



10 Tips to Prepare Your House for Sale

1. Disassociate - The time has come to sell your house; you must realize that soon it will no longer be yours. In no time, your home will be just a house, but it's ok because you'll be moving on to the next phase of your life, which is great! You need to put yourself in the prospective buyer's shoes, and think "What can I do to make the house more appealing to the buyer?"

2. De-Personalize - When selling your house; buyers want to envision their "things" in the house. Take down family photos and your great-great grandmother's oval picture frame. Buyers will become too intrigued with personal artifacts, and let's face it; you want them to focus on the house, not your grandma. You have to give the buyer an opportunity to imagine their "stuff" on the walls. You want the buyer to be asking, "Can I see myself living in this home?"

3. De-Clutter! - In all reality everybody has junk, but be realistic; if you haven't used something in over a year, then you probably don't need it... Give it away to charity, sell it at a garage sale, or simply throw it out.

- Take out all of the books from your bookcases.
- Clean off any kitchen counter clutter. (Mail, keys, snacks, etc.)
- Put essential items that you use everyday in a little box or container and store it in a cupboard when you're not using it.

As you can probably tell by now, organization is key. Just think, all of this cleaning and organizing gives you a head start on packing up.

4. Rearrange Bedroom Closets and Kitchen Cabinets - Potential buyers are always opening and closing your kitchen cabinets and closets. It looks like you are unorganized if the buyer opens the kitchen cabinet and 3 bags of chips fall out onto the floor.

On the other hand, if the buyer sees that everything is really organized, then they will presume that you take good care of the rest of the house. This means that you should:

- Neatly stack dishes.
- Turn coffee cup handles facing the same way.
- Neatly organize food in the kitchen cabinets and pantry
- Hang all shirts together, and make sure they are buttoned and facing the same way.
- Line up all of your shoes.

5. Rent a Storage Unit - Your home will show better with less furniture. Plain and simple, people don't want to see your furniture blocking walkways and paths in the house. Since you already emptied your bookcases, you can store them too. Move the big screen TV and pool table away to storage. You want to leave enough furniture in each room to showcase the room's functionality, but also leave enough room to make the rooms look larger and more comfortable. The last question you want the buyer asking is; "What could I possibly use this room for?"

6. Remove/Replace Your Favorite Items - If you want to keep built-in appliances or fixtures, well you better remove them now. If a buyer walks through the house and there is a full kitchen set (dishwasher, refrigerator, stove, etc.), then they are going to expect it to be there when they buy it. If you tell the buyer that they can't have it, they will want it even more, and you could potentially blow the deal. Don't risk a good deal over procrastination, take it now!

7. Make Little Repairs - They will add large amounts of added value to your home!

- Replace those cracked floor or counter tiles.
- Patch small holes in the walls.
- Fix that annoying leaky faucet.
- Add a new (more efficient) showerhead

- Re-caulk showers, sinks, and tubs.
- Fix the doors and kitchen drawers that don't close properly.
- Be sure to add a fresh coat of paint to every room. If you have any rooms that were painted with very vibrant flashy colors, you should repaint them with a neutral color! You don't want the buyer to remember your house as the one with the lime green bathroom. Adding new paint can tremendously increase your selling price.
- Painting is an investment... you may have to spend \$100 on 4 gallons of paint, but you can tremendously increase the value of your home. You can usually profit 10x the actual cost of paint by adding a couple fresh coats.
- Replace burned-out light bulbs...use florescent bulbs for replacements (Energy Saver)!
- Steam clean rugs and carpets
- For "how to" tips on home repair log on to www.doityourself.com

8. Make the House Shine - The potential buyer will know that you take excellent care of your house.

- Wash all of the windows inside and out.
- Renting a pressure washer and spraying down the exterior can really spruce up the outside of the house.
- Take the broom and knock out all of the cobwebs.
- Clean and polish mirrors and chrome faucets.
- Scrub out the bathtub, shower curtain, and sink scum.
- Organize and clean out the refrigerator (use some baking soda to absorb any odors).
- Dust off fan blades, light fixtures and other furniture.
- Replace old worn out rugs.
- Hang fresh towels
- Air out and clean any musty areas in the house. (Bake some cookies and leave them in the kitchen to give the house a cozy smell. Not only does this provide a comforting smell, but a nice little snack for the buyer)

9. Self-Evaluation - Now it's time to assess the presentation of your home. Now you are back to the point where you have to stand in the buyer's shoes. Walk around the house

and ask yourself: “is each room is presentable to the buyer”, “is the furniture arranged correctly”, and if it isn’t, then move it until it works. If the house looks like no one lives in it, then you're almost finished.

10. Curb Appeal - The outside of your house has to be presentable before the buyer will even think about looking at the interior. You’ve got one chance to make a first impression!

Be sure to:

- Clear off all the sidewalks.
- Mow the lawn, suck up grass clippings, and rake away any leaves or rubbish on the ground.
- Repaint the window trim.
- Plant some flowers. (Yellow flowers) Yellow evokes a buying emotion. Marigolds are inexpensive and look great when bunched together
- Trim your bushes.
- Make sure that the entire landscape is presentable and looks easy to manage.
- Replace the outdated porch light with a new one.
- Be sure that the house number is clear and visible.
- If you have a garage...use it! The buyer will not be concentrating on the cars parked outside, and they can see the functionality of the garage.
- Replace the tired mailbox!

OK, so you did it! Your house is ready to be sold. Who wouldn’t want to make an offer on a house that is so clean, organized and well presented?