

Prepare Your Home to Sell

Staged to Sell

It won't surprise you that an attractive, well-maintained home will generally sell faster and for a higher price than a similar home that looks worn, run-down or bland. So when you prepare your home for sale, think of it as more than cleaning it – think of it as marketing it! Of course you'll make sure the dust bunnies are gone and that no clutter is lying about, but you'll also need to think about what will attract a buyer. Put yourself in the buyer's shoes and take a critical look inside and out. Although this can be a bit of a challenge since you're used to seeing your own house day after day, it's important to see it through the fresh eyes of a potential buyer. However, if you are having trouble seeing your home objectively, consult your Eliason Realty agent. S/he is experienced in preparing homes for sale and will be able to give you specific directions to help get you started. In the meantime, here are a few specific areas you'll most certainly want to address.

Exterior

Obviously, the outside of your home is the first thing a buyer will see – and notice. Never underestimate the importance of curb appeal. Make a good first impression by:

- Keeping the lawn mowed and shrubs well trimmed.
- Removing dead tree limbs and other yard debris.
- Livening up the landscape by planting fresh shrubs or flowers. (A small investment of even under \$100 can really make a difference here.)
- Arranging outdoor items neatly and putting away lawn equipment.
- Checking siding, trim and doors – especially the front door – for dirt and peeling paint. (Wash or touch up where needed.)
- Inspecting the condition of your fence; repair or paint as necessary.
- Repairing or replacing loose or damaged roof shingles or flashing.
- Cleaning and repairing broken windows or screens.
- Cleaning gutters and downspouts.
- Washing the driveway and sidewalk; patch holes, too.
- Cleaning and neatly arranging the garage or shed.
- Making sure the gas grill is ready for use, especially in season.
- Making sure the entry light and doorbell work.

If you find that a repair is needed on anything listed, fix the entire defect so it will not cause a distraction.

Interior

Make every room look as spacious, organized, bright, warm and inviting as possible by:

- Washing walls, ceiling and trim; if possible, paint with light, neutral colors.
- Repairing cracks in plaster.
- Take down personal items including pictures, knickknacks, etc, the buyers need to picture themselves in living in the home.
- Make the house smell good. Cook a pie before a showing, or burn a candle.
- Tightening loose doorknobs, pulls on drawers and cabinets, towel racks, switch plates and outlet covers.
- Fixing sticking doors and windows, squeaking doors and loose banisters.
- Repairing and cleaning caulking around tubs and sinks.
- Fixing leaky faucets and removing water or rust stains.
- Organizing the basement and attic so they appear as spacious and neat as possible. (Discard anything you're not taking with you or hold a garage sale.)
- Bringing order to closets and removing clutter. (An extra tip: limit the number of items stored overhead or on the floor.)
- Organizing kitchen cabinet contents and removing clutter from countertops.
- Laundering or cleaning draperies, blinds and curtains.
- Shampooing carpets and waxing floors.
- Spraying for bugs if you haven't already.
- Arranging furniture so the room appears as roomy and appealing as possible.

- De clutter and remove magazines, personal papers, etc, so it does not take away from the room.
- Removing items you plan to take with you, including chandeliers, coordinating drapes and mirrors.

While these chores can keep you busy for a while, finishing them can make the difference in your final sale price. Be sure to talk to your Eliason Realty agent if you have any questions about getting your home ready to sell.



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