

Buyers buy homes based on emotion – how a home “*feels*” to them. Many factors come into play, many that the buyer isn’t even aware of. Buyers buy what they see. Ask your friends and neighbors to view your home through “buyer’s eyes” and give you their honest opinions. In general: cleaner is better, brighter and more open is better, no odors is better, and neutral colors are best. Make your home as appealing and uncluttered as the home you would like to buy.

Joe Finnerty’s Time Tested Tips for Selling Your Home:

OUTSIDE:

Good “curb appeal” is imperative. If people don’t like your house from the outside, they won’t want to come inside.

1. Make sure your front lawn looks neat and tidy to make the first impression favorable. Cut the grass and trim the hedges and shrubs.
2. Plant some extra flowers for color – or just put some pots beside the front door.
3. Spruce up your landscaping with some fresh plantings. Even a few items can improve the look of things.
4. Remove all dead limbs and debris. Give the lawn a fresh raking and the sidewalk and driveway a good sweeping. Patch any holes.
5. Walk your fence line. Repair broken areas and paint or stain spots in poor condition.
6. Put away lawn equipment. Arrange outdoor items, such as firewood or outdoor furniture, neatly.
7. Take a close look at your front door. It’s a focal point and one of the first things your prospects will examine. If it’s faded or shows signs of needing repair, clean it, stain it, or paint it. While you’re at it, do the same with the back door and garage door.
8. Repainting the entire exterior of your home is a fairly expensive venture, and really unnecessary unless the walls have bad blistering or peeling. But you can do wonders by simply painting window sashes, trim, and shutters.
9. Replace faded house numbers with shiny new brass ones.
10. If needed, repaint or replace the mailbox.
11. Clean out debris in your rain gutters. Touch up with paint if necessary, and realign if crooked.
12. Check the roof for shingles or flashing that needs replacing.
13. Fix any broken windows or screens, and wash them for a bright, sparkling appearance.
14. Test the entry light and the doorbell. It’s the little things that matter.

15. Haul out any “junk” in your side or backyard.
16. Clean out the garage. The perfect garage contains only cars – do your best.

INSIDE:

After you’ve tackled the exterior of your home, head inside. The goal here is to make everything look more spacious, more organized, brighter, warm, and homey.

1. No matter what the season, do your spring cleaning. Clean houses sell a lot easier than dirty ones.
2. About the cheapest way to make rooms seem warmer and brighter is by buying higher intensity light bulbs, putting them in every lamp in the house, and then turning them on. Also always open drapes and angle blinds to brighten rooms. This gives the house a friendly glow. Buyers will react positively, and feel good about your home.
3. Brighten things with fresh paint. White, off-white, or beige walls make a room look bigger and lighter. And you can be fairly certain these colors will go with the new buyer’s furnishings. Painting the inside costs very little, gives a “new” smell, and makes a big difference in buyer perception, so go ahead and do it.
4. Too much furniture can make a home “feel wrong.” So move out all your excess furniture, especially worn or outdated furniture, to make rooms seem larger and uncluttered, and take down pictures that hide walls.
5. Clean out all your closets to make them look bigger. Store out-of-season clothes in the attic or basement, and get rid of excess items. Neatly arrange everything that’s left.
6. Have a huge garage sale with all your excess items. Not only will you be reducing clutter, but you can use the money you earn to finance your touch-ups. You’ll also be reducing your moving costs.
7. Clean all your windows and mirrors so they sparkle.
8. Arrange the furniture so each room appears as spacious as possible.

9. If the carpeting looks dirty, have it cleaned. If it looks worn, or is a loud color, consider replacing it. You will probably recover the cost, and your home will sell faster. Ask Super Agent about the competition in your market to help you decide.
10. Launder draperies and curtains, if needed. Dust blinds and furniture.
11. Clear off the kitchen counters – that includes small appliances and dish-draining racks. Make the counters look as expansive as possible.
12. Clean out the inside of kitchen cabinets. Leave them looking clean and spacious.
13. Clean the oven and all appliances. Wash the grease splatters from around the stove. Don't forget to polish the chrome on the sink. Clean out the refrigerator, use a clear wax and polish the floors.
14. A grungy bathroom will kill sales. Make each bath look like a guest bath. Polish the tub, toilet, and bathroom sink. Clean all tile, grout, and caulk, replace cracked tiles, and regrout if necessary.
15. Put out fresh towels and a new bar of matching colored soap when the house is to be shown.
16. Clean the furnace/air conditioner return filters and vents. Then crank up whichever one is appropriate to make your home as comfortable as possible.
17. Get out your tool kit, and fix all those little things that you've lived with over the months or years.
18. Tighten loose doorknobs, drawers, cabinet handles, towel racks, switch plates, and outlet covers.
19. Tack down any loose molding, glue down any lifted wallpaper; replace any cracked switch plates.
20. Fix sticking doors and windows, squeaking doors, and wobbly stair banisters.
21. Fix leaky faucets and remove water stains.
22. If it's time to spray or bomb for bugs, don't wait until the last minute.

WHEN YOUR HOME IS SHOWN:

When it's time for Super Agent, or another agent, to show your home, all your preparations will be worth it. But there are a few final tips that can add that little extra magic.

1. Before prospective buyers walk in the door, give your home the welcoming aroma of fresh-baked bread or cinnamon rolls. (A pot of cinnamon and water on the stove will give the same results.) Do not smoke in the house!
2. Clear out the kids, their toys, the cat, and the dog.
3. Turn off the television, stereo, and radio. Like kids and animals, they too can be distracting.
4. Turn on all your lights – open all the drapes and blinds – even during daylight.
5. Put out fresh flowers, your best towels, and a nice tablecloth.
6. Make yourself scarce. Many prospects feel like intruders when the owners are present. They tend to hurry away, or fail to ask the questions they'd like to ask. Your absence will put buyers at ease, and give them a chance to spend more time looking at your house, absorbing its advantages and visualizing themselves living there.
7. Be polite, but avoid conversations with prospects. Their agent needs their complete attention to increase their interest in your home.
8. Don't apologize for the appearance or condition of your home. You'll only call attention to things the buyers might have overlooked.
9. Don't try to complicate the sale of the home by discussing drapes, furniture, appliances, etc. If the buyer wants any of these items, the agent can ask about them later.
10. Keep your home on the market. Let your home be shown even when you're not there. If you don't, you're limiting the showings – and actually keeping your house off the market many hours a day.
11. Always keep your home ready to be shown. Super Agent and other agents will try to give you as much advance warning as possible, but be prepared.