

Home Staging Tips

What does it take to sell a home quickly these days? You might need something called home staging. Home Staging is the art of decorating a home in a way that will appeal to potential buyers. The goal is to create a home interior that looks brighter, bigger and more inviting. Browse these tips along with the before and after shots to see techniques that you can use to help your home sell fast and for top dollar!

1. Curb Appeal

Landscaping is nice, but not in everyone's budget. At minimum, lawns should be freshly mowed and leaves raked. Trim up low hanging bushes or shrubs that might obstruct the view of the front of the home. Consider a hanging or potted plant for the entrance. Sweep the porch, deck and all walk ways and ensure garbage and recycling are tucked neatly away from the front of the house. Scrub your front door, porch, outside railings and steps. This is cheaper than repainting and makes a world of difference. Once the outside entrance is clean, decide if the paint really needs a touch up.



2. Get Rid of the Clutter!

Pick one closet or area at a time so the task isn't as daunting. Look at every item with a very critical eye and ask yourself why you're keeping it. Forget about hanging onto items for a garage sale. Pick your favorite charity and donate it. You'll probably have to edit the same closets a number of times to really whittle them down to the "essentials". If rooms and closets still look cramped or you just can't part with certain things, rent a storage locker.



Keep in mind that organized closets give the illusion of more space. Furthermore, people are drawn to order – it's just basic human nature. An organized home sends a subtle message to buyers that you pay attention to upkeep.

3. Watch Where The Eye Goes.

There are speedy and low cost solutions to many of the little problems that make a home look shabbier than it needs to. Walk along each hallway and into every room and see where your eye is drawn (better yet, ask a friend or family member to use a critical eye). If there are nail holes and chipped trim and door frames go ahead bite the bullet and paint! Glue down peeling corners on wallpaper.

4. Find a fix-it person.

Ensure cupboards open and shut and no taps are dripping. Look in all rooms for things you never got around to fixing and decide which ones might be distracting to potential buyers.

5. Clean, Clean, Clean!

It's nearly impossible to live in a spotless environment all the time. Keeping your home clean can be one of the most stressful aspects of having your home on the market – but it's worth the effort to sell your home for top dollar. You can hire a professional service to come in and deep clean everything, then take 20-30 minutes each day to maintain it. Appliances should sparkle even though they're not included in the sale. Countertops, faucets, sinks, showers and tubs should be shiny and



free of water spots. If you have a pedestal sink, don't forget the dust that collects on top of the plumbing where it attaches to the wall. If the whole sink is spotless and the taps aren't dripping, it will look new!

Dust shelves, ceiling fans and vacuum, sweep or "Swiffer" the floors. Naturally, all beds should be made. At a recent open house for a home listed over \$500,000 (and over 60 days on the market), they hadn't even bothered with these two simple steps! It made you wonder what bigger things had been neglected.

Remember clean windows let in more light and look newer. Hire a service if you have to— it's worth the investment. If all this attention to detail seems over the top, remember that a very clean home leaves the impression that the house is well cared for. This helps put buyers at ease— especially a first time buyer who may be worried about the responsibilities of owning a house.

6. Check For Odors!

Nothing can ruin a chance for a sale faster than a smelly house! Pet and smoke odors **MUST** be dealt with. These odors linger in soft surfaces like the furniture, drapes and carpeting. Consider having the carpets and even chairs and sofas professionally steam cleaned and send out the drapes to be dry-cleaned. If you simply can't afford that, try sprinkling baking soda or spraying Febreze on carpets and furniture. Leave it for an hour or so, then vacuum. "Nature's Miracle" is a great stain and odor treatment that you can buy at pet supply stores that works wonders too. If all else fails, keep air freshener handy!

7. Let There Be Light!



It might be mood lighting to you, but if you're trying to sell your home, keep it bright! Dimly lit rooms tend to look small and dingy— especially during the day. If you have a particularly dark room, consider investing in a floor lamp that will bounce light off the ceiling. If your walls are so dark that they're sucking up all the light, consider repainting. You can even buy a small can of a lighter shade of your wall color, mix it with glaze and rub it onto the wall. It will reflect light and give the room a more open feeling. This approach saves much of the preparation and clean up involved in repainting.

8. Don't Forget Fresh Flowers.

You don't need to spend a fortune to have fresh flowers throughout your home. Even a daisy in a bud vase brightens a bathroom counter. Ask your florist which blooms last a week. You can also use potted flowering plants that are in season for a low-cost solution. Don't use plastic or obviously fake flowers, especially in an expensive home!



9. Music.

Soft background music can help create a soothing environment and camouflage neighbor and traffic noise. But make sure the volume is very low. Blaring TVs are definitely a no-no, but you'd be surprised how many people leave them on for showings!

10. Does your house look like a show home yet?

Consider rearranging furniture to make rooms look bigger. Get rid of scatter rugs, family photos and most knick-knack items on shelves. A buyer needs to be able to visualize how they will live in the home.



Before



After

