



Preparing Your House for Sale

10 Simple things you can do to sell your home faster

1. Take care of the simple home repairs

Now is the time get to all those little repairs you've been meaning to do. Filling the cracks in the walls, changing that broken light socket, freshly caulk around the bathtub, sinks and countertops, etc.

2. Take a Look at Your Ceilings

Ceilings are often very neglected in a home. Your ceilings may appear white but you will be pleased with the difference a fresh coat of paint will make. Your rooms will not only appear cleaner, but brighter and more spacious as well.

3. Paint/Repaint Your Walls

Paint is the simplest and the least expensive way to make a big change in your house. Use a soft off-white or beige colour (ie: Benjamin Moore's CC-140 *Barely Beige* , Pratt & Lambert's 2255 *Downy Gray* or C2's 2246 *Rice Paper*) to brighten up the space and neutralize it. Remember, your current paint colours were selected for your family, not the potential buyers. Another tip for paint is to use a lower shine finish, like eggshell to minimize flaws in the walls.

4. Doors and Trim

Walk around your house, room to room, and note all of the little cracks and holes that have developed in your window and door frames, along your crown mouldings and baseboard. Use a caulking gun to clean these holes up and apply a fresh coat of white semi-gloss paint (Benjamin Moore's CC-30 *Oxford White*, Pratt & Lambert's 2337 *Designer White* or C2's 1007 *Architectural White*).

5. Lighting

Change all of your lightbulbs to brighter, white lights instead of soft yellow bulbs. When you have a showing, be sure to turn as many lights on as possible to really brighten up the house and create an open feeling. Another excellent way to create this feeling is to open all blinds and drapes to let in the natural light.

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10 Simple things you can do to sell your home faster...continued.

6. De-clutter

Take a look at your home and remove any unnecessary objects from the rooms. Store them in boxes for when you move to your new home, or consider a garage sale or even donating the things you no longer need to charity. Clear off all counter tops, tabletops and mantelpieces. Minimize the amount of knick-knacks and collectibles to groups of 3 or 5 and create a display of them. Temporarily move personal items such as children's art projects, family photos (mainly large collections, the odd family photo is perfectly fine) into storage. You want the buyer to imagine themselves living in the house.

7. Clean Carpets & Draperies

This can be done professionally or by the use of a rental unit. This will brighten up your carpets and get rid of accumulated dust and dirt. This is particularly important if you have pets.

8. Re-arrange Furniture to Create Larger, More Open Space

Try moving your furniture around to get the best possible combination for the room. This doesn't necessarily have to reflect the way you use the room (for example, the TV unit could now be tucked into a corner instead of the main wall where you would usually watch television), but you want to maximize the visual space and make it seem more open. This doesn't necessarily mean the furniture has to be pushed up against the wall either - try creating small conversation areas with two chairs or a love seat opposite the sofa. This effect can make a small living room seem very intimate and comfortable.

9. Fresh Flowers

If it is possible, try to have fresh flowers out on the table/kitchen countertop before a showing or open house. This will bring in some natural beauty as well as a pleasant fragrance for those who enter the home.

10. Everything Else - Carpet, Tiles, etc.

If you are still having trouble selling your home. You may want to look at the more "permanent" finishes such as your flooring, countertops or bathroom fixtures. Sometimes, just replacing a colourful ceramic tile or countertop for a more neutral one will make all the difference. If you have hardwood floors, consider having them refinished, or maybe even replacing dated carpeting. This will not only improve the look of the home, but will add to the overall value and may even land you a better price in the end.