

6 Tips for Successfully Selling Your Home

1. Take a Fresh Look at Your Home | First, consider curb appeal, how your house appears as you drive by. Does it need pressure washing or painting? Does the driveway need repair work? Is the landscaping in good shape? Is the yard neat and trimmed? What about the view from the front yard?

Second, size up the interior as though seeing it for the first time. Take a tour and imagine what your real estate agent might say about each room, look into cabinets, open doors, check out the kitchen and bathrooms.

Then, make a mental note of the things that might jump out at or put off potential buyers. Also consider what first attracted you to the home and if they're features worth highlighting. Remember, the home's become a great place for you, but a new buyer will see things that you don't. Try to limit a potential buyer's reasons for censure.

2. Clean Out the Clutter Before You Start to Sell | Before putting your home on the market, get rid of clutter in closets, in the attic, in kitchen cabinets, in drawers, in bath vanities, and on shelves - everywhere. Remember, your sentimental items won't help your house sell.

Also, don't forget the furniture and fixtures when getting rid of clutter. A buyer is more inclined to picture themselves in a space that is clean, open, and neutral.

3. To Sell, Sell, Sell -- Clean, Clean, Clean | After you've cleared out the clutter, it's time for a deep clean - hire a professional if necessary. Have the carpets professionally cleaned, strip and polish the floors, scrub the bathrooms and laundry room, polish the furniture, clear out the cabinets, wash the windows and window coverings, and clean/dust the ceiling fans and kitchen appliances. In short, clean everything, thoroughly.

Also, don't forget the to paint or power wash the exterior. Remember, this is a floor-to-ceiling, foundation-to-roof clean-up project. A thorough cleaning can allow a potential home buyer to see your home for all it has to offer, without being distracted because of small fixes.

4. Get More for Your Home: Repairs Pay Off | Once cleaning is out of the way, you can move forward with making any necessary repairs to attract a buyer.

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So, patch up the roof, remove branches hanging on your roof, clean gutters, touch up all the paint, repair the screens, spruce up the porch framing, and make your entry area really shine. Don't forget to water the lawn and landscape beds, and take the time to trim, mow, edge and get rid of sick or dying plants. Inside, fix the grout in the bathrooms and on tile floors, adjust any doors that need it, fix any scratches on the walls, cover any stains, and be sure to fix any plumbing problems.

It's a good idea to get all this done before getting your home if officially listed. Remember, do what your home needs before a single buyer lays eyes on your home.

If you'd rather proceed with listing your home without the clean-up and repairs, just consider that an "as-is" sale keeps you from doing all this work, but a buyer will assess about twice the price you would have paid for the repairs. Then, the buyer will deduct that amount from your asking price before making an offer.

5. Putting Your Home on the Market: Show It to Sell It | Regardless of who markets your home, you or your real estate agent, there are small things you can do to better attract buyers. For example, even if it's bright daylight, open the blinds and turn on the lights. Also, open all the interior doors to make the home appear roomier. Be sure to remove all your kids and pets. In addition, make sure your pet's litter pan is clean (not hidden) so the home smells clean and fresh. Remember that when your home is on the market, you need to make sure your home is available to be seen by a prospective buyer with as little notice as possible.

6. Get a Sense of the Market | Before you put your home on the market, take a weekend day to check out the competition: homes with similar prices and in similar neighborhoods. Remember, you don't have to go out and buy new furniture just to look like that beautiful new model in the new development -- what you want is the feel of that new model -- clean, uncluttered, and fresh.

Remember, after location, the most important item to a buyer is a well maintained home. Many flaws can be overlooked if the buyer knows he can move in without a lot of trouble and expense.