

## **Preparing your Home to Sell**

This is the hardest thing for most people to do because they are emotionally attached to everything in the house. After years of living in the same home, clutter collects in such a way that may not be evident to the homeowner. However, it does affect the way buyers see the home, even if you do not realize it.

### **Entry**

The front door should be especially sharp, since it is the entryway into the house. Polish the door fixture so it gleams. If the door needs refinishing or repainting, make sure to get that done. Get a new plush door mat, too. This is something else you can take with you once you move.

Make sure the lock works easily and the key fits properly. When a homebuyer comes to visit your home, the agent uses the key from the lock box to unlock the door. If there is trouble working the lock while everyone else stands around twiddling their thumbs, this sends a negative first impression to prospective homebuyers.

### **Kitchen**

The kitchen is a good place to start removing clutter, because it is an easy place to start.

First, get everything off the counters. Everything. Put the toaster in a cabinet and take it out when you use it. Find a place where you can store everything in cabinets and drawers. Of course, you may notice that you do not have cabinet space to put everything. Clean them out

### **Closet**

Closets are great for accumulating clutter, though you may not think of it as clutter. We are talking about extra clothes and shoes – things you rarely wear but cannot bear to be without. Do without these items for a couple of months by putting them in a box, because these items can make your closets look "crammed full." Sometimes there are shoeboxes full of "stuff" or other accumulated personal items, too.

### **Furniture**

Many people have too much furniture in certain rooms – not too much for your own personal living needs – but too much to give the illusion of space that a homebuyer would like to see. You may want to tour some builders' models to see how they place furniture in the model homes. Observe how they place furniture in

the models so you get some ideas on what to remove and what to leave in your house.

### **Storage Area**

Basements, garages, attics, and sheds accumulate not only clutter, but junk. These areas should be as empty as possible so that buyers can imagine what they would do with the space. Remove anything that is not essential and take it to the storage area.

### **Windows and Doors**

Check all of your windows to make sure they open and close easily. If not, a spray of WD40 often helps. Make sure there are no cracked or broken windowpanes. If there are, replace them before you begin showing your home.

Do the same things with the doors – make sure they open and close properly, without creaking. If they do, a shot of WD40 on the hinges usually makes the creak go away. Be sure the doorknobs turn easily, and that they are cleaned and polished to look sharp. As buyers go from room to room, someone opens each door and you want to do everything necessary to create a positive impression.

### **Odor Control**

For those who smoke, you might want to minimize smoking indoors while trying to sell your home. Actually, it is best to move smoking outside. You could also purchase an ozone spray that helps to remove odors without creating a masking odor.

Apologies to pet owners, but pets come with odors. You may have become used to them, but they are immediately noticeable to those with more finely tuned senses.

For those with cats, be sure to empty kitty litter boxes daily and use plenty of baking soda. For dog owners, keep the dog outdoors as much as possible, even those adorable lovable little dogs. You might also try sprinkling carpet freshener on the carpet on a periodic basis