

If you are trying to sell your home it really pays off to make the extra effort to impress your buyers.

There have been studies that show it takes buyers only seven seconds to decide whether or not they are going to buy a home once they set foot in a house. That is why it is so crucial to make a good impression and also why “staging” a home for sale is such a fine art.

However not all of us have the cash on hand, or the time and energy, to do things that are really going to flip your home over to the next buyer quickly. For instance, not everybody has the cash on hand to install a brand new flashy Jacuzzi complete with freestanding brass towel warmers and new stone tile floors. However you might have the money on hand to install designer faucets, paint the walls and replace the old iron door handles with trendy new crystal knobs.

Here are some quick and easy ways to make your home show like a model home for under \$200. These are easy-to-do tips and the type of thing an interior decorator would advise you to do to help “stage” a property so it is more attractive to buyers. The goal of this top ten list: is to give you hints on how to make your home show better than your competitor’s home on the real estate market!

1. Clear All Clutter

You can get rid of all of the junk in your home for free. Simply get rid of anything you don’t need and haul it away in your car to the nearest dump or Goodwill. This means getting rid of “stuff” in the front yard, back yard, hallway and basement. Studies have shown that people perceive clutter as being indicative of a property that is decrepit or not worth much money. They also associate it with decay and the presence of vermin or bugs.

One thing in particular you need to get rid of is ashtrays. People consider houses that have been smoked in to be less desirable and also smelly.

You should also get rid of all junk in your yard. This includes things like broken garden



TEN WAYS

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(for less than \$200)

hoses, old equipment and bicycles.

Even things you are actively using should be tucked out of sight before a house showing. This means clearing your kitchen counter of appliances like George Forman Grills or blenders or anything else that takes up counter space.

Outside you should make sure that your garden hoses are coiled up, your birdbath is clean of leaves and that you do not have sports equipment or bikes laying around your front porch.

2. Get Rid of Evidence of Pets

If you have a dog or cat send them away for the day. Hide the litter box and any evidence of it’s aroma. Make sure there is no dog feces in the front yard. These types of things, along with their smells can convince a buyer that there are allergens, mites and pet urea in the house. Houses with more pets are also

considered to be less desirable than ones with no pets at all.

3. Get Rid of Evidence of Kids

Get rid of strollers on the porch, inflatable kiddie pools in the back yard and any toys that may be lying around in the hallway. Get rid of baby gates and make sure there are no handprints or crayon drawings on the wall. Studies have also shown that homes that have kid’s stuff strewn about are considered to be less hygienic or valuable than those that don’t.

4. Clean Up the Front Yard and Porches

The front yard and porch are very important as that is what your buyer will first see when they approach the home. Make sure that the grass is cut and that the garden is nicely tended.

If you have to, reseed the lawn and plant a few decorative bushes. It also does not hurt

to spruce up the front door with a coat of paint and replace the house number plates and the door knocker with new versions.

It also helps a lot to get rid of dead trees or bushes that may be on the property. Many people associate that with bad luck or a lack of caring for the property.

5. Get Rid of Sunken Paving Stones

The path to your front door and the driveway are also very important. Sunken paving stones or missing rocks make your home look ratty and cheap. It is quite easy to buy new stones, level them and redo these pathways. Curved path ways look more contemporary than ones that are at right angles.

6. Paint Rooms That Need It

If you have a wall that looks scratched up, beaten or damaged you are well advised to paint it. This can go a long way towards making a home look less shabby. You should also make an attempt to plaster any holes or crumbled parts of walls in your home as well. If paint is out of the question then you certainly could make a better impression by covering up flawed walls with wall paper.



7. Replace Some Fixtures

If your chandelier or light fixtures look dated, then go to some trouble to replace them. You can also make a home look more contemporary and like it is worth more money simply by making a few cosmetic changes like changing the light switch plates or electrical plates to designer versions.

8. Change the Faucets and Spouts

Sometimes you can make a kitchen or bathroom look really glamorous simply by changing out your old faucets and spouts for glamorous new ones. There are lots of different styles on the market that can instantly transform a sink into a contemporary silver masterpiece of design and many of these fixtures also cost less than \$200. Furthermore it can be quite easy to install these fixtures all by yourself.

A tall spigot on a kitchen sink can make it look suddenly very European and modern. Replacing the shower head in the bathroom with something quite snaky, long and silver with several water flow options can also help it seem more luxurious and expensive.

9. Provide Flowers and Greenery

If you have cleared all the clutter, then you should have a home that looks more simple and kind of Zen in nature. One way to augment this air of designer sophistication is to put flowers or vases of tall grasses in every room.

For instance if you have a dining room table it is quite a good idea to put a display of fruit or flowers on the center table to make it seem more glamorous or traditional. It is also quite chic to place a small display of flowers or bamboo in the bathroom. A rose floating in a bowl of water looks nice reflected in a dresser mirror in a bedroom.

10. Provide Some Aromatherapy

It's been proven that if an item for sale makes some kind of impression on the nose then people are also more likely to buy it. That is true for small ticket items but it is also true of big things like an entire house.

One of the tricks that professional real estate

agents use is to simply bake some cookies in the over so the scent of cinnamon and vanilla fills the air as potential customers walk in the front door. This gives a place a more homey effect.

It is also nice to have aromatherapy candles burning in places like a downstairs bathroom where things might be a little dark. Soy candles are especially aromatic.

If you do not want to spend your time baking you can buy all kinds of professional scents for your home that help it seem more cozy or sophisticated. You can even buy vanilla, cinnamon or apple pie scents that mimic the smells of baking. Tropical scents such as pineapple and mango are also used by professional real estate agents and also the owners of clothing stores to encourage people to buy.

Of course if you do have some money to invest in preparing your home for sale, you can also hire a professional to stage your home for you. The benefits of this are usually a faster sale and more money for your property. Many of these organizations can rent you furniture and accessories that can help make your home look better. A home stager can also offer you an objective perspective on what exactly it is that can make your home look fresh, appealing and attractive to others.

With an eye for design and just a few hundred bucks you can usually fix up your home so that it is more appealing to buyers all by yourself.