



Preparing Your Home To Sell

How to maximize your property's profitability

Step #1 - Start Preparing & Packing

Most real estate agents prefer to enter through the front door when touring your home with their buyers because it presents the property in its best light. **Make sure to have extra keys to place into the keybox for access.**

Since you're moving anyway, it's best to start packing as soon as possible. This will make your home appear more spacious - which increases its perceived value as well as make your move easier.

***Real Estate Agent Staging Trick** - Do not place moving boxes in your living areas. Instead, store them in non-living areas like your garage. This will keep the home from looking cluttered and people expect to find moving boxes in your garage.*

Start packing! Everything should be divided into three categories:

Things you'll need in the next 6 months. Keep these items in the home. You'll need to use them now and probably need to unpack them first in your next home.

Things you'll need beyond 6 months. Box up everything thing you can live without for the next few months. For example, if you're selling in the springtime, you won't need Christmas decorations or winter coats easily accessible. Pack them up and move them to the garage.

Things you don't need. Now is a great time to de-clutter your life. Don't wait until moving day because you won't have the time or energy to clear your home of un-needed items. Those well-meaning folks usually pack up everything and plan to de-clutter once they arrive at the next house. Offer those items to friends and family, have a garage sale (which generates interest that you're selling the house) or donate to charity.

While you're packing we recommend storing valuables too. Jewelry, firearms and items that are important to you should be kept safe.

***Real Estate Agent Staging Trick** - After the initial packing, look at every closet to make sure there is ample headroom on every shelf. Shelves filled to the top make the closet appear like there isn't enough room for extra storage. There should be at least a quarter to half of the headroom on every shelf remaining. The same is true for furniture and room layout. Un-needed items in a room make the area feel smaller than it is. When it comes to staging, less is more!*

Step #2 - Inspect your own home.

It's time to perform a thorough inspection of your property's exterior and interior. It's often helpful to have a friend or family member help in this process because they can offer an additional perspective. The goal is to see your property through the eyes of a prospective buyer. You are looking for items that need to be cleaned, repaired or improved.

Using a notepad, start with the exterior. Stand at the curb in front of your home and identify anything that could use attention. Look for items that impact your property negatively. Make notes regarding anything to be cleaned, repaired or improved. Continue around the house standing as far away as possible. This will give you a broader perspective, the way buyer's look at houses. Once completed, make a second tour around your house standing closely to the exterior walls. This way, you will see the items you missed standing farther away. This will give you a seller's perspective.

Next, work through every room in your house making notes for items to be cleaned, repaired and improved. Stand in the doorway of each room. Does the furniture appear to be situated in the best place possible? Is there extra furniture that can be removed in order to create more space?

***Real Estate Agent Staging Trick** - Removing highly personal decorations, wall art and family photos will "de-personalize" a property. Buyers need to feel what their life will be like living in that space. Having too many personal items of yours will make that difficult. But don't go too far! Our eyes are designed to focus on items in our surroundings. Buyer's eyes looking at walls that are too bare will focus on negative issues like nail holes, cracks in the drywall or smudges on the walls. Use good common sense when clearing rooms.*

Step #3 - Clean Everything

There are several good companies that can be hired to perform this work. However, a willing seller with the right tools and cleaning products can easily handle it. Rake the flowerbeds. Power wash the exterior walls, decks and porches. It's surprising how much benefit this one task will do for your curb appeal. If needed, polish hardwood floors, clean carpets, remove mildew from grout, etc. A good overall cleaning will make your home shine and increase its perceived value.

Step #3 - Repair Safety Issues

Divide your repair list into safety issues and nuisances. Have all safety issues fixed before letting anyone tour your home. Items like loose handrails or ripped carpets, etc. create hazards. When reasonable, tackle those nuisance issues too. Replacing nonworking lightbulbs, lubricating sticky doors and drawers, etc. are common nuisance problems. Handling these items will only enhance your home's sale-ability.

Step #4 - Make Reasonable Improvements

After packing, cleaning and repairing items, we're sure you've noticed a few things that could use updating. Small, easy and inexpensive improvements can have a major impact when selling your home. Consider painting the front door with a trendy color or replacing lighting fixtures so that they're all made of the same material that fit the vibe of the home. We don't advise spending a lot of money on improvements - just on simple items that give your home that "WOW" factor.