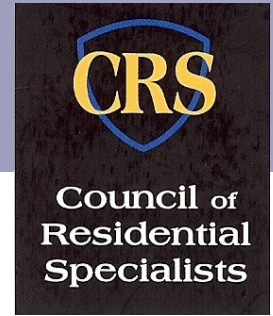


Is My Home Ready to Sell?



Giving Your Home the On-the-Market Makeover

You work with a Certified Residential Specialist because he or she is best able to sell your home quickly and profitably. But remember: Your relationship with your Certified Residential Specialist is a partnership. While he or she markets your property and screens potential buyers, it's up to you to give your home a simple, inexpensive sprucing up that can go a long way toward a speedy sale.

With that in mind, here are some helpful hints gathered from Certified Residential Specialists across the country.

Before the Showings Begin



Hint: First Impressions are Lasting Impressions

The exterior of your home often determines how buyers will view the interior, so:

- Make sure your front entrance is clean and inviting
- Paint or replace your front door if it's faded or worn.
- Add some paint to shutters, trim and any other outside features showing signs of wear.



Hint: Beauty is More than Skin Deep

Buyers often see the surface condition of your home as a sign of what's underneath, so:

- Keep window and floors clean.
- Replace faded wallpaper and glue any areas that have come away from the wall.
- Repair worn woodwork.
- Repaint scarred or dirty walls in a neutral color
- Steam clean carpeting or replace, if necessary.
- Repair loose knobs, sticking doors and windows, warped cabinet drawers, broken light switches and other minor flaws.
- Check and repair caulking in bathtubs and showers.



Hint: Accentuate the Positive

Try to see your home with a fresh perspective and arrange each room to bring out its best attributes, including:

- Open draperies and curtains to let the light in during the showing.
- Remove all unnecessary clutter from your attic, storage areas and closets to better display spacious rooms (consider a storage unit or garage sale to dispose of extraneous items).
- Arrange all your rooms neatly and remove excess furniture.
- Keep fresh, clean towels in the bathrooms.
- Use candles or air fresheners to make the room smell pleasant.

Hint: Put Your Home in the Best Light

Strategically lighting your home, even during daytime showings, can create a cozy mood and highlight positive attributes of each room, so:

- Avoid the use of overhead lighting that makes rooms look washed out and lifeless.
- Be creative and arrange lamps to help smaller rooms seem larger, and larger rooms seem more intimate.
- Use lighting to highlight the “living areas” of your home, such as a pair of chairs near a fire place, or a table in a breakfast area.

1. *Put the spotlight on the strengths and potential of your home.*
2. *Create the right mood and atmosphere given the room’s function, color scheme, etc.*
3. *Accent the aspects and unique features of each area of your home.*
4. *Define the space.*
5. *Bring the room to life.*

After the Showings Begin

Hint: Leave the Selling to the Professional

Buyers often feel uncomfortable in the presence of a homeowner, so:

- Try not to be present during inspections.
- If you are home, never apologize for the appearance of your house.
- Only your Certified Residential Specialist should discuss any objections and subjects like price, terms, possession and other factors with the buyers.

Hint: Keep the Disturbances Down

Potential homebuyers have a lot to take in, so minimize distractions.

- Pipe in classical, jazz or soft rock music, but keep the volume low.
- If possible, turn off the ringer on your phone during showings.
- Keep cats, dogs, litter boxes and feeding dishes out of the way - preferably out of the house.



Hint: Create a Homey Atmosphere

A buyer tries to picture themselves and their family living in your home, so:

- Create a pleasant aroma by baking cookies or bread, or placing cornmeal in a pie plate in a warm oven on the day of the showing.
- Keep the heat of air conditioner at comfortable levels.
- If you have a fireplace, light it during wintertime showings.

Hint: Have Records Available

Even if a buyer doesn’t study them, having records available can make it clear you are conscientious and have nothing to hide.

- Have copies of your gas, electric and water bill from the last 12 months available.
- Be ready to show all home improvement and repair bills.