

PREPARING YOUR PROPERTY FOR THE MARKET



First Impressions:

- Make sure that the yard and any landscaping is nicely trimmed.
- The front door and hardware should be clean and in good working condition. If the door is looking a little faded, consider a fresh coat of paint. If the hardware is pitted or worn, consider replacing it.
- Make sure that windows are clean and any torn screens are repaired.
- Add some color (yellow and red are ideal) to make the entrance inviting, inside and out (potted plants, wreaths, etc.)
- Ensure that floors are super clean – if you have carpets or rugs with spots or stains, get it thoroughly cleaned or replace it!

Declutter, Organize & Minimize:

- Straighten up items on bookcases & shelves and clean them thoroughly
- Minimize the number of family / personal photos that are displayed (but don't remove every evidence of life!)
- Have all surfaces as clean and as clear as possible throughout the home.
- Clean out your closets! Pack things away, straighten up linens and clothes so that the closets look like they have plenty of space.
- Secure valuable items, especially small collectibles and jewelry.
- Organize the laundry area and get rid of unnecessary items.
- Consider using a laundry hamper to collect toys/remotes/day-to-day items quickly for showings

Clean Bathrooms:

- Ensure that the bathrooms are spic & span and re-grout or caulk any necessary gaps in tiles, counters, tubs & showers and floors.
- Ensure that faucets are shiny and working properly.
- Clear toiletries off of the counters, clean out and organize medicine cabinet(s).
- Remove unnecessary toiletries from bath / shower areas.
- Look up – bathroom ceilings often have peeling paint or moisture stains – take care of those.
- Ensure that any exposed bulbs in vanity lighting are matched sets
- Prepare a set of “guest” towels and perhaps pretty soaps that are put out just for showings.
- Remove or replace any floor mats / rugs that are worn.

Clean Kitchens:

- Remove everything from counters and tops of appliances – clean underneath and behind, and put back only necessary items
- Organize your cabinets and pantry, pack up and store things that you don't need so that there appears to be as much storage as possible

- Ensure that all cabinet doors and drawers are operating smoothly
- Ensure that faucets are shiny and working properly
- Clean the insides of oven, microwave & refrigerator
- Remove unnecessary refrigerator magnets and clean the outside thoroughly

Repair/replace those pesky little items ahead of time:

- Doors that are hard to open/close or knobs that are loose
- Broken trim pieces
- Light bulbs that are out
- Anything that you know is broken or not working properly should be addressed now, instead of when it turns up on an inspection report. (A handyman can take care of many things now, but you may have to hire more expensive licensed technicians later.)

Anything not going to convey?

- Remove and replace any light fixtures that you plan to take with you.
- If there are garden or outdoor features that won't remain, be sure to exclude them in writing.

Some great articles for additional ideas & suggestions:

<http://www.realtor.org/field-guides/field-guide-to-preparing-staging-a-house-for-sale>

Specific to households with kids:

<http://www.realtor.com/advice/staging-selling-with-kids-house-shine/>