

# When It's Time To Sell Your House

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KELLERWILLIAMS.





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Sell Your House



# Prepare To Sell Your House with:

Curb Appeal  
Eye Appeal  
Buy Appeal



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Getting top dollar for your house begins with seeing it through the eyes of a buyer. To be a successful seller your house needs to look its best!

## ADOPTING A NEW MINDSET

When you decide to sell, it's important to begin the process of emotional detachment from the home you love so dearly. A *home* is where your heart is. A *house*, on the other hand, is a product you're preparing in order to compete in the open market.

Objectivity is key - look at your house through a new lens. It is common to overlook details once you've lived in the same place or a while. Gradual wear and tear and accumulation of clutter may seem insignificant but they are very often a big turn-off for buyers.

Some improvements are more effective than others at helping a house sell quickly and for top market value. Conversely, if you do nothing at all, or if you make the wrong improvements to your house, you risk prolonging the sale and decreasing the price your house commands.

## CREATING CURB APPEAL

Buyers tend to make snap judgments, and their first impression of your house, good or bad, is usually lasting. People generally decide if they want to go inside within 20 seconds of assessing the external attractiveness (curb appeal).

## EXTERIORS ATTRACT, BUT INTERIORS SELL

Curb appeal draws buyers into your house, but appealing and well cared-for interiors make the sale. Most sellers don't have to spend thousands prior to putting up the *For Sale* sign. On the contrary, little things generally offer a better return on investment. Concentrate on the three C's -- Clean it up, clear the clutter and make cosmetic improvements.

- Clean/Refresh. Scrub and polish all your appliances, inside and out. Wash walls, floors, bathtubs, showers and sinks and mirrors until they sparkle. And remember that odors from cigarette or cigar smoke, pets or fragrances can often make buyers turn and leave quickly. Whether you do the cleaning yourself or hire someone, make sure your house ends up spotless and smelling fresh.
- Clear clutter. Reduce clutter on kitchen counters and keep dirty dishes out of the sink. Recycle magazines and newspapers and organize the attic and basement. Clean-out and organize closets and built-in drawers. Like it or not, serious buyers will inspect your closets and built-in cabinetry.
- Make cosmetic improvements. Painting isn't expensive if you do it yourself, but be careful that the job done well. Stay with soft whites and other neutrals that won't clash with most prospective buyers' tastes. Don't forget the basement.

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## DETAILS TRULY MATTER

**Repairs.** Making repairs before you put a house on the market gives buyers less reason to ask for price reductions. All appliances that remain with the house should be in proper working order.

Here are some things to look for and have repaired:

- Hairline cracks over doors or windows and nail pops in sheet rock
- Ceiling stains (be sure to repair the source of the leak before addressing the stain)
- Windows that do not open and shut properly or that have cracked panes
- Doors that stick, don't close or slide properly
- Inspect rooms, especially bathrooms, for signs of mildew. Remove rust stains from sinks and toilets, replace missing tiles or grout, touch up or replace caulking around tubs. Check for dripping faucets, slow draining sinks and tubs, broken mirrors.

Remember -- a buyer's typical reactions to poor maintenance are to reduce the offer price or buy a different house. It pays to put your best foot forward!

## STAGING

Just as stagehands set the stage for Broadway productions, you can stage your house to create a production designed to WOW prospective buyers and set your house apart from the competition.

If you have walked through a builder's model home you've seen the work of a stager. Builders employ these visual design experts to make their newly-constructed homes beautiful and appealing to the largest number of potential buyers. To do that, they use warm, neutral colors and place furniture in a way that maximizes space and functionality. The details they manage extend to decorative items such as artwork, pillows and other accessories down to a stylishly-set kitchen table or hardcover books arranged next to a bed.

Staging a house not only makes the most of a home's features, it can help prospective buyers picture living there.



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## GIVE IT CURB APPEAL

Getting top dollar for your house requires seeing the house through the eyes of prospective buyers. It's often little things that enhance the value to buyers. The following checklist will give you an idea of how to create a great first impression.

### EXTERIOR

- Pressure wash to brighten color and remove mildew and dirt build-up.
- Paint all faded siding, window trim, and shutters.
- If paint color does not conform to neighborhood norm- repaint in appropriate color.
- Repair (fill nail pops) or replace and repaint all damaged, delaminated siding.
- Paint or refinish the front door in order to brighten appearance upon approach.
- Repair or replace all rotten or damaged wood around window sills and doors.
- Check all gutters and downspouts—clean and replace if necessary.
- Replace all broken or cracked window panes and torn screens.
- Wash windows to remove dirt, cobwebs and insect nests.
- Check mailbox and replace if broken or dilapidated.
- Replace exterior light fixture(s) if outdated, damaged or not working.

### SIDEWALKS/DRIVEWAYS

- Repair all cracks in walkways and driveways.
- Pressure wash sidewalks and driveways to remove built-up dirt stains and mildew.
- Edge and trim the lawn next to sidewalks and driveways.

### LAWNS

- Keep lawn freshly mowed and trimmed. In the fall, clear lawn of fallen leaves weekly.
- Remove toys, bicycles and garden hoses from lawn.
- Re-seed or sod bare or unsightly areas in the lawn.
- Keep the lawn edged next to the curb.

### SHRUBBERY

- Remove or replace any dead shrubs, hedges, and trees.
- Trim all shrubs and bushes. Keep shrubbery below window-level to avoid blocking light.
- Skirt any trees that block views of the house.
- Add color and charm with seasonal flowers in pots or along beds.

### DECKS/PATIOS

- Pressure wash decks and patios.
- Replace rotten wood, repair loose rails, reseal deck if necessary.
- Edge the lawn along the patio.



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## GIVE IT "EYE" APPEAL MAKE THE INSIDE SPARKLE

Curb Appeal will get the buyer to come in, but what's inside the house makes the sale.

### KITCHEN

**The kitchen is the most important room to buyers. Make it sparkle!**

- Oven, cook tops and ventilating hood should be cleaned and spotless, inside and out.
- Replace any badly worn flooring.
- Scour walls, floors, sinks and fixtures until they shine.
- Clean and polish cabinets and drawer fronts. Consider professionally painting dull or dark cabinets.
- Remove toasters, coffee makers, can openers and other clutter from counter tops.
- Remove all photos and magnets from refrigerator.
- Wash the windows.
- Remove wallpaper of unique color and design. Ideally, paint with neutral colors with broad appeal.
- Repair any dripping faucets and slow running drains.
- Replace any small, dingy and/or ineffective light fixtures so the room is full of bright white light.

### BATHROOM

Bathrooms are almost as important to buyers as kitchens. The bathroom's condition speaks volumes to the buyer about the overall condition of the house.

- Scour tile walls, floors, bathtubs, sinks, toilets and shower stalls until they shine. Remember to wipe down tiles, sinks and shower doors daily.
- Use special cleaning products to remove stains from toilets, tiles, bathtubs and sinks.
- Replace old caulking around bathtubs and faucets. Replace any missing grout between tiles and clean thoroughly to remove dirt stains and mildew.
- Keep all mirrors shining.
- If bathtub drains too slowly, make sure it gets unclogged.
- Clean and polish all cabinet and drawer fronts.

### FIREPLACES

- Remove old ashes.
- Polish fireplace tools, screens and doors. Stack logs neatly.

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## LIVING AREAS

- Wash interior windows. Make sure windows open and close properly.
- Get walls in top condition. Repair hairline cracks and nail pops. If you are taking any bookcases, drapery rods, window treatments or fixtures with you, remove and repair the walls before placing the house on the market.
- Check the ceiling for leaks and stains. Fix the leak before repainting the ceiling.
- Replace all burned out light bulbs.
- Make sure all light switches work.
- Ensure all sliding doors are in tracks. Rub tracks with paraffin or candle wax for easier movement.
- Clean all carpets. Replace carpet if heavily worn, pet stained or damaged or if color unusually bold.
- If you smoke or have pets, seek out professional cleaning and products and monitor daily. Clean air ducts if a resident regularly smokes indoors.
- Repaint walls if they are a unique or bold color or if they are faded. Use neutral colors that will appeal to most buyers.
- Clean switch plates, wall plates.
- Make sure all flooring is clean and in good repair.

## BASEMENT, ATTIC, GARAGE

- Clean out the attic, basement and garage and remove everything you are not going to move.
- Box up everything you won't need until you are settled in your new house. Consider renting a small storage space to store the items so buyers can see the full size of each room.
- Make sure there is plenty of light on the stairs to the basement.
- If your basement is dark and gloomy, paint the ceilings and walls a light color and put the highest wattage bulbs you can safely use in all fixtures.
- Repair cracks in the basement floor.
- Vacuum garage floor and clean oil spills.
- Stack items neatly but keep boxes far enough away from walls for viewing.

*Getting your house ready to put on the market can take anywhere from 2 to 5 weeks depending on its size, condition and the amount of time you can devote to preparation. If you lack the time or ability to do the work yourself, your Realtor can provide a list of professionals who can help.*



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## STAGING - GIVE IT "BUY" APPEAL

Staging your house puts the finishing touches on the Three Cs - clean up, clearing clutter and cosmetic improvement.

### KITCHEN / LIVING / DINING AREAS

- Remove excess furniture to give rooms a larger feel.
- Rearrange remaining furniture to give warm, intimate feel to room.
- Add fresh fruit to kitchen counter top and fresh flowers to table.
- Set the kitchen table with color coordinated place mats, napkins, and china.

### FIREPLACE(S)

- In summer, nestle fresh, fragrant pine boughs (in water) in fireplace.
- In winter, stack logs neatly in fireplace or, if at home, have a fire in the fireplace.

### BATHROOMS

- Display fresh, color coordinated towels and shower curtains.
- Remove all everyday toiletries from counter tops.
- Place healthy, green plants on all counter tops.
- Place new soap in all soap dishes.
- Place fragrant, evergreen scented air freshener in all bathrooms.

## GETTING READY FOR SHOWING

When a buyer wants to see your home, make it clean, bright and showing ready!

### CLEAN AND WELCOMING

- Make sure the house is neat and organized inside - put away shoes, jackets and electronics. Put dirty dishes in the dishwasher and damp towels in the washer. Tuck away bathroom toiletries.
- Adjust the thermostat to a seasonally-comfortable temperature
- Sweep the front porch and remove webs or debris from around lamps
- Consider baking a batch of cookies or brownies to create a warm, welcoming scent.

### LIGHT

- Keep draperies and blinds open to let in light.
- Turn on lights to spotlight fireplaces and mantels
- Turn on all lamps in every room (even during the day).
- Turn on all hallway and stairwell lights.
- Turn on lights in closets, over counter tops and cook tops.
- At night, turn on porch lights and all outdoor lights and floodlights.

**I'd be honored to help you sell your home. Please call me at 678.427.7107**

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