

Prepare your home for sale

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Every seller wants their home to sell quickly and for the best price.

Forget baking bread and brewing coffee, if you put in some careful planning and spruce up your home you can really improve your chances of achieving these goals.

Here's How:

1. Disassociate Yourself From Your Home

Understand that you are selling a house, a product to be sold like any other

Pack up those personal photographs and family heirlooms. You want buyers to imagine their own photos on the walls, and they can't do that if yours are there

Let go of your emotional attachment and focus on the fact that soon this house will no longer be yours. Picture yourself handing over the keys to the new owners.

2. De-Clutter

People can collect an amazing quantity of junk.

If you haven't used it in over a year, you probably don't need it so why not donate it or throw it away?

Pack up those knickknacks.

If you have a serious amount of personal items that might be considered clutter by anyone else, consider putting some of it in the attic or the garage or into storage.

Almost every home looks better with less furniture. Remove furniture that blocks or hampers paths and walkways and put them in storage. Remove extra leaves from your dining room table to make the room appear larger. Leave just enough furniture in each room to showcase the room's purpose and plenty of room to move around.

If you want to take items with you, consider removing them now. If the chandelier in the dining room once belonged to your great grandmother, perhaps take it down. If a buyer never sees it, they won't want it.

Think of this process as a head-start on the packing you will need to do anyway.

3. Clean Up Your Act!

Wash windows inside and out.

Rent a pressure washer and spray down paths and patios.

Clean out cobwebs.

Re-grout baths, showers and sinks.

Polish chrome taps.

Clean out the refrigerator.

Vacuum daily.

Wax floors.

Dust furniture and light fittings.

Replace worn rugs.

Clean and air out any musty smelling areas.

Dog or cat baskets and toys should be hidden and all areas of your house should be pet-hair free.

Open windows for a blast of fresh air.

Replace cracked tiles and fix leaky taps.

Patch holes in walls and consider painting the walls in neutral colours.

Fix doors that don't close properly and kitchen drawers that jam.

Replace burned-out light bulbs.

4. Take each of the rooms in turn

The Kitchen

Greasy hobs, messy surfaces and sticky floors are an immediate turn off. Even when your kitchen is spotless, there is more that you can do to make it appealing.

Buyers will probably open cupboard doors to take a peek inside. If a buyer sees that everything is organized it says you probably take good care of the rest of the house as well.

Uncluttered surfaces give the illusion of space in a small kitchen. Clean off everything from kitchen worktops, put jars and bottles away in cupboards and clear as much room as possible.

Make sure none of your appliances are running when viewers are being shown around - the buzz of the washing machine or whirr of the dishwasher isn't the most inviting sound.

You don't need to spend a fortune on a new fitted kitchen just to impress but new cupboard handles are cheap and easy to fit, and can bring your kitchen up to date.

The Lounge

This is where the new owners will spend most of their time, so it is vital that you make the right impression.

Just remember the 3 Cs - cosy, clean and clutter-free.

Draw back the curtains and make the living areas as light as possible; sunlight immediately cheers up any room and creates the illusion of space.

The Bedrooms

Bedrooms are probably the most personal rooms in the house, so try to make them welcoming. Clothes should be away and carpets fluffy and spotless.

Bed clothes should be clean and matching.

Don't forget that cupboards and wardrobes can hide a host of sins - if you don't have time to finish the ironing, or sort out that pile of bits and bobs on your bedside table, put it away.

The Bathrooms

Put away any personal lotions, potions and other bathroom items and make sure the bathroom is as clean and sparkling as it can possibly be.

Invest in a couple of expensive looking soaps and fluffy towels to help make the best impression.

5. Pavement Appeal

If a buyer won't get out of their car because they don't like the exterior of your home, you'll never get them inside. First impressions have never counted more.

Your messy hedges or uneven paving stones could lose you a sale before you even invite viewers inside. Mow the lawn and plant bright flowers and make sure visitors can clearly read your house number.

Be critical - could your window frames or facade do with a quick lick of paint to get them up to scratch? Do you need to re-lay a wonky paving stone or two? Or spruce up your front door?