

So you want to sell your home.....

Presentation, marketing and price are the key factors to selling anything! As the saying goes, "You only get one chance to make a first impression"! It's very important and beneficial to make the most of your property! The seller's goal is to sell there home in the shortest period of time with the highest return. The following information will achieve the maximum results that you're looking for. I hope this information helps with the sale of your home and good luck!

General Tips:

Examine your house as if you were buying it! If your house exhibits outstanding "curb appeal," you'll attract more buyers. A well-manicured yard and lawn show potential buyers that your property has been well cared for by you. Sparkling clean entry light fixtures, a cleanly swept entry area and an inviting doorway show attention to detail and pride of ownership. Clean up anything that might detract from an appealing first glance, such as oil spills on the driveway, contact marks from children bouncing balls against the garage door, and toys scattered about the yard. Next, scrutinize each room in the house, paying close attention to the kitchen and bathrooms. Make sure that rooms and closets are not overly crowded. Gain a competitive edge by repairing, painting or replacing anything that detracts from the appeal of your property. Traffic flow is very important. Make sure buyers can get from room to room easily and be able to open closets, doors and windows without a struggle. Remove all excess furniture and clutter and if necessary rent a storage locker and move stuff there.

If you are a smoker you should air the house out really well, clean carpets and remove/clean anything that has a heavy smoke smell to it. If you usually smoke inside the house you should try not to during the selling of the house. Many buyers will not even enter a house that has fresh cigarette smoke in it.

Selling Tips While Your Home Is Being Shown

- Children, pets and adults can keep buyers from feeling at ease while looking through a home. For showings it is recommended that you be out of the house if possible.
- Turn on all lights including closet and garage lights.
- Open all drapes and curtains.
- Strong cooking odors can ruin a sale. Make sure your home is fresh for a sale.
- Turn off T.V.
- Turn on stereo with soft music playing.
- If you have a bread maker, bake a loaf of bread.
- If you have a fireplace put one on in the cold months.
- In the warm months open some windows and let some fresh air in the house.

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Preparing Your Home For Sale

Preparing The Interior

The exterior creates the first impression, but it's the inside that is important to most buyers. Try to make your home as appealing to as many types of people as possible. For example, a buyer can imagine white walls a different color but can be turned off by colors that are too bold.

Cleaning

- Clean everything in and out of sight.
- Shampoo rugs and wax floors. Wash or brush walls. Wash windows and clean blinds or draperies.
- Your home should be immaculate, beds made, floors cleaned or vacuumed, windows spotless, shelves dusted and trash taken out.
- Any repairs should be done, leaky faucets, missing tiles, broken screens, etc.
- Freshly clean all linens, draperies and shower curtains.
- If you are a smoker, clean any nicotine stained items thoroughly and refrain from smoking in the home during the period you have your home on the market.
- Clean the basement and garage.

Lighting

Lighting and space are two things that can make or break a home's appeal. When the house is being shown, turn on the lights when you leave, open all curtains and shutters to let in as much light as possible and block out unappealing views.

Space

- Space is important, take a look around your home, take 50% of your closet contents and put them away.
- Take everything off the kitchen counters.
- Clean out your garage. Buyers want to envision themselves they are in clean and uncluttered open space.
- Weed out clutter in cabinets
- Create space by storing some of the extra furniture you've found useful (bureaus, bookcases, storage chests, oversized chairs) but which makes a crowded impression.
- Place the remaining furniture so that traffic can flow easily from room to room.
- Unless you're a skilled artist, scale down your personal art work (portraits, landscapes), posters, signs, and family photos, especially in teenagers' rooms. Create a feeling of spaciousness.
- Keep normal walkways throughout the house clear so buyers don't have to walk around items in the way.

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Preparing The Interior con't...

Kitchens

- Kitchen: stove, refrigerator, sink should be spotless and workspace clear.
- Clear counters, drawers and cabinets of unnecessary items.
- Put away all dishes. Don't leave dishes drying by the sink.
- Be conscious of odors caused by dampness, hampers, garbage and various foods.

Bathrooms

- Re-caulk around tub if you can do it yourself properly if not have someone who can do it right.
- Clean tiles to sparkling shine.
- Clean soap dishes, mirrors, faucets and appliances (inside and out).
- Store cleaning supplies and hang freshly washed towels.

Bedrooms and Living Areas

- Keep living areas clean and inviting.
- Arrange furniture to allow a spacious atmosphere.
- Make beds, arrange couch cushions, dust shelves, vacuum carpets and touch-up walls with paint as necessary.
- Wallpaper should be clean and adhere smoothly to the walls.
- Finishing touches such as flowers or candles add to the home's house warming appeal

Garage or Workshop

- Remove all cars for showings.
- Items should be neatly stored in shelving or wall units.
- Allow appropriate space for the home buyer to visualize their vehicle or workbench.
- Consider moving excess or over-sized items to mini-storage.
- Clean floor and if necessary repaint.

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Preparing Your Home For Sale

Preparing The Exterior

Your home's exterior is the first thing a potential buyer sees when visiting your home. The following tips will help you increase your home's curbside appeal and create a strong first impression to potential home buyers.

Driveway, Garage, Carport

- Clean up grease or oil spots on driveway surface. For asphalt driveways it is a good idea to apply a fresh coat of black driveway sealer. You can do this yourself or hire a professional.
- Keep driveway and walkways free of snow and ice. Clear immediately after a snowfall or ice storm because you never know when you will be called for a showing. Clear entire driveway. If it is a double driveway don't clean just enough for your car, clean the whole drive.
- Make sure the garage door opens freely and the automatic door opener is working. If hinges squeak oil them.
- Clean your garage or outbuildings thoroughly and relocate any stored vehicles.
- Provide an unobstructed view of your home from the street by not having cars that don't work and boats, campers or other vehicles in the driveway.

Lawns and yard

- Do a general cleanup around the yard
- Remove clutter, garbage
- Mow, trim and fertilize the lawn. Remove grass clippings.
- Edge walkways & trim hedges and shrubs
- Weed flower beds and replace dead plants and trees.
- Keep bicycles and toys out of sight.
- Fences:
 - Replace missing slats, stakes and posts.
 - Repair broken hinges and paint or stain the fence if necessary.

Siding and trim

- Make sure all exterior siding is clean and free of mildew or other stains. If not wash siding.
- Consider painting the highlight features of your home, such as trim work, shutters, gutters, down spouts and railings.
- If necessary, add a fresh coat of exterior paint to the exterior siding.

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Preparing the Exterior con't...

Doors and Windows

- Consider adding a fresh coat of paint to your front door.
- Polish brass fixtures and be sure door locks work properly.
- Oil hinges to both doors and windows.
- Keep stairways tidy and secure handrail. If required repaint handrail.
- Repair or replace bent or damaged screens and window glass.
- Cut back outdoor plants that restrict natural light.
- Clean all windows inside and if possible outside.

Front Entry

- Polish door handles and door knockers.
- Replace worn or broken items, such as an unsightly mailbox or rusty doorbell.
- Replace or repair screens in doors
- Be sure porch lights are working, replace bulbs and add welcoming features such as a new door mat and flowering plants.

Roof

- Remove debris such as tree branches and leaves.
- Make any necessary repairs to worn shingles or cracked surfaces.
- Clear gutters and down spouts of leaves and debris

Patio Deck

- Remove clutter
- Replace rotten boards and railings
- Repaint if necessary all or portions of the deck
- Tidy any visible items, such as an outdoor grill or barbecue.
- Stairways cleared of objects and obstacles
- Flowering plants and outdoor furniture add appeal.
- Remove any unnecessary items such as gardening equipment.

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House Staging Tips

Here is some cost-effective ways to make your home more appealing to buyers.

The attitudes of Canadians toward the currency of their homes' décor differ from industry experts. Most agree, however, that house staging – preparing a house for sale using cost-effective and non-invasive methods – is part of their selling and buying criteria.

First impressions count

Like a first date or job interview, the first impression of your home is the most important. Walking into a home with fingerprinted screen door windows or cluttered entranceways can influence the potential homebuyer's decisions. Likewise, strong odors can ruin a sale, so pay close attention to pet, cooking and cigarette smells in your home. Light delicately scented candles or have cookies baking when showing.

Keep it clean

Look at your home as though you're seeing it for the first time. Is every room neat, spotlessly clean, dusted and uncluttered? Steam clean carpets and wax floors. Wash walls, heating and A/C vents and light fixtures. Pay special attention to your bathroom and kitchen - make sure that tile grout is mildew free and baseboards scrubbed. Clean the refrigerator and stove as well as the washer and dryer (inside and out).

Lose the clutter

Have a yard sale or take old furniture, clothing and knick-knacks to Goodwill. Organize shelves, put away items and purge your home of unnecessary items. Make sure that your kitchen and bathroom counters are free of small appliances and personal effects.

De-personalize your home

Make your home "anonymous," so that buyers can envision it as their potential home. Put away any family photos, sports trophies, collectibles, knick-knacks and souvenirs. This will also help to remove clutter and create more space.

Freshen-up

Adding a fresh coat of paint and laying new carpet will clean and brighten up your home. Choose neutral colors and make it consistent throughout the home. If you choose to wallpaper, make sure that the paper is properly applied, your color choice is neutral and patterns are kept to a minimum.

Curb appeal

Homebuyers decide whether or not to look inside a house by the appearance of your home's exterior. Paint or wash the outside of your home. Check your gutters and chimney and make necessary repairs. Keep your lawns trimmed and flower beds weeded. Use urns to define walk spaces and ensure that window boxes are full of healthy all-season plants.

Create the illusion of space

To make your home seem more spacious, it is key to de-clutter and re-organize. Start by removing excess furniture to make rooms feel more open and replacing any items that are not appropriately sized for the room. Clean and organize your closets and remove excess clutter from all areas of your home. Strategically placed mirrors can also help to create the illusion of more space.

Modern choices

Ensure that the décor of your home is modern and tasteful. Use neutral tones on your walls and floors and add color with removable items such as throw pillows or bedding. Steer away from too many personal touches to create a minimalist and contemporary space.

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House Staging Tips cont'd....

Doggie don'ts

"Love me, love my pets," doesn't apply when selling your home. Take your pets with you when your house is being shown, or at least keep them outside. Pets under foot will quickly put a damper on an otherwise positive showing. While making sure that your house is odor-free and spotless applies to everyone, pet owners need to take special care.

Beautify your backyard

Don't forget about your backyard. A house showing doesn't always end at the backdoor. Beyond size and layout, potential buyers can also be influenced by the state of your yard. Keep the lawn, hedges and flowerbeds manicured. Buy exterior storage containers to hide gardening tools, kid toys and pool supplies. Lastly, interested buyers may decide to look inside your shed, so make sure that it is organized and clean

INSIDE:

-Clear or remove all unnecessary objects and furniture throughout the house. Keep decorative objects on the furniture restricted to groups of 1, 3, or 5 items.

-Clear all unnecessary objects from the kitchen countertops. If it hasn't been used for three months... put it away! Clear refrigerator fronts of messages, pictures, etc. (A sparse kitchen helps the buyer mentally move their own things into your kitchen.)

-In the bathroom, remove any unnecessary items from countertops, tubs, shower stalls and commode tops. Keep only your most needed cosmetics, brushes, perfumes etc., in one small group on the counter. Coordinate towels to one or two colors only.

-Rearrange or remove some of the furniture if necessary. As owners, many times we have too much furniture in a room. This is wonderful for our own personal enjoyment, but when it comes to selling we need to thin out as much as possible to make rooms appear larger.

-Take down or rearrange certain pictures or objects on walls, patch and paint if necessary.

-Review the inside of the house room by room.

-Paint any room needing paint.

-Clean carpets or drapes that need it.

-Clean windows.

-If you need room to store extra possessions use the garage or rent a storage unit.

Leave on certain lights during the day. During "showings", turn on all lights and lamps.

Have stereo FM on during the day for all viewings.

OUTSIDE:

-Go around the perimeter of the house and move all garbage cans, discarded wood scraps, extra building materials, etc., into the garage.

-Check gutters for roof moss and dry rot. Make sure they are swept and cleaned.

-Look at all plants... prune bushes and trees. Keep plants from blocking windows. "YOU CAN'T SELL A HOUSE IF YOU CAN'T SEE IT." Plants are like children — they grow so fast!!

Weed and then mulch all planting areas. Keep lawn freshly cut and fertilized. Remove any dead plants or shrubs.

-Clear patios or decks of all small items such as, small planters, flower pots, charcoal, barbecues, and toys. etc. (Put them in the garage or a storage unit).

-Check paint condition of the house — especially the front door and trim. "CURB APPEAL REALLY WORKS!"

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