

Tips for Selling

Staging your home to sell

A few changes may decrease time on the market and increase sales price.



You know you should clean everything and get rid of clutter. But aside from that, how do you broaden the appeal of your house?

Here are a few tips:

- Walk through the house and prioritize things that, if changed, would increase the value of your home. For example, repainting a child's bubble-gum pink bedroom may attract more buyers than something not as apparent, such as replacing an old dishwasher.
- You can direct a potential buyer's eye away from something negative or toward something positive. Use artwork or a room's own features, such as a fireplace, to capture a buyer's attention. However, there's a fine line. You want buyers to be able to appreciate the room and not just focus on the items in the room.
- Remove any furniture that tightens spaces. If a couch or chair makes you turn your body as you walk by or just

makes a passage look small, get rid of it. Everybody wants more space.

- Rid the house of personal effects, and don't forget simple things like magnets on the refrigerator. Small distractions to the buyers' eyes will disturb their thinking, preventing them from picturing the house as theirs. And while you want the rooms to look well-decorated and spacious, avoid turning the house into a perfect home. Try to balance the brand-new look with some of its lived-in warmth.

- Potential buyers often feel uncomfortable in bedrooms and bathrooms because they are, by definition, personal and private places. To counter this reaction, make bedrooms and bathrooms look like a model home (toss the lived-in feel out the bathroom window). Clear off all surfaces of the bathroom—remove even simple things like toothpaste and soap. Put out nice, fresh towels instead. The goal is to make these rooms comfortable for buyers. When they're comfortable, they'll linger and picture themselves in the house.

- Consider hiring a professional to improve your home's visual appeal. The fee charged by a "stager" can be worth it if the changes bring a quicker offer or a higher sales price.

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