

Stage your Home to Get Top Dollar

When staging your home, you have to seduce a potential buyer into believing that this is the house for them. While they will want to see a home, they will also want to see a house they could easily move into and live in. In some ways, when buying a house, a buyer is also buying an improved lifestyle, so what you offer in terms of your home has to be an improvement of what they already have.

It's difficult for a buyer to imagine him or herself living in your home if it's crammed to the rafters with your personality. What you may consider design touches, a potential buyer will think cluttered. Go through every room in your home and eliminate anything that detracts from the basic layout. A buyer wants to see the home they're getting for their money and if a room is cluttered it becomes difficult to see.

This is where finding the balance between de-cluttering and showing a home off to its best advantage comes into play: you need to take out all those items that personalize your home, but not too many of them to leave it looking as though no one does, or would, live in your house.

Bedroom

Make sure that the bedrooms look like bedrooms! All too often when selling a house all those items that have been removed in order to smarten the house up get stored in a spare bedroom. This is one big warning sign to a potential buyer that there's not enough room in the house. If you have to arrange for storage in order to keep the house clear, then do so. You will recoup the cost in the sale price.

Dining Room

When selling a house, defining rooms is very important. A potential buyer doesn't want to be confused as to the purpose of a room. For example, if there's a computer and office chair in what you show as the dining room, the buyer is left wondering whether the house is too small for that computer and office chair to be where they should be. If you show a room as a dining room, then make sure that a potential buyer is given the impression that they could actually dine in it!

Living Area

This is the one room that might need to be "de-individualized." Remove anything that might detract from a potential buyer being able to imagine him- or herself living in the room. While it's OK to leave out one or two photos to give the room a "lived in" feel, if your photo collection is big, then trim it out and store the remaining photos. Keep as much of the floor as clear as you can: this gives the impression of space while at the same time letting the buyer see the state of the floor covering (which should be clean and presentable).

Kitchen

The kitchen is the most important room in the house when it comes to selling it. Real estate agents will often tell a buyer that kitchens and bathrooms sell houses -- and they do. Potential buyers place a lot of importance on the state of a kitchen. That doesn't mean that it has to have extremely expensive and fashionable fittings: it does mean, however, that it has to look clean, fresh, and fit for purpose. A buyer won't want to see loose fixings, or drawers that don't close properly. When selling your home, ensure that the kitchen is in very good order. If your kitchen is a little outdated, all you might need to do is to replace the cabinet doors, lay new floor covering, and paint the walls. This can transform a kitchen from one that looks old and tired into one that clinches the sale.

Bathroom

The bathroom comes a close second to the kitchen in terms of importance when selling your home. A buyer knows that what's in this room -- as with the kitchen -- he or she is going to have to live with (unless they are prepared to remodel it themselves). Again, as with the kitchen, it doesn't take a great deal of effort and money for the bathroom to look good. A potential buyer won't be impressed with cracked tiles or a grubby shower curtain -- it's vital that this room looks clean. Anything in this room that doesn't should be replaced.

The Yard

Don't neglect the yard, especially the front yard. First impressions are important, and it doesn't matter how wonderful your house is looking, if the front yard looks unkempt then a potential buyer will step through your front door looking for faults. Get off on the right foot when it comes to staging your home, and have the yard looking good enough that a buyer wants to see more of what's on offer.

The Small Things

Small, inexpensive touches can create a good impression when selling your home. A vase of wonderfully scented flowers strategically placed in an entryway, such as the hallway, can work wonders. A vase of flowers will also add an elegant touch to a dining room.

Eliminate all bad odors from your home -- buyers don't just use their eyes to make a decision. A coat of paint can not only brighten up a room, but can leave a fresh smell that will signal to any buyer that the house is clean.

All it takes is time and effort, and perhaps a little expenditure, when it comes to getting your house looking good -- a sound investment when it results in a quick sale.

About the Author

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