



Selling your House

Preparing your House to Sell



Here are some tips that you may find helpful as you prepare to place your house on the real estate market.

Disconnect your emotions

When conversing with real estate agents, you will often find that when they talk to you about buying real estate, they will refer to your purchase as a "home." Yet if you are selling property, they will often refer to it as a "house." There is a reason for this. Buying real estate is often an emotional decision, but when selling real estate you need to remove emotion from the equation.

You need to think of your house as a marketable commodity. Property. Real estate. Your goal is to get others to see it as *their* potential home, not as yours. If you do not consciously make this decision, you can inadvertently create a situation where it takes longer to sell your property.

The first step in getting your home ready to sell is to "de-personalize" it. You should remove all photographs and other small items from table-tops. Buyers should be allowed to imagine their personal possessions in the home, not look at yours. You should also put away your personal collections so that buyers don't get so interested in looking at them that they forget to look at the house.

Create a mood

Is there a mood that you could create? If you're near a coast, how about breezy fabrics and blue-green colors that remind us of the beach? If you're in the mountains, maybe you could go rustic. Study the house and brainstorm with friends or family members to come up with ideas. Remove heavy drapes that keep out natural light, especially if there's a great view. Warm vanilla in the oven to create a cozy feeling and softly play soothing music in the background to enhance relaxation.

Make sure it's your house they come back to for a second look

Here's a critical bit of home selling advice: don't even think of putting your house on the market until you've taken a close look at its condition. You only have one shot at impressing potential home buyers, so properly prepare the house for showings to be rewarded with a faster sale and higher offer. What changes would make immediate improvements? What features do you want to show off the most? Your agent can help you evaluate your home through the eyes of a buyer.

Love where you live.

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Top 10 Tips to Prepare your House to Sell

1. *Clean, clean, clean.*

Don't only dust, vacuum, and mop but also clean the windows, baseboards, and doors. Remember that clients will look in your cupboards, under your sinks, and in your closets. Make sure the house smells clean, too!

2. *De-clutter, de-personalize, and organize.*

Get rid of the clutter! Buyers want to see your house, not your stuff. Too many personal items (paperwork, photos, collections, etc.) will make it difficult to see past your style and envision themselves in your space.

3. *Less is more: remove extraneous furniture.*

Get rid of outdated or worn furniture. Some professional stagers remove up to half of homeowner's furniture to open rooms up and make them appear larger.

4. *Repair, replace, or upgrade.*

Worn carpets, broken light switches, leaky faucets, running toilets, cracks/holes in the walls are signs of an unkempt house, but each is easy to fix. Replace old or outdated fixtures to renew the look of a room.

5. *Kitchens and bathrooms sell homes.*

Make sure yours are clean and up-to-date. Consider the benefits in resale value if you upgrade old bathrooms and kitchens. Even re-facing or painting cabinets and updating hardware can give a more modern appearance.

6. *Don't neglect the exterior.*

The first impression is made when a buyer drives up: make sure the exterior of the house is clean and inviting. Power-wash the house, patios and driveways, weed the garden, mow the lawn, and add colorful flowers.

7. *Hide your pets, hide your kids.*

Ideally, pets and children should be off the premises when showing the property. Get rid of pet hair and odors, paying particular attention to pet bedding. Store children's toys and make sure rooms are tidy.

8. *Showcase bedrooms as bedrooms.*

Avoid showcasing "multi-purpose" rooms; bedrooms have more appeal to a buyer.

9. *Make the master bedroom feel like a private retreat.*

Make the room unisex--nor overly masculine or feminine--and don the bed with luxurious bedding, soft tones, and plenty of big, soft pillows.

10. *Pay attention to light and color.*

Paint, if necessary, to freshen-up space; neutral colors are preferable. A neutral home appears larger and has less chance of offending a potential buyer. Open all blinds and draperies to ensure there is sufficient natural light throughout the house.