



20 Tips for a Faster Sale



1. Reduce clutter. Sort through closets, drawers, and storage areas. Toss what you can, organize the rest. If you have too much furniture in your home, put some pieces in storage to make a better first impression. Organize the kitchen. Clear off the counters. Add drawer organizers to suggest efficient use of space. Store seldom-used small appliances and large baking pans.

2. Make minor repairs. Tighten loose knobs, fix leaky faucets and discolored sinks, lubricate squeaky hinges, clean out clogged drains, replace filters, secure loose shingles, tighten loose banisters, repair doors, door knobs and remove stains. Clean curtains and draperies, shampoo rugs and wax floors.

3. Check that all lighting fixtures work. Add new bulbs with the highest wattage allowed for each fixture to make your room seem brighter.

4. Clean. Not only should your home be spotless, it must be clean. Apply elbow grease and strong cleansers to surfaces inside and outside your home. Consider painting if cleaning doesn't do the job.



5. Sparkling windows are a signal to buyers that you care about your home. Clean your interior and exterior windows. Clean the window sills. Repair cracked panes, torn screens, broken sashes, and ropes or cords. Whenever your home is being shown, open your curtains to let the light in - especially if the view is nice. Clean all curtains and draperies.

6. Carpeting has a major impact on the look of your home. Carpet should be shampooed. If yours is badly worn, outdated or stained, consider replacing it.

7. Hardwood floors add to the beauty and value of a home and deserve special attention. If you live in an older home, check for hardwood floors under the carpeting. You may be able to pull up the carpeting and refinish by simply cleaning the floors to create a classic fresh look.

8. Exterminate. One bug, dead or alive, can make a bad impression on a buyer. Call in a professional to rid your home of insects, and allow time for the smell of the pesticide to disappear before showing your home.



9. Paint light, neutral colors such as beige, white, off-white, or gray. If you have dated wallpaper, remove the paper and paint the walls.

10. Update the bathrooms. If cleaning and painting can't make a life-less bath dynamite, consider replacing the vanity and sink, installing a new floor covering, or resurfacing a stained bathtub. Even a new shower curtain or toilet seat can work wonders.



11. Repair a wet basement as applicable. The problem can be as easy to fix as installing covers over window wells. If the moisture problem calls for more extensive repairs and you are not able to make them, be prepared to explain the problem to a buyer. Don't cover up the signs of a wet basement.

12. Gussy up the front entrance. A coat of paint on the door, brass accents such as house numbers, a door knob, a kick plat, pruned bushes, and blooming plants can help your home make a good first impression. Install outdoor lighting that properly illuminates your entrances, walkways, and driveway. Turn on all those outdoor lights when your home is being shown.

13. Update wallpaper. If you have dated wallpaper, remove the paper and paint the walls.

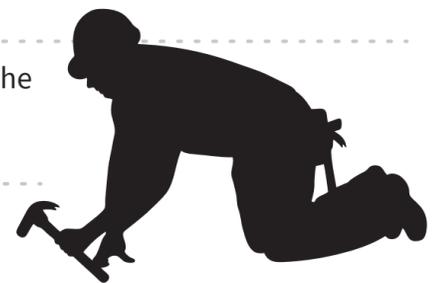
14. Clean gutters and downspouts. Straighten and paint if necessary.

15. Declutter outside. If you have a deck, patio, porches, or other outdoor entertainment area such as a pool or hot tub, make the most of them. Keep these areas, as well as your backyard, clean and clutter-free, put debris in covered trash cans.

16. Friendly welcome. Put potted flowering plants by the front door. Give shutters a fresh coat of paint. A window box full of flowers is an inexpensive way to add an accent of color to your home's exterior. Get a new Welcome mat.

17. Fix exterior. Make sure the exterior paint and siding is in good condition, and that the roof, gutters, and spouts are in good repair. Repair a leaky roof, and then paint over any water marks on the ceiling. Don't paint to hide a problem, always fix and then paint.

18. Repair cracks and pull weeds from walkways and the driveway. Edge between your lawn, driveway, and walkways. Put fresh mulch around trees, shrubs, or hedges.



19. Pick up tools and toys from the yard. Put garbage cans in the garage and shut the door. Make sure the garage is swept, and try to remove any stains from the floor.

20. Hose down the walkway and driveway at least once a week.

BONUS TIP

Take a picture - it will last longer. If your home is surrounded by flowering or fruit-bearing trees, low-maintenance landscapes, and herbal or flower gardens, be sure to take pictures when everything is in full bloom. Photographs are proof of the breathtaking view of your lawn and garden and tell prospective buyers the full story of your home - no matter the season.

