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PREPARING YOUR HOME FOR SALE

Do not tell a prospective buyer how your home can look, **SHOW THEM!**

LAWN & YARD

A well-kept lawn implies a well maintained home.

- Cut lawn weekly while showing your home. Rake leaves and sweep sidewalk on weekends when house is to be shown.
- Remove dead limbs and debris from shrubs and trees.
- You can plant extra flowers for more color or spruce up landscaping with potted flowers.
- Repair fences and latches and touch-up with paint or stain.
- Store lawn equipment, toys and other outdoor items away neatly. Board dog or other large pets with neighbors while showing the house.
- Repaint or replace mailbox if needed.

EXTERIOR

Experienced homeowners often ignore things that jump out at first-time homebuyers that cause them to avoid your house as signs that it was not well maintained.

- Repair miss-aligned shutters, bent gutters and loose shingles (unless there is a leak).
- Paint and repair gutters. Repair loose shingles and flashing in roof, especially when visible from the ground.
- Paint window sashes, trim and shutters if necessary.
- Replace or repair cracked windowpanes, and wash entire window.
- Replace and repair torn or damaged screens.
- Clean and paint siding as needed. White or something very close is the best color for aluminum, wood or synthetic siding.
- Repair cracked stucco.

FRONT ENTRANCE

The front entrance of your home is a key part of the "First Impression" so make it inviting.

- Paint, clean or stain the front door. Remove old screens if they don't fit or operate properly.
- Make sure entry light and doorbell are in working order.
- Replace missing house numbers and make sure the number is visible from the street in the early evening.
- Put out a nice welcome mat and a potted plant if you have room on steps or entrance way.
- Remove any obstructions to the entrance.

CLEANING

Clean everything. Ask a friend to assess your efforts, especially sensitive areas like odors.

- Have any carpets cleaned. Replace worn, stained and odorous carpeting.
- Wash windows and mirrors.
- Clean the oven and all appliances. Clean all grease spatters and polish chrome fixtures and surfaces.
- Clean window treatments.
- Clean smudges, especially around doorknobs and light switches.
- Keep washer and dryer clean and empty.

INTERIOR

Clutter and dark colors turn off most buyers. That means getting rid of everything you can live without.

- Rearrange furniture to make rooms appear larger and more spacious.
- Bright lights and white walls make rooms look bigger too. If you plan to paint, use white or off-white.
- Replace lights with higher wattage bulbs or CFL's.
- Make storage areas appear spacious by arranging them neatly without overfilling.
- Clear kitchen countertops as much as possible. Reduce number of items in cabinets.
- Arrange clothing neatly in each closet and reduce number of items stored on shelves and on the floor.
- Clean and organize your basement, attic and garage and even your workshop.
- Avoid extension cords in plain view.
- Depersonalize the house by removing knick-knacks, photographs or religious iconography so potential buyers can see it as *their* home.

HANDYMAN

Rattles, squeaks and leaks leave the impression that the house needs a lot of work and was not well maintained. Eliminate them.

- Repair squeaking steps and wobbly banisters.
- Repair leaking roof and remove all signs of water damage:
 - Seal & paint over water stains
 - Replace discolored wallpaper
- Repair leaky faucets and pipes. Repair or clean caulking around tubs and sinks.
- Tighten loose doorknobs, light switch plates and cabinet hinges. Repair sticking doors, drawers and windows.
- Tack down all loose molding
- Make sure toilet seats look new and are firmly attached.
- Replace worn shower curtains
- All kitchen appliances should be clean and working properly.

STAGING OR SHOWING YOUR HOME

- Try not to be there when your home is being shown. Keep pets and children out of sight as they are a distraction to the prospective buyer and salesperson.
- If you are there, do not volunteer any comments unless asked by the salesperson.
- Turn off the T.V. or radio.
- Do not tag along with the prospect or salesperson. He/She knows the buyers requirements. You will be called if needed.
- Clear all the clutter.
- Try to eliminate odors from cooking or pets.

- Let the light shine in. Open the blinds or shades.
- Clean the trash cans and put them out of sight.
- Keep the garage door closed and the driveway clear.
- Double check that the kitchen and bathrooms are cleaned and unstained.
- Make the beds.
- Remove newspapers and junk mail.

A WORD TO THE WISE

Do not discuss price, terms, and possession with the prospect. We ask that you do not show the house to a prospect without a salesperson. Refer them to us. We are better equipped to bring the negotiation a favorable conclusion with all due dispatch.

Remember, not all of the above mentioned ideas for preparing your home for sale are required, so pick and choose what you think is within your budget, skills, and time constraints keeping in mind the more you are able to do the more likely your home is to sell in a timely manner.

PREPARED BY ROBERT ISRAEL

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions. Thank you.

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