



PREPARING YOUR HOME FOR THE MARKETPLACE



- Remove clutter and clear off counters. Throw out stacks of newspapers and magazines and stow away most of your small decorative items. Put excess furniture in storage, and remove out-of-season clothing items that are cramping closet space. Remove all items from and on top of the kitchen refrigerator. Don't forget to clean out the garage, too.
- Wash your windows and remove screens. This will help get more light into the interior of the home.
- Keep everything extra clean. A clean house will make a strong first impression and send a message to buyers that the home has been well-cared for. Wash fingerprints from light switch plates, mop and wax floors, and clean the stove and refrigerator. It's worth hiring a cleaning service if you can afford it.
- Get rid of smells. Clean carpeting and drapes to eliminate cooking odors, smoke, and pet smells. Open the windows to air out the house. Potpourri or scented candles will help.
- Brighten your rooms. Put higher wattage bulbs in light fixtures to brighten up rooms and basements. Replace any burned-out bulbs in closets. Clean the walls, or better yet, brush on a fresh coat of neutral color paint.
- Don't disregard minor repairs. Small problems such as sticky doors, torn screens, cracked caulking, or a dripping faucet may seem trivial, but they'll give buyers the impression that the house isn't well-maintained.
- Tidy your yard. Cut the grass, rake the leaves, add new mulch, trim the bushes, edge the walkways, and clean the gutters. For added curb appeal, place a pot of bright flowers near the entryway.
- Patch holes. Repair any holes in your driveway and reapply sealant, if applicable.
- Add a touch of color in the living room. A colored afghan or throw on the couch will jazz up a dull room. Buy new accent pillows for the sofa.
- Make centerpieces for your tables. Use brightly colored fruit or flowers.
- Set the scene. Set the table with fancy dishes and candles, and create other vignettes throughout the home to help buyers picture living there. For example, in the bonus/media room you might display a chess game in progress.
- Replace heavy curtains with sheer ones that let in more light. Show off the view if you have one.
- Accentuate the fireplace. Lay fresh logs in the fireplace or put a basket of flowers or fern there if it's not in use.
- Make the bathrooms fee/luxurious. Put away those old towels and toothbrushes. When buyers enter your bathroom, they should feel pampered. Add a new shower curtain, new towels, and fancy guest soaps. Make sure your personal toiletry items are out of sight.
- Send your pets to a neighbor or take them outside. If that's not possible, crate them or confine them to one room.
- Lock up valuables, jewelry, and money. While a real estate salesperson will be on site during the showing or open house, it's impossible to watch everyone all the time.
- Exterior Front Entrance. Since this is the place that the prospective Buyers will wait the longest, make sure the front door is cleaned or freshly painted with a new door knob, kick-plate and any address numbers. Add potted shrubs/flowers to each side. In addition, make sure all exterior coach lights are cleaned and in perfect working condition.
- Air Vents. Clean all the air vents throughout the home and replace with new air filters.
- Leave the home. It's usually best if the sellers are not at home. It's awkward for prospective buyers to look in your closets and , express their opinions of your home with you there.



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