spend an average of 73% less time on the market.

STEP #12

TAKE PROFESSIONAL PHOTOS & VIDEOS AND GO LIVE ON THE MARKET

When your house or condo is de-cluttered, cleaned and ready for prime time, it's time for the photographer to work their magic. This will happen a few days before you list your home for sale, and may include a virtual tour or video. Also remember, not all "professional photographers" are created equal. Trust in your realtor's recommendations for a professional photographer with a known track record for gorgeous photos. Nothing is worse than an over exposed set of photos or low quality film work! Now is not the time to trust in your cousin Eddie or help give him his big break in real estate photography! You only have one chance to hit the market strong, with your best foot (and listing photos) forward! Good photography might be one of the most important aspects in actually getting people to your listing! So make sure this is not taken lightly!





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HOME PREP CHECKLIST

EXTERIOR

Repair/Replace, Paint/Varnish any damaged items

- Wood Siding
- Trim
- Rain Gutters & Shutters
- Window Frames & Screens
- Hardware
- Outdoor Lighting & Light bulbs
- Doors
- Fence & Gates
- Street Numbers On The house
- Adjust & Repair Sprinklers

Clean & Wash Exterior Items

- Wood Siding
- Windows & Screens
- A/C Unit
- Pool/Spa
- Patio Furniture & Decks

Landscape

- Mow/Edge Lawn
- Seed Bare Spots On Lawn
- Water Lawn Regularly
- Replace Dead Plants
- Haul Away all Garbage and Debris
- Clean Up Pet Droppings
- Prune & Remove Greenery
- Weed Flower Beds
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HOME PREP CHECKLIST

INTERIOR

All Rooms- Thoroughly clean around:

- Doors
- Windows
- Light Switches
- Baseboards
- Chair Rails

Other

- Pull Back Dark Curtains
- Lubricate Window Slides
- Make Sure All Doors Open Smoothly
- Clean Ceiling Light Fixtures
- Check For Cobwebs
- Fix scratches On Wooden Floors
- Replace Worn Flooring
- Empty Wastebaskets
- Make All Beds
- Repair All Leaky Faucets
- Put Away Pet Items

Laundry Area

- Clean Washer/Dryer Tops
- Eliminate Any Mildew
- Eliminate Odors
- Organize The Room

Kitchen

- Remove Dishes & Food From Sight
- Clean Appliances
- Clean Range Hood & Oven
- Keep Floors Clean
- Make Sure All Outlets Work
- Deodorize Garbage Disposal
- Repair Faucets
- Organize Cupboards
- Clean Out Under Sink
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HOME PREP CHECKLIST

INTERIOR

- Bathrooms**
- Clean Mirrors
- Clean Shower Door
- Remove Soap Residue
- Remove Stains From Sink, Tub & Toilet
- Replace Old Shower Curtains
- Clean Any Grout
- Be Sure Toilets Flush Properly
- Closets**
- Keep Free Of Clutter
- Pack Away Any Non-Essentials
- Garage, Carport & Sheds**
- Keep Clean, Uncluttered & Tidy
- Put Away Tools
- Clear Away Cobwebs
- Remove Oil Stains
- Ensure Breaker Panel & Water Heater Are Accessible
- Lubricate & Repair Garage Door Unit
- Replace Any Rotted Trim & Paint Where Necessary
- Heating & Air Conditioning Unit**
- Replace Filter
- Clean Intake Vent
- Remove Any Non-Essential Window Units
- Add Any Additional Items**
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