

Preparing the Outside of your home

The Mail Box

Be sure that there are no signs of deterioration. Replace the post the mailbox sits on if necessary. If not, put a fresh coat of paint to match the home. Remove any rust that may be on the mailbox itself and apply a fresh coat of paint as well. Replace any old or tattered house number too.

If there are any flowers posted at the base of the mailbox, make sure they are as fresh as possible, or consider using plastic flowers for a year round appeal.

The Yard

Mow your yard often and plant grass seed wherever necessary. Keep the landscaping weed free and well groomed. Cut back any overgrown shrubs to look neat and tidy.

Vines growing on homes are some times favorable but to others are nuisances. If you plan to keep them make sure they well groomed. Keep them away from windows and doors.

Paint any birdhouses that you have out. Pick up any dead leaves or branches that may be lying around the yard.

Clean out any fish ponds or bird baths that you may have. Be sure to keep any yard debris from entering these areas as they sometimes appear as a hassle to deal with.

If you have a lot of yard ornaments, consider removing them. This will allow people to focus on the yard and the view of the landscaping. Also this will help against prospective buyers assuming that they go with the house.

Straighten up any wood piles. Remove any bark and unwanted debris to make the pile look neat and organized

If your yard has a clothes line, make sure that it is sturdy. Paint any posts and remove rust. If your clothes line is frayed, replace it.

Remove any items from the yard that are unsightly such as limbs, bricks, flowerpots etc.

Remove any inoperable or unused vehicles from the yard or drive.

All outbuildings should be in good shape. Paint, repair locks or latches is needed. Replace light bulbs if you have electric ran to them etc.

Make sure that all of your yard lights work. Some buyers may drive by your home at night. Make sure that swimming pools are free from debris and look well cared for.

The Driveway

If you have a gravel driveway, spread a fresh goal of gravel over it. You'll be surprised how nice it will look. If there are any weeds or other spouts in the driveway remove them by pulling them. Weed killer only kills the plant it doesn't remove them or the un-kept look the present.

If you have an asphalt or concrete driveway that has cracks in it, repair or fill the cracks with a crack filling compound that can be purchase at home improvement store or lumber yard.

If you have a basketball pole fixed to or around your driveway be sure that it is good condition. Fresh paint a new rim will make a difference and may be a nice touch for the next owners.

If there is any landscaping along the driveway, spruce it up with new flowers and or rock/mulch. Keep in mind it may be the first landscaping your new buyer sees.

If there are any hanging tree limbs or branches that drip sap or could scrape the tops of cars, be sure to trim them back.

THE FENCE

Make any repairs to fences that may be needed such as missing planks, tattered or bent posts, rotted wood, sagging or missing planks etc. If it needs painted, please do so. If you pet has inadvertently removed some of the earth in his quest for China, fill in the holes.

THE WALKWAYS

Fill in any crack in the concrete or asphalt.

Pull or spray weeds from between stones or bricks

Fill in any missing mortar or concrete between stones or bricks

Trim Shrubbery to clear the path

Manicure flower beds lining the walkway

Make sure that any lighting that lines or illuminates the walk area in working order.

THE OUTSIDE OF YOUR HOME

Repair any items such as shutters, spindles, post or columns. Paint, if necessary. Remove any rust that is accumulating on any metalwork. If you have a sagging porch, consider shoring it up or even replacing it.

Paint Peeling trim around doors or windows

Replace or paint rusted or broken light fixtures or porches or beside doors.

Replace cracked window well covers, if you do not have covers consider getting some or clear the debris that collects in such places.

Remove any mud daubers' or wasps' nests

If you have a porch swing, be sure that it is secured to the ceiling or roof. Paint it if necessary. If the pillow pads are worn be sure to replace them.

Make sure that the front entry is as inviting as possible. Polish the brass knocker paint the front door, and make sure that windows around the door sparkle.

Be sure that the address numbers that are attached to the home are new looking and are readable from the street.

A metal or wood plaque close to the front door with the address or the year the home was built is usually an attractive addition.

Potted and hanging plants are a touch that makes a home seem inviting and warm. Consider adding some if you have none but remember all things in moderation.

Be sure to clean out the gutters from any seed pods or other debris that may be lingering around

Check your doorbell button to be sure it works properly and lights up. If it is broken repair or replace it.

Wash the inside and outside of your windows. The better your windows look the more natural light it can illuminate your home for optimal viewing pleasure.

THE INSIDE OF YOUR HOME

GENERAL THING THAT NEED TO BE DONE IN EVERY ROOM

Take a walk through your house and try to look at it as though you are a potential buyer. If there are things that you or a friend might have to ask if whether or not in needs to be removed, repaired, or replaced, the answer is that you should.

Review the condition of your flooring. Is the carpet matted or stained? Is it a color that others could live with? If it isn't you should replace it. Buy a neutral color that will appeal to most people. You do NOT have to buy the most expensive grade. You WILL get your money out of this one. Buyers look more favorably on a house that they do not have to replace the flooring right away. It will also eliminate a reason for a buyer to offer you a lower price for your house.

Clean every room thoroughly. You need to make the entire house "move-in ready".

Dirty, scuffed, or smudged walls are a major deterrent for many buyers, the easiest way to fix these small problems is to apply a fresh coat of paint to the walls. You may like the color of your walls but others may not. Consider an off white or light gray color. You may consider these items drab or uninteresting but it will allow a potential buyer to focus on how much they like your home rather than what colors they will have to change everything to.

Clean all light fixtures and mirrors in the home and polish any metals including appliances

Bring your rooms down to the basics when it comes to furniture and other personal items. Removing these items creates an illusion of more space and allows the future homeowner to visualize their stuff in your home better. Consider renting an off-site storage unit to keep all extra tables, plant stands, and pictures until you move.

Clean your closets and other storage areas thoroughly. Consider buying plastic containers to organize the contents of your closets. Do NOT leave shoes on the floor unless they are in a shoe rack. Consider removing some of the extra clothing that you have hanging to eliminate that cramped clothing look.

If you have indoor pets, it is ***absolutely essential*** that your house does not smell like you have them. Odors trigger an instant and strong response that is difficult to change. You want the future homeowner's first impression to be a pleasant one otherwise they may not even consider your home no matter how perfect it is for them. It would be a good idea to set out baskets of fresh scent potpourri or plug-ins. Do NOT use flower scents as they are considered obtrusive to many people.

Fill in any holes in the wall and paint over them.

THE LIVING ROOM

Clean the fireplace of ashes and soot. Polish screens and fireplace tools. Clean glass enclosures if applicable.

Do you have a cluttered coffee table or magazine rack? Get rid of any excess clutter.

When someone comes to see your home turn on lights, open drapes, and play soft music in the background.

THE OFFICE, LIBRARY, OR STUDY

Leave a lamp on by a comfortable chair with an open book face down on the cushion. If you have a window seat make sure that it is comfortably padded with pillows.

Clear your desk or work area of all papers and clutter. Make the space seem as organized as possible.

If this room has specifically insulated to block sound, be sure that it is notated in the comments about your home. Also make note of any special wiring or computer networking that has been installed.

THE KITCHEN

The kitchen must be perfectly spotless. Kitchen and bathrooms sell houses so it vital to keep them both impeccable.

If you have a garbage disposal system run a lemon half through it daily to combat any secret smells that tend to lurk in these areas.

Fix any dripping faucets and make sure all appliances and fixtures are polished.

Be sure that your oven and range are perfectly cleaned.

Clean the inside of the dishwasher door

THE LAUNDRY ROOM

Be sure that all soiled clothing are in organized containers or hampers

Be sure that all detergents are organized and neatly placed

Clean all clutter from the top of the dryer. Wipe dust and lint from the appliances.

If your laundry room doubles as storage space, consider that storage unit again or install shelves to organize items.

THE BATHROOM

This room must also be kept spotless and odor free

Fix or replace any leaky faucets or drain plugs.

Polish any visible chrome and dust all cabinetry.

Make any necessary repairs to the toilet.

Make sure that all towel racks and other dispensers are firmly secured to the wall and are level.

Be sure that all items stored in the bathroom or linen closets are organized and neat. People will open the cabinets so be sure it is top notch.

Be sure that ALL soap scum is removed and re-caulk any discolored seals.

Change the décor to something warm. Fresh towels are always nice too.

BEDROOMS

Make the beds everyday

Place a subtle throw rug over carpet areas that are less appealing

THE GARAGE AND BASEMENT

When in doubt, throw it out, into your storage unit that is. These are the areas where clutter seems to multiply. You want these areas to seem as big as possible to the new homeowner.

Dry to clean any oil drips from the garage floor. Kitty litter can be used to absorb the oils and any degreaser can finish the job.

Stack hang or stand items as neatly as possible to give that organized feeling

If the hot water heater or furnace works great but shows its age, a fresh coat of paint will take care of that.