



Staging Your Home to Make It Sell

We've all heard some form of the old adage that there's never a second chance when it comes to making first impressions. And nowhere does that saying reign more supreme than in the process of showing your home to potential buyers.

Ultimately, a great first impression can make all the difference in whether you get a real offer on your house or instead enter into a tedious period of endlessly showing your property and only getting lackluster responses

To help you get the best possible bids, keep the following six tips in mind:

Enhance your curb appeal. When you first see your property from the street, it should give the impression that it's a well maintained, welcoming home. That means you have to keep up with all the landscaping. Put away all extraneous tools, toys, and equipment. Make sure your front door and windows are spotless. Keep all walkways freshly swept. And if you're showing your home in the evening, have all exterior lights in good working order.

Declutter. Potential buyers aren't at your home to view your belongings. Instead, they're there to imagine if their clothes, dishes, and collectibles will fit into the closets, cabinets, and countertops. So it's best to clear away as much clutter as you can. Even if it takes moving excess stuff into the garage or renting a self-storage unit, the time you invest in decluttering can really pay off in the long run.

Take care of repairs. From a leaky faucet to a faulty light switch, minor problems that need attention are a big turnoff to potential buyers. In the minds of the viewers, it means the property hasn't been maintained properly and will likely have numerous unseen issues. So take a moment and fix all those little things that tell buyers this home is cared for and will be a wonderful place for their family to live in.

Eliminate odors. Nobody likes staying in a hotel room that doesn't smell fresh. Likewise, no one is going to buy a house that smells like fish has been cooked there seven nights a week for the past year! That's why so many professional home stagers suggest baking bread or making a pie before an open house; pleasing scents arouse pleasant thoughts. Of course, it goes without saying that all your garbage cans and recycling containers should be clean and empty; and if you have ashtrays, put them somewhere out of sight. In addition, a well-placed box of baking soda, fresh cut flowers, and some potpourri can go along way to eliminating unwanted odors.

Set the stage for formal company. Imagine you're about to play host to your boss for dinner or even your in-laws for the weekend. Now you're ready to display your best dishes on the dining room table, your best towels in the bathroom, and your new curtains and bedding in the guest bedroom. It's the little touches that say, "This home is a showcase," not just an item for sale.

Look through the buyer's eyes. When you've completed everything else, take another fresh look at your home, but this time imagine you've never seen it before. Ask yourself if you'd honestly be interested in buying this property. Is there anything you see that seems out of place or detracts from making an overall good first impression? If the answer is yes, by now you know what do: make one more trip to your self-storage unit!