

Preparing Your Home to Sell

by Kirsten Sharpe, The REALTOR for SENIORS™



You have decided to sell your house but now you're overwhelmed by the thought of preparing your home for buyers to view. Maybe holding an Open House makes you anxious, knowing you have accumulated more things than you'd like the public to know about.

Many sellers are unsure about what areas to address when listing a home. Dividing this project into manageable tasks will make it easier. Engaging your spouse, kids or best friend can make the task more fun. Then share a meal to celebrate your accomplishments (just don't go shopping for more stuff). Here are some basic areas to address:

Exterior (Curb Appeal)

- At the front door, which you probably don't use often, remove cobwebs and leaves and buy a new doormat. Power wash the exterior if possible or wipe down the siding.
- If you have containers for gardening, toss plants past their prime and refresh them with bright colors or seasonal accents. Have your lawn in good shape and straighten the bird feeder, which has been leaning for some time.
- Check to make sure exterior light bulbs work (and interior ones, as well).
- Clean your windows and check screens for tears.
- Power wash the deck or patio. Fix loose deck boards and make sure railings are stable.

Interior

- De-clutter all horizontal surfaces, which include floors, kitchen counters, bathroom vanities, dressers, shelves, the dining room table, and the fireplace mantle. Yes, you have a lot of horizontal surfaces!
- People love to open your refrigerator. It gives them a peek into your life. Make sure it's clean and doesn't smell.
- Closets. Yes, buyers will open them. Make sure items don't come tumbling out. Storage space is very important to buyers and they are known to open anything with a doorknob.
- Look up – do you have fuzz on your ceiling fans? And look down - wipe baseboard trim, especially if you have pets.
- Are your walls covered with "too many" family photos? Take them down so buyers don't feel they are living in your space but instead can envision their family living there.

- If your walls are a dark color, it's time to lighten up those rooms. A neutral palette will appeal to the largest number of buyers. Be sure to repair nail holes and do drywall patching before painting. But be aware of too many "spot touch ups" as they can appear in listing photos and make the wall look like it has polka dots.

Next time you come home, use your front door. Look at your house from the perspective of someone who has never been there. Is this a home you would buy? If not, concentrate on decluttering and making reasonable improvements. You only have one chance to make a first impression!

For a personal evaluation of your house, call Kirsten Sharpe, Managing Broker/Owner of Sharpe Realty, LLC. 574-339-7959 or www.TheRealtorForSeniors.com.

