

PREPARING YOUR HOME FOR BUYERS

Understanding the Real Estate Market

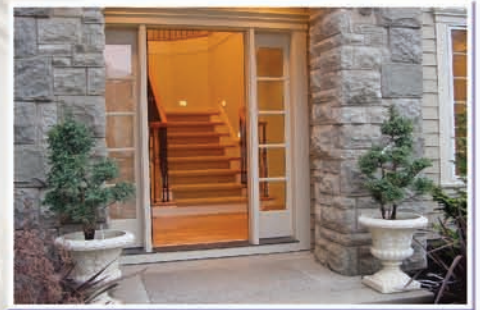
There are three types of markets when discussing real estate: Balanced Market, Buyer's Market and Seller's Market. In a Balanced Market, neither the buyer nor the seller has the upward advantage. In a Buyer's Market, the buyer has the advantage and in a Seller's Market the seller has the advantage. Today, we are in a Seller's market. There are not many homes for sale, as most are being sold within days of being listed. The limited inventory creates a very competitive environment for buyers and a quick window for decision-making.

Regardless of which market we happen to be in currently, a seller should make the home stand out with a beautiful presentation and correct pricing. The homes that stand out will sell fast and get competitive bids, possibly resulting in a buyer paying more than the asking price. The top-selling homes are de-personalized, staged, de-cluttered, and clean. Your home is going to attract the largest amount of potential buyers within the first two weeks. The first impression is key because it determines what the buyer thinks of the home. Follow these tips to make your house stand out and shine!

De-Personalize

Pack up personal photographs and family heirlooms. Buyer's cannot see past personal artifacts and get distracted with photos. They end up trying to figure out who you are, rather than imagining themselves living in the home.

- Start by opening your front door. Is your home inviting?
- Envision your home as a product that will appeal to a buyer.
- Think about how best to represent your home on the market.
- Stand in the doorway of each room and see the buyer's view.
- Imagine yourself handing the keys over to the new owner.



De-Clutter

You should have just enough furniture in each room to showcase the purpose of the room and leave plenty of space to move around. There is an easy rule to follow for de-cluttering your home. If you haven't used it in over a year, it is likely you will not need it anytime soon. Get a head start on packing and store these items.



- If you do not need it, donate it or throw it away.
- Neatly arrange books in bookcases.
- Pack up all non essential items, clothing and collectibles.
- Clean off everything from the kitchen and bathroom countertops.
- Put items used daily in a small box that can be stored away easily.



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Organize, Remove or Replace

Having neat closets and cabinets will make an impression on the buyer that you probably have taken good care of the rest of the home as well. Window coverings, built-in appliances, fixtures, and chandeliers can be taken to the new home. Decide which items will not be sold with the home and pack those things.

- Line up shoes in the closets.
- Neatly stack spices and dishes in the cabinets.
- Recaulk, patch and paint cracks in fixtures and walls.
- Replace all old towels, sheets and rugs with new linen.
- Fix doors that do not close properly and drawers that jam.
- Replace burned out or dimmed light bulbs with bright bulbs.
- Fix leaky faucets in the kitchen, bathroom and laundry room.
- Paint your walls neutral colors if you have flashy or bold colors.



Keep Things Clean

You want to give the impression that the home has been well maintained. This starts with a clean home, inside and outside. Be sure to pay attention to detail, as buyers are prone to look in the most unexpected places during an open house.



- Vacuum, dust and sweep daily.
- Remove any cobwebs from walls or floors.
- Clean inside and outside windows.
- Polish faucets and mirrors in bathrooms and kitchen.
- Clean out the refrigerator, removing old food and stains.
- Steam clean carpets and ceramic tiles to remove stains.
- Use air fresheners to keep out any musty smelling odors.

Curb Appeal

First impressions are lasting with home viewings. Give them something to remember, as buyers see many homes. When a buyer drives up, they should instantly fall in love with the property. The exterior gives an idea of what they can expect on the inside of the home.

- Paint faded trim around the house.
- Keep the sidewalks clear of trash and debris.
- Mow the lawn, rake leaves, trim bushes and mulch beds.
- Plant flowers and/or buy potted plants for front of home.
- Make sure your house number is visible from the street.



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