

10 TIPS

FOR PRESENTING A HOME FOR SALE

You know the old saying about never getting a second chance to make a first impression? Well, that is certainly true when you're putting a house on the market.

IN REAL ESTATE, FIRST IMPRESSIONS SELL.

In today's world, that first impression could come at an open house, but it could also come in an online listing. Real estate agents take great pains to stage houses and post photographs and videos that make a strong, positive first impression.

Today's young buyers pay particular attention to the details because they want to find a home that is visually

beautiful and already fixed up. Don't count on offering offsets for repairs or appliances in your pricing — millennials want a home that presents itself as move-in ready.

Given this reality, here are 10 ways that real estate agents maximize that first impression of a home, whether it's seen online or in person.

1. BOOST THE CURB APPEAL

If potential buyers can't get beyond the ornate orange birdbath smack-dab in the middle of the lawn — or the overgrown shrubs against the foundation, or the crumbling sidewalk — they won't even venture inside (even if

they're viewing online). And unfortunately, the sale is lost. Sellers should tend to the outside view of the home by adding landscaping and flowers, cleaning gutters and windows and removing spider webs!



2. FIX OR REPLACE DOORS

Doors matter more than you may think. Buyers approaching the home usually see two doors: the main door and the garage door. Both need to be in perfect condition with updated hardware. If the front door looks worn out, the buyer will turn around and go somewhere else.



3. MAKE THE HOME A BLANK SLATE

Stage the home to appeal to as general of a buyer as possible. That way, potential buyers can visualize themselves living in the home. Nothing breaks the spell of envisioning yourself in a home faster than seeing items that are personal to the seller. This includes family photos, unique artwork, trophies, workout equipment or antiques that are precious to the seller but distracting to the buyer. So even though you love them, toss them into a storage locker until your home sells.



4. REPAINT WITH NEUTRAL COLORS

Cover up the local football team's colors with a fresh coat of neutral paint. Select a simple beige or a modern gray. This helps remove visual distractions so that buyers can see the space and imagine how they'd comfortably fit in it.

5. REPAIR FLOORING

Floors may be basic and essential, but they're also something buyers tend to focus on. A wood floor with stains or loose boards, a frayed or dirty carpet or peeling linoleum all tell the buyer that there are probably more structural problems or that you neglected to maintain the flooring. Sadly, they'll probably walk away.

6. TEND TO STRUCTURAL ESSENTIALS

Window glass, window slides, roofing, siding, foundations, decks and garage floors should be in tip-top condition prior to a showing. Today's buyer is more educated on the costs of major repairs and prefers a move-in ready house, not one they must repair.



7. FIX ANY PLUMBING ISSUES

Every buyer will turn on the water in the bathroom sink, the bathtub and the kitchen sink. Some may even test the washing machine. To a buyer, old faucets, poor water pressure or hard water marks indicate neglect and a costly plumbing upgrade if they were to buy the home.

8. ELIMINATE WATER STAINS

A water stain on the ceiling or a wall will have buyers running for the door! Water stains indicate plumbing problems, leaky roofs or windows, poor maintenance and possibly mildew or mold. Fix them yourself ASAP or get a professional to repair pipes and drywall before listing.

9. DE-CLUTTER CLOSETS AND STORAGE SPACES

Staging a home for sale doesn't mean cramming everything into the closets and storage areas. Buyers want to look inside closets and make sure there is room for their clutter — they'll expect to see clean and orderly closets with extra room. Otherwise, the house will feel too small, no matter the square footage.

10. CLEAN, CLEAN, CLEAN!

Dust, mildew, stains and smells suggest to buyers that the property could have health problems. If you can't do a deep clean, hire someone. The entire home should pass the white-glove test and be odor free. And don't try to mask it with Febreze — buyers can tell the difference.

STAGING A HOME FOR SALE IS AN ART

Successful presentation goes a long way in making the sale and in selling the home quickly. Unless presented properly, even a home with a reasonable price, in a great school district or in a desirable neighborhood may not sell.

REMEMBER: THE FIRST IMPRESSION IS EVERYTHING.