

# **Staging Tips**

Every seller wants their home to sell fast and bring top dollar. It's not luck that makes that happen! It's careful planning and knowing how to professionally spruce up your home that will send buyers scurrying for their checkbooks. Here is how to prep a house and turn it into an irresistible and marketable home.

## **Disassociate Yourself from Your Home**

- Say to yourself, "This is not my home; it is a house - a product to be sold much like a box of cereal on the grocery store shelf."
- Make the mental decision to "let go" of your emotions and focus on the fact that soon this house will no longer be yours.
- Say goodbye to every room and don't look back – look toward the future.
- This might seem harsh and it may not be easy, but mentally preparing is the first important step!

## **De-Personalize**

Pack up those personal photographs and family heirlooms. Buyers can't see past personal artifacts, and you don't want them to be distracted. You want buyers to imagine their own photos on the walls, and they can't do that if yours are there!

## **De-Clutter!**

People collect an amazing quantity of junk. Your mantra for this process: "If you haven't used it in over a year, you probably don't need it." This is a wonderful opportunity to lighten the load!

- If you don't need it, why not sell it, donate it or throw it away?
- Books look cozy and appealing if they are on neat bookcases – otherwise, pack them up!
- Clean everything off the kitchen counters. Even small appliances give the illusion of less counter space.
- Put essential items used daily in a small box or basket that can be stored in a closet when not in use.
- Pack up those knickknacks.

## **Don't Forget the Closets!**

Buyers love to snoop and will open closet and cabinet doors. Think of the message it sends if items fall out! If things are well organized, buyers make an assumption that you take care of the rest of the house as well. Plan to pack and store any items you won't need until after the move. Empty closets scream "lots of storage space" to potential buyers!!

## **Rent a Storage Unit**

Almost every home shows better with less furniture. Remove pieces of furniture that block or hamper paths and walkways and put them in storage. Remove extra leaves from your dining room table to make the room appear larger. Leave just enough furniture in each room to showcase the room's purpose and plenty of room to move around. You don't want buyers scratching their heads and saying, "What is this room used for?"

## **Remove/Replace Favorite Items**

If you want to take window coverings, built-in appliances or fixtures with you, remove them now. If the chandelier in the dining room once belonged to your great grandmother, take it down. If a buyer never sees it, they won't want it. Once you tell a buyer they can't have an item, they will covet it, and it could blow your deal. Pack those items and replace them, if necessary.

## **Make Minor Repairs**

- Replace cracked floor or counter tiles.
- Patch holes in walls.
- Fix leaky faucets.
- Fix doors that don't close properly and kitchen drawers that jam.
- Consider re-painting your walls with more neutral colors if needed.
- Replace burned-out light bulbs. Good lighting is VERY important when showing a home.

## **Make the House Sparkle!**

- Wash windows inside and out.
- Rent a pressure washer and spray down sidewalks and exterior.
- Clean out cobwebs (don't forget the basement ceiling!)
- Re-caulk tubs, showers and sinks.
- Polish chrome faucets and mirrors.
- Clean out the refrigerator.
- Vacuum often!
- Dust furniture, ceiling fan blades and light fixtures.
- Replace or eliminate worn rugs.
- Hang up fresh towels.
- Clean and air out any musty smelling areas. Odors are a no-no!

## **Scrutinize**

- Go outside, open your front door and stand there. Do you want to go inside? Does the house welcome you?
- Linger in the doorway of every single room and imagine how your house will look to a buyer.
- Examine carefully how furniture is arranged and move pieces around until it makes sense.
- Make sure window coverings hang level.
- Does it look like nobody lives in this house? You're almost finished!

## **Check Curb Appeal**

Internet marketing of homes means clients are out on the streets, driving by properties all the time. If they drive by your home and the exterior doesn't appeal to them, they will not even bother calling an agent to see the inside.

- Keep the sidewalks cleared
- Mow the lawn.
- Paint faded window trim.
- Group flower pots together and limit the yard ornaments to prevent a cluttered look.
- Trim your bushes and trees.
- Make sure visitors can clearly read your house number.
- Maintain good lighting to highlight the exterior features of your home.

Contact Gina (651-470-8983) or Dan (651-428-7162) for more ideas on Staging your home.