

21 Ways to Prepare Your Home to Sell Faster

Heidi DeLuca, Realtor
Colorado Home Finders



21 Ways to Prepare Your Home to Sell Faster

Ready to sell your home? Don't just list it without any advance preparation. A few minor touch-ups can go a long way towards making a favorable impression on potential buyers — and perhaps cinching a deal.

Put your buyer's hat on and walk thru your home for the first time. Make notes on what a buyer would notice and then repair or replace those items.

Some ideas for preparing your home for the market include getting rid of clutter, hiding family photos, cleaning out closets, removing excess or oversized furniture, and cleaning.

Here is a list of the 21 top ways to prepare your home for a sale:

1. Clean, Clean, Clean

Dust on top of the fireplace mantle and fan blades, polish your appliances and faucets, and give the windows a thorough washing. If you've already moved out or if you're too busy to stay on top of things, consider hiring a cleaning service to stop by every couple of weeks.



2. Pay Attention to Smells

Avoid cooking greasy or highly spiced foods that can leave odors that linger. Regular trash runs can remove odors too, and keeping pets shampooed and cat boxes clean are a simple yet effective way to keep odors at bay when you are selling your home.

3. Clear Out the Clutter

You want buyers to focus on how awesome your space is, not how messy it looks. Banish that piles of shoes from the entry, that stack of mail from the kitchen table and anything else that detracts from your home's gorgeous features. A good "rule of thumb" is to pack up anything that is not essential to live in the home. You can visit model homes that local builders have open to see this idea in action. Builders know that uncluttered spaces make a home feel larger and allow a potential Buyer to imagine living there.



4. Repaint Walls Neutral Colors

As much as you love your dramatic red dining room, or cheery yellow bathroom, it could turn off many your buyers looking for a fresh, contemporary appeal. Repainting rooms in a neutral pallet like light shades of gray, tan or cream tones, allow buyers to focus on the space instead of the color of the walls.



5. Keep Décor Simple

To help buyers imagine themselves in your space, get rid of any art or other décor that might turn off people with different tastes. A classic landscape painting? Totally fine. Your zebra print leather couch? Might want to slipcover that for showings.

6. Get Rid of Personal Items

Buyers want to be able to envision themselves in your home, so remove anything overly personal, like family photos in the hallway or your kids' artwork on the fridge.

7. Let there be light!

Open all the windows to let in natural light and add floor or table lamps to areas that are dim. A bright, cheery room looks bigger and more inviting.

8. Bring Nature Inside

Potted plants or a few pretty buds in a vase can help bring energy into a space, fill in empty corners and even draw attention to features you want buyers to notice. Just make sure the flowers and plants are in good health.

9. Remove Bulky Furniture

Your furniture should fit the scale of the room, so get rid of any extra or oversized items that could make your space look smaller than it really is.

10. Organize your closets

Storage space is a huge selling point, and if your closets are stuffed to the brim, buyers will think you don't have enough of it. Invest in some boxes, dividers and other solutions that will help make items organized. Remove extra items you don't need immediately (you can stow them away until you move).

11. Tackle the Honey-Do List

All the little things you've been meaning to do. Buyers will notice them, and it detracts from the value of your home. Set aside a weekend to tighten loose doorknobs, fix leaky faucets and paint over the scuffs.

12. Do A Mini "Renovation"

Small tweaks can make a big difference in the overall feel of a room. Kitchen a little outdated? Replace the fixtures, faucets and hinges. Family room furniture beaten up? Throw some slipcovers over it.

13. Give Each Room A Purpose

The spare room you've been using as an office/guest room/dumping ground won't help sell your home unless you show buyers how they can use it themselves. Pick one use (office, guest room, crafts room) and clearly stage the space to showcase that purpose.

14. Turn the Bathroom into a Spa

Create the feel of a relaxing, luxurious bath — for less than \$50. Stack a few pretty washcloths tied with ribbon, add some scented candles and artificial plants, and buy towels in coordinating tones to mimic a soothing spa environment.

15. Put Down the Toilet Lid!

When it comes to showing your home, this little trick can make a surprising difference.

16. Create Conversation Central

Help buyers picture themselves relaxing with family and guests by grouping your furniture into arrangements that inspire conversation.

17. Keep the Flow Going

The last thing you want is people bumping into furniture as they tour your home; it disrupts their focus and makes your space look cramped. Do a dry run as though you're seeing your home for the first time, then adjust or remove anything that interrupts the "flow."

18. Bake Something Yummy

Realtors don't put out freshly baked cookies at open houses just to treat buyers; a "homey" smell like baking cookies, or bread can help people connect with a kitchen. Not a baker? Frozen pies work like magic!



19. Create Vignettes

Help your buyers see themselves in your home by adding deliberate vignettes that showcase how your home can be lived in. An inviting armchair and a tray with a coffee cup and book can turn that empty corner into a reading nook. Pretty soaps in a small decorative tray can make your tiny half-bath more appealing.

20. Highlight Focal Points

Draw buyers' eyes towards any special features with bright colors or accents. A pop of red throw pillows can draw a buyer's attention to that lovely window seat. A striking fern on the mantle can show off your fireplace.

21. Boost Curb Appeal

Don't forget the exterior of your home. Make sure it looks inviting. Trim shrubs, weed flower beds, fix peeling paint and keep the walkway clear. Add a few potted plants along the walkway, or a pot of flowers to your front porch, even a cheerful wreath added to your front door can make a big difference.

The last suggestion is critical to making a great first impression. If you're on a budget, this might be a great place to start. A little effort here can go a long way to creating an inviting look that will generate more showings with potential buyers.

Often, the exterior photo of your home is the first one a buyer will see. Encourage them to look further by setting the stage for the sale of your home with strong curb appeal!

Follow these simple but effective suggestions for preparing your home for the market, and you will give yourself the best possible chance to sell your home in a timely manner and to maximize your sales price and net proceeds!