

Seller's Checklist to Prepare for a Successful Sale

Why Repair and Stage Your Home?

First Two Weeks. You'll never have more activity on your property than you will in the first two to four weeks of being on the market. The reason is simple: the bulk of home-shoppers have unsuccessfully searched for a home and have seen everything currently available. Now, they are just waiting for something new to come on the market. When a qualifying new property comes on the market, both buyers and their agents will scramble to look at it. After the initial surge of interest, the only people who look will be those buyers new to the marketplace.

Pricing accurately and having a repaired, staged property from the beginning is critical for receiving your highest and best offer. When properly prepared and priced, you can expect an offer quickly.

Model Home. If you haven't looked at a builder's model home lately, make the time. Home-shoppers will. Do what you can to make your home look and feel like a builder's model home. Everything should look clean, spacious, and staged even if it means storing things until the home is sold. The feeling we want to create is for the home-shopper to see themselves living there.

Repairs. Make repairs or replace non-functioning items prior to your first showing. Buyer always exaggerate what they think a repair will cost when making an offer. Even if the Buyer doesn't notice a needed repair during a showing, the home inspector will. This causes extra negotiations and sometimes even the cancellation of the purchase agreement days or weeks after your home is placed under contract.

Maintenance. We want the prospective buyer to feel that this home is well-maintained through and through and not just on the surface. Remember, you are competing with every other home that is currently for sale: New and pre-owned, in your area and nearby areas, those listed with Realtors and those trying to sell by themselves.

Owner-Occupants. Another reason for a well-prepared home is we want your property to appeal to Buyers who plan on occupying the property themselves as opposed to investors. Owner-occupants will pay the highest price for the property because they want to live there are not seeking a "great deal" just for an investment return. Owner-occupants are attracted to homes in "move-in" condition.

Buyer's Lack of Funds. Today's typical buyers invest their entire savings into the down payment and closing costs. They simply don't have any funds left over to make repairs or replace such things as old, worn-out appliances or carpeting. Those buyers would have to live with that carpet until they can afford to replace it and many refuse to do so.

Buyer's Choice. If buyers have a choice between two competing properties similar in price, they'll choose the one in the best condition. On the other hand, if two properties are similar in condition, the buyers will choose the one that is less money.

Curb Appeal

First Impression. It is important to make certain the first impression is a favorable one. The property needs to look good from the street, up the sidewalk, on the front porch, throughout the house, in the darkest closets, and even in the unfinished basement. You definitely want to give the impression of a well-cared for home. Keep children's toys out of the front yard and off the sidewalks and front porch.

Shrubs. Stand across the street and look at the house. If trees and shrubs are blocking the windows, you have some yard work to do. One of the easiest ways to improve curb appeal is trim overgrown shrubs. They should be lowered to a height near the bottom of the windows. If there is ivy growing on the side of the home, remove it.

■ **Trees.** If there are tree branches hanging low in the yard, they need to be pruned. A simple rule of thumb is to have all the limbs high enough so that you can walk under the tree.

■ **Flowers.** Invest in a few flats of flowers such as petunias or periwinkles that will last the entire growing season. They will add color and beauty to the front of your home. Consider putting some nice looking flower pots on the porch with red geraniums or some other blooming plants in them.

■ **Entrance.** Look at the front door and the area around it. Give it a fresh coat of paint. If the doorbell is dirty, clean it. If broken, replace it. Keep the porch swept. Get an attractive mat for people to wipe their feet.

General Interior

■ **Eliminate Odors.** When living in a home, you are probably the last person to notice any peculiar odor in your home that may be blatantly obvious to visitors. Discover the source. It may be a kitty litter box or a dog bed; it might be a trash can that needs emptied; it could be your garbage disposal; it might even be a mildewed shower or a long-lost diaper.

■ **Wash all the windows.** Inside and out. While you're at it, clean the windowsills and the bottom of the window jambs and dust the blinds.

■ **Clean the Carpets.** If it has been a while since you've had the carpets cleaned, now is the time to do it. Carpet is one of the main culprits of unwanted odors. Any uncarpeted floors should also be waxed or polished, even if they're supposed to be "no wax".

■ **Lighten Up.** Put bright LED light bulbs in every socket made for bulb, even in lamps and closets. A "bright and cheery" home has great appeal to home-shoppers. You'll also want to keep the drapes and shades open during the day, even if you're not in the habit, to give your home even more light.

Removing Clutter

■ **Clear.** Removing clutter is one of the most powerful things you can do to allow buyers to mentally move-in to your property. Clear out all of the closets, bookcases, desktops, and countertops. Pack up everything that you haven't used in the last few months and move it to a storage shed.

■ **Closets.** Closets should look as they have more than enough room to hold additional items. You might need to box up off-season clothes to make it look that way. Get everything off the floor and empty top shelves.

■ **Furniture.** Even though it may be inconvenient, you will attract more buyer interest by selecting the furniture pieces that look best and putting the others in the garage, basement, or better yet, in storage. You can rent a mini-storage for a few dollars a month. For showings, most homes look better by storing one third to one half of the existing furniture.

Most Important Rooms

■ **Kitchen.** Go over the kitchen like a health inspector. Clean the stove and keep it that way, even if it means eating out more often. After cleaning the range, put new drip pans under the burners, or at least, cover the old ones with foil. Clean around the seal of the door of the dishwasher, oven, and refrigerator.

■ **Bathrooms.** Bathtubs, showers, and sinks should be freshly caulked and sparkling clean. All the grout should be clean and in good condition. There are excellent cleaners that will do the job without tons of scrubbing. There should be no leaks in the faucets or traps.

■ **Master Bedroom.** Clear out and store any extra items to make the bedroom look large and spacious. Can you remove one of the dressers or desks? Is there an extra chair that can be eliminated? Clear off the tops of your dressers and side tables. Remove and hide any jewelry, guns, or coin jars.

Help Buyers Imagine Living Here

Denise Martin
(801) 602-9552

David Martin
(801) 850-3015

Team@HomeRealty.com
HomeRealty.com

