

Smart Home Selling Tips

With today's changing housing market, home-buying opportunities are tremendous. Interest rates are low, prices are competitive, and many fantastic incentives and financing options can be found. But what if you have to sell your current home first? These tips will help you get your home sold and on the road to moving into your own new home of your dreams. The price you set for your home is obviously the key factor in many buyers' minds. But don't forget that presentation is crucial. The potential buyer needs to be able to see themselves living in your home.

Keep personal items like photographs to a minimum. Address any clutter and either donate items to charity, throw them out or organize them neatly. Organize all of your closet spaces and kitchen cabinets. Clean off kitchen countertops and pack up small knickknacks. Your house will appear neater and you'll also get a head start on packing up for your own move.

While that red accent wall opposite the lime green fireplace perfectly ties in with your ultra-modern furniture, a potential buyer at your open house may be turned off immediately and decide that the entire house doesn't reflect their style. Consider painting walls a neutral color such as beige or taupe. The interior paint job should be fresh and clean and in a single, neutral color throughout. The same goes for the exterior. Don't forget shutters and windows. If your home has vinyl or aluminum siding, be sure it's clean. Moldy, dirty siding will tell a buyer that your home has not been taken care of properly.

Old, matted carpeting will be a detriment to your home selling. Real estate agents all have a dozen stories of a home that sat and sat on the market until the old carpeting was replaced. Then, it sold immediately. If you have hardwood floors under old carpet, tear up the carpet to expose them; today's buyers love hardwood floors.

Remove furniture that blocks walkways or windows. Leave just enough furniture to showcase the room's purpose. Rent a storage unit if you have to. A home that is too empty can appear lifeless, so if you've already packed your furniture, consider hiring a staging company that will rent you some for a short time period.

Clean your house top to bottom including walls, floors, furniture and tabletops. Everything should be sparkling clean when a buyer makes that all-important first visit. Don't leave dirty dishes in the sink, crumbs on the counter or laundry stacked in the bedroom. Wash your windows inside and out, wipe down baseboards and clear out cobwebs from ceiling corners and closets.

If there are problem areas in your home, get them fixed before the showing. When prospective buyers tour the house and see leak stains on the ceiling or peeling paint, they will also see future work and assume that bigger maintenance and repair issues are lurking behind those small problems. This is particularly true in kitchens and bathrooms, which are often the two rooms that make or break a sale. The expenses you incur on the front end sprucing up your home will be cheaper than the profits you could lose by having to lower the price to meet buyer demand.

If your home's appliances, like the dishwasher, oven, refrigerator and washer and dryer, are old and outdated, it could pay to replace them. Buyers do not want to be faced with the possibility of having to replace appliances upon moving in to a new house. Shiny, new appliances already in place will be a big selling point.

Even small touches count. Hang fresh towels in the bathrooms and kitchen. Set the dining room table, and buy fresh flowers for vases throughout the home. Turn on all your lights during the open house to highlight the home's amenities.

Finally, don't forget the first impression: curb appeal. Make certain that your house number can be read from the street and remember to keep your sidewalks clear and your lawn mowed. Trim shrubs and trees and if possible, plant some flowers.

Selling your home doesn't have to be a headache. With a little preparation, your home will be sold before you know it and you'll be settling in to your new home.

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