

Staging your home to sell

Every buyer is comparative shopping. By making investments in time, money and effort, you can give your home a solid advantage over competing properties. Pay attention to detail as the Buyers certainly are doing so.

You only have one chance to make a first impression, and it starts with curb appeal. Many homes are sold before the Buyers even get out of their cars, so stand across the street from your house and review its curb appeal. Then go to your front door and take a long detailed look as the Buyer will. Fix, straighten, replace or polish what is needed.

Go through your home as a Buyer would. Things that you have become accustomed to seeing and accepting may be the very thing that turns Buyers away.

The following are some easy things you can do to make your home more appealing to buyers.

Create A Buying Mood:

- Turn on lights (Use 100 watt bulbs for a brighter feel)
- Turn on air conditioner/heater, making it very comfortable for the season
- Open the drapes/blinds, cleaning all the windows

At The Front Door:

- Clean porch and foyer
- Ensure door bell works
- Repair screen on door
- Paint or varnish front door
- Repair door locks and key access
- Update front door lighting

Exterior Appearance:

- Keep lawns cut and edged
- Trim hedges and shrubs
- Maintain flower beds or planters
- Weed gardens and lawns
- Clear driveway and clean up oil spills
- Remove newspapers, bikes, and toys
- Park extra cars away from the property
- Clean out garage
- Touch up paint
- Make repairs where needed including any peeling paint or rotted wood
- Sweep front walkway
- Power wash the home
- Make sure roof and gutters are in good condition
- Remove dead trees or bushes

Inside:

- Dust/wash the baseboards throughout
- Wash light fixtures and ceiling fans, you'll be surprised the difference this makes
- Kitchen and bathrooms should sparkle
- Minimize the things on the counter tops
- Clear the front and top of the refrigerator
- Remove wallpaper and paint a neutral warm tone
- Carpets should be cleaned; vacuum daily. Replace carpet, if needed
- Place fresh flowers in the kitchen or dining room
- Put dishes away
- Make beds and put all clothes away
- Enhance the spaciousness of each room by minimizing collectables and extra furniture
- Straighten closets. If possible, go ahead and pack up enough clothes & shoes to leave some empty space. 50% empty is the rule of thumb
- Put toys away
- Turn off televisions
- Play soft music on the radio/stereo
- Keep pets out of the way, pet areas to be clean and odor-free
- Secure jewelry, cash, prescription medication and other valuables
- Pre-pack all personal photos as you want them to envision their family in your home

Create Space:

- Clear halls and stairs of clutter
- Store surplus furniture
- Clear kitchen counter and stove top
- Clear closets of unnecessary clothing
- Remove empty boxes and containers

Maintenance:

- Repair leaking taps and toilets
- Clean furnace and filters
- Tighten door knobs and latches
- Apply fresh paint where needed
- Repair or replace missing or damaged screens
- Maintain sealant around tubs, sinks, showers, windows, etc.
- Replace light bulbs with maximum wattage
- Oil squeaking doors
- Repair squeaking floor boards
- Keep plumbing and all appliances in working order

Squeaky Clean:

- Clean and freshen bathrooms
- Clean fridge and stove (in and out)
- Clean around heating vents
- Clean washer and dryer
- Clean carpets, drapes and window blinds

Important Reminders:

- Potential Buyers usually feel more comfortable if the owners are not present. We want them to "feel right at home."
- If people unaccompanied by an Agent request to see your property, please refer them to your Realtor for an appointment. DO NOT let them in your home without a Realtor.
- Leave a number where you can be reached if you are leaving town, even for a weekend.
- If an Agent doesn't use the lockbox to access your home (e.g. you open the door for them on your way out), collect a business card from him or her and call or email my office with the Agent's name and phone number so we can follow up for feedback.

In short, have your home looking and feeling like a 4 Star Hotel! It should be free of personal décor and inviting to any Buyer coming through.

Remember, we are a team in selling your home!