

Home Staging Check List

When you get ready to place a home on the market for sale it becomes a product. Just like any product on the shelves at your local store it has features and benefits, pluses and minuses. There are other products to compete with. To gain an edge in your marketplace you must be priced right and look better than the competition.

When you sell your home you're sadly going to have to go through the difficulty of moving. When you move, you're also going to have to pack your belongings, unless you have a company take care of that for you. Sometimes it's helpful to pack away seldom used items yourself, such as clothing of the off season, large kitchen appliances that are rarely needed, extra books, etc. You can either rent a storage unit or use your garage. We've never had a problem selling a house because the garage was full of personal items and/or boxes.

Things to Keep In Mind:

- Buyer's only know what they see, not how it's going to be.
- Reduce clutter to really show the rooms to their best advantage.
- If there are pets, consider cleaning carpets to reduce the odor.
- As you may already realize, the way you live in your home and the way you market and sell your house are two different things.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

- In every room, stand in the doorway and look at the room through the eyes of a buyer. What do you see? What can you do without while your home is on the market?
- Most carpets need to be cleaned. Have them professionally cleaned before coming on the market. Please discuss with us before replacing the carpet. You may not need to.
- Check all light fixtures. Are they working properly? Replace all burned out light bulbs. Look for dark hallways and corners and increase the wattage of bulbs in those areas.
- Make sure there are lamps with adequate bulbs in dark corners. We recommend turning on all lights for showings, but not leave any music playing.
- Repair and repaint cracks on all walls and ceilings.
- Repair or replace broken light switches and switch plates. Clean dirty areas around them.
- Keep all curtains and blinds open during the day to let in all light and views. The extra cost of heating or air conditioning is a necessary cost of selling.
- Fireplaces need to be cleaned out. Glass doors should be cleaned. Mantels and hearths need to be cleared off except for a few decorative items.

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- Reduce the number of books on bookshelves. Pack up the books early!
- Wash all windows inside and out and make sure they operate freely.
- Repair items that are broken. This will show that your home is well taken care of.
- Rearrange or move furnishings from room to room as needed to create more space.
- In general, pack up the little things. Anything you can do to reduce clutter will help.

INSIDE:

Living Room, Family Room, Den:

- Clear off all coffee tables and end tables. Keep decorative objects on the furniture restricted to groups of 1, 3, or 5 items.
- Remove all ashtrays.

Dining Room:

- Clear off dining table except for one nice centerpiece.
- Remove extra leaves from tables to make the room look bigger.
- Remove extra chairs from table if they crowd the table or fill up corners of the room. Four or six chairs should be enough.

Kitchen:

- Clear all unnecessary objects from the kitchen countertops leaving only a very few items you use on a daily basis.
- Clear refrigerators of magnets, pictures, messages, etc.
- Clean tile grout with bleach if needed.
- Repair broken tile or loose corners on Formica counters.
- Clean the stovetop and oven. Replace burner pans if they are badly stained. Clean all exhaust fans, filters and hoods.
- Keep the kitchen sink clean and empty on a daily basis.

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- Keep all soaps, sponges and cleaning supplies out of sight under the sink.
- Empty the garbage regularly to reduce odors.
- Move cat and dog dishes so they don't interfere with the buyer's walk around the room.

Bedrooms:

- Make beds before showings.
- Clear off bedside tables, dressers, etc. except for a very few necessary items.
- Store extra books and magazines underneath the bed.
- Keep closet doors closed. If you have a walk-in closet keep the floor clean and free of laundry and clutter.
- Remove all posters tacked on walls and repair holes in walls.

Laundry Rooms:

- Put soaps and supplies in cupboards.
- Keep counters and sink clean and empty.
- Make sure that light bulbs are working and have adequate wattage. Most laundry rooms are too dark.

Bathrooms:

- Clear off all surfaces. Put toiletries in drawers or cabinets and only keep a few necessary items out in baskets or a tray.
- Make sure you have a bottle of hand soap or a clean bar of soap.
- Clear all items out of shower stalls and tubs except for necessities.
- Clean or replace the shower curtain.
- Repair any cracking or peeling areas and clean any moldy areas. Paint if necessary.
- Many tubs and showers need a fresh new bead of silicone caulking around the edges to make them look neat and clean.
- Hide garbage can and cleaning supplies out of sight.

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Closets:

- Make sure you can open the door freely without any thing falling on potential buyers. This has happened to us many times!

OUTSIDE OF YOUR HOME:

The first impression when a buyer drives up to your home is critical. Walk across the street and look at it through a buyer's eyes. Be tough on yourself. What do you see?

Trim and House Paint:

Take a hard look at the front door and trim. Give special attention to this because this is where buyers will get their first opportunity to make a close inspection of your home. Does it need repainting or staining? Repainting the doors and trim to help make the house look crisp and in good condition is one of the least expensive things you can do to dress up a home.

Decks, Porches and Patios:

- Sweep all walkways and patios, porches or decks. Front walkways are a good candidate to be pressure washed to clean away stains.
- Remove all moss.
- Decks should be pressure-washed, stained or painted if needed. We have a pressure washer that you can borrow.
- Clear patios/decks of small items such as plants, flower pots, charcoal, barbeques, toys, etc.
- If you have outdoor furniture create one simple room setting of clean furniture so buyers see how they can use the space.

Roofs:

- Check gutters and roof for dry rot and moss. Make sure they are swept and cleaned. A pressure washer does a great job of cleaning out the gutters (just be prepared to get wet!)

Fences:

- Repair broken fences and gates and paint if necessary.

Landscaping:

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- Look at all plants. Plants are like children...they grow so fast. Prune bushes and trees. Keep plants from blocking all windows.
- Remove any dead plants, weed all planting areas and put down fresh mulching material.
- Keep your lawn freshly cut, edged and fertilized during the growing season.

General:

- Go around the perimeter of the house and remove all garbage cans, discarded wood scraps, extra building materials, etc., to the garage or, if applicable, take them to the dump.
- Remove all plastic storage containers, children's toys and any unnecessary objects.

Garages:

- Sweep out and organize. Keep storage in garage neat.
- If needed, use garage as storage location. Better to have the garage cluttered than the house.