

How to Sell Your Home: 5 Easy Steps to Make Your Home More Appealing to Buyers

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Have you just placed your home on the market? Have you had your home on the market for months? Are you considering accepting a low bid or lowering your asking price to sell your home? Before you lose all hope, try these five easy and inexpensive tricks to make your home more appealing to potential buyers.

Why Your Home Hasn't Sold Yet?

Many homeowners experience a great deal of stress when trying to sell their homes. There is the anxiety that comes along with selecting your realtor. There the back and forth with setting your asking price. There is the seemingly endless stream of strangers wandering through your home. There are a ton of bids that are just too low, or maybe there are no bids at all.

So how do you position your home in the best possible light to those buyers who can actually afford your asking price? For one, don't fall prey to the same roadblocks that other sellers run in to while trying to sell their homes. Homeowner's inability to look at their home objectively, through the eyes of a potential buyer, causes many sellers to accept bids that are much lower than their asking price.

When decorating your home, you decorate to our own tastes, incorporating items that are special to you. However, it is important to understand that not everyone has the same tastes as you, especially if, like myself, your taste includes bright mismatched colors, or eclectic art displays. It is also true that items, which are special to you, may look like junk to someone else.

With just a few simple and inexpensive cosmetic changes you can completely change the way potential buyers see your home. You can make your home seem appealing to a much wider variety of homebuyers and increase your chances of receiving your asking price for your home. The following five simple steps can help you to transform your home in to a much more buyer friendly environment.

1. Kill the Clutter

Even if you have to get a storage locker to hold some of your prized nick knacks or the nine hundred family photos that you keep around the house, whatever you need to do, get the clutter out. Clutter of any type will make your home look smaller.

If you have too many pictures on the walls it will distract from the rest of a room. Clutter on the walls will also make the ceilings seem lower, and the rooms seem darker. So even though all those pictures of family vacations make you feel warm and welcome, it will have the reverse effect on your potential buyers by making your rooms seem darker and smaller.

Tables and selves should also be free of clutter. Clutter on shelves and tables distract from your room, make your home seem unorganized, and the unorganized look of clutter makes your home seem too small. A general rule of thumb is 60% free space to 40% used space on shelves and 70% free space to 30% used space on tables.

2. Pick Up the Paint Brush

A fresh coat of paint can make even a hundred year old home look brand new. If the paint on the outside of your home is dirty or peeling chances are that many potential buyers will not even make it inside the front door. If your home has vinyl siding, take the time to power wash it. A clean and fresh exterior will make a huge difference in your potential buyers first impression of your home.

On the inside of your home, fill in nail holes from some of the things that you have taken off the walls and repaint your rooms. Nicks and marks on walls make a home look dingy and uncared for. Wild or dark colors will not sit well most homebuyers, so stick with light, neutral colors.

3. Breakout the Steam-Cleaner

Shampoo your carpets with a professional steam-cleaning machine. Stains in the carpet will distract potential buyers from the overall look of your room. Shampooing your carpets can dramatically brighten a room and is a must when your carpet is next to freshly painted walls. A dirty carpet in a freshly painted room is like a little boy all dressed up in his Sunday best, but with dirt all over his face.

No one wants to move in to a dirty home. If a buyer sees stained or dingy carpet in your home they are not thinking about cleaning it, they are assuming that it will need to be replaced. Which, of course, is a very costly venture and can deter many buyers.

4. Clean and Polish Everything

It is so important to clean and polish everything in your home. Everyone likes his or her surroundings to look bright, shiny, and clean. It is human nature to want something that is clean and shiny. There is also a sense of "if you can keep it this clean, then I can do it too" when looking at a clean and shiny home.

Some of the small detail items I notice that homeowners neglect time and again are light fixtures, door handles, and light switch and electrical outlet plates. These small details can make a huge difference. Take a look around your home right now and then take another look around your home after you have done some cleaning and polishing to these items.

Don't forget the big things either. Clean your furniture as best you can. No one wants to live in a home that is smelly or dirty. If your furniture is stained, has a musty smell, or tobacco smell, your home itself will seem as though it is not as clean as it could be. This is a very important point for pet owners as well.

I cannot stress enough the importance of shiny wood and stain free fabric furniture. If you have a special chair or other piece of furniture that you just cannot get clean or free of that musty smell, move it out of the house and in to storage. Do not let even one piece of furniture slide; details count!

5. Send Your Furry Family Members on a Trip

Move your pets to a relative or friend's house. I know that this can be heart breaking, but even the most well behaved pet leaves behind fur and odors. You don't want to spend hours shampooing your rugs and cleaning your furniture just to have them covered in fur. Or must worse to have your home smell like your much loved, but stinky, pet.

Even worse, your pet will leave behind dander, the leading cause of animal allergies. No one is even going to walk through a home in which they cannot breathe. So move your pets out of your home before you do your cleaning, and keep them out until after you move.