

## Preparing to Sell Your Home

Springtime is usually the time when most homeowners who are moving or relocating, place put their house on the market. Getting your house in good condition before you sell can demonstrate pride of ownership and could possibly get you a higher sales price for your home. A home that is visually appealing and in good condition will attract more potential buyers particularly those driving down the street. You should view your property through an outsider's eyes.

- Are the lawn and shrubs well maintained?
- Are there cracks in the foundation or walkways?
- Are the gutters, chimney and walls in good condition?
- Are garbage and debris stored out of sight?

Strong curb appeal will lure potential buyers inside, where you have to live up to their expectations. There are a lot of easy improvements you can make to your home's interior without incurring major expenses. A major cleaning is mandatory. Your windows, floors and bathroom tiles should sparkle. Shampoo dirty carpets and clean tubs and showers. Give the interior or exterior a fresh coat of paint.

Next, get all of your mechanical systems serviced by qualified contractors. Service your air conditioning system, clean your furnace, repair plumbing leaks, and correct any electrical switches or outlets that are not working.

Most people buy homes because they have outgrown their existing house or apartment and need more space. You can create more space, even in smaller houses, by eliminating excess furniture and removing unnecessary clutter from the garage, basement, attic and closets.

Before you put your house on the market, arranging for a professional home inspection can provide expert help in the pre-sale process. While buyers will often want their own inspection, you will be far ahead of the game to have an impartial expert check your house beforehand. Inspectors can provide lists of needed repairs and, most importantly, give you an early warning of any potentially major problems that are likely to creep up when a buyer's inspector gets involved.

Remember, cosmetic changes do not have to be expensive. In fact, costly home improvements do not necessarily offer a good return on your investment when you sell. It is attention to the basics - anything that says "this home has been carefully maintained" - that will help you get the price you want.

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