



“Room-by-Room”: How to sell your home faster!

The #1 home improvement that will help you sell your home fast is removing clutter. Letting go of your CRAP (Clutter that Robs Anyone of Pleasure) is the priority, but you can also temporarily store items in the basement, the attic, a friend’s home, or rent a storage unit. To sell for top dollar, you also need to start saying goodbye to your home by staging it to sell. Let’s break it down:

Front door and porch:

- Does your home have curb appeal?
 - No dead plants, replace with planters
 - Trim shrubs to expose windows.
- Front Door
 - Does it sparkle? If not, repaint it or clean it.
 - Door knob should shine to welcome people. If it’s pitted or old, replace it.
- Welcome with a spot of color
 - Flowers, old sled, bright milk box, etc.
 - Paint door a bright color if necessary.
- Capitalize on your front porch
 - Make it welcoming, even if you don’t sit on it.
 - Use chairs, end table, plants, new welcome home mat
- Do cursory gardening as needed
 - Keep lawn ornaments to a bare minimum if at all.
 - Remove toys or any clutter that takes away from the gardens.

Entry hall:

- A dramatic focal point
 - Create the effect if you don’t have one
 - Greet buyers with “welcome home”
 - Flowers, bold and dramatic
- Reduce furniture to make it easier to walk
- Add a “special” mirror and clean it
- Improve the floor
 - Make repairs or replacements if necessary
 - No loose throw rugs; one long rug is best
- Clean out your coat closet
 - Keep to a minimum; coats and shoes
 - No wire coat hangers; containers for accessories

Kitchen (your kitchen alone could sell your home):

- Clean off front and top of refrigerator

- Use props to set the scene
 - Open cookbook, basket of fruit, show food
- Quick cabinet makeover: new knobs and/or hinges. Clean the doors.
- Expand counter space
 - Clear it of everything except a bowl of fruit, store other things away
- Create more storage if possible (e.g. moveable cart, pantry, small island)
- Accent windows
 - Clean windows, simple curtains
 - Windowsill with herbs or tiny bottles
- Make small kitchens appear larger
 - Clear top of cabinets
 - Repaint or unify the paint
 - Colorful accents are important
 - Strategically placed mirror
- Highlight eat-in area
 - Set the stage: placemats, bowl of fruit
 - Stools painted bright colors
- New towels/pot holders/dishcloths
- Items on a horizontal surface should be attractive
- Create a mail sorting area if there is room.
- Clean out what opens
 - Cabinets, refrigerator, pantry, mop closet



Dining room or dining area:

- Set the table
 - Personalize the room: bright placemats, pitcher filled with flowers, candles, etc.
- Make large dining room do double duty
 - Room-within-a-room: secretary to create a den, reading nook, music corner, etc.
- Visually enlarge small dining area
 - Remove leaves in table
 - Table against wall instead of center
 - Remove extra chairs
 - Clutter eats equity so limit the “stuff”

Living room and family room:

- Set the stage and strike a happy medium: not too casual and not too formal
- Take down 90% of your family photos
- Music, games, knitting, reading means “We could live here.”
- Open curtains or eliminate them

- Highlight fireplace/screen
 - Clean it
 - Mantel uncluttered, tasteful
- Improve traffic flow
 - Make room to walk
 - Remove excess stuff and furniture
 - Exit and entry ways not blocked
- Draw attention to exposed beams or cathedral ceilings
 - Draw eyes upward: lighting, hanging basket, long tapestry
- Downplay the television if possible
- A few matching pillows and afghans for warmth
- Bookshelves
 - Organize books by size and color and leave white space; less is more.
- Organize electronics and accessories, clean up wires
- Papers and magazine racks organized
- Clean out what opens
 - Cabinets, closets, built-ins

Bathroom:

- Limit the “stuff” inside the shower stall: makes it look bigger
- Consolidate bottles and go through old make-up
- New bath towels/floor mat
- Make sure grout is clean
- New shower liner and/or curtain
- Unclutter linen closet and neatly fold towels and sheets.
- Guest towel and liquid soap on sink
- Clean out what opens
 - Cabinets, medicine chest, linen closets



Laundry Room:

- Cheerful and appealing
 - Accentuate any window
 - Well organized and fresh smelling
 - Bright lighting
- Can it do double duty:
 - Sewing/hobby area
 - Area for coats and shoes for out of the way storage
 - Pantry overflow

Stairways:

- Make them safe
 - Increase lighting
 - Clutter-free (attic steps too)

- Stair railings tight and secure
- No loose rugs at top or bottom
- Add visual interest
 - Wide stairways-hang pictures or lighting; attractive focal point
 - Narrow stairways-minimize clutter, pictures and loud wallpaper
- Improve stair treads
 - Secure any loose carpet
 - Clean carpet or replace
 - Lightly wax wood or paint

Bedrooms:

- Closets should appear large
 - Clothes hang straight, not smashed in
 - Not too much on the floor; leave space to walk
 - Too much clothing says, “This closet is too small.”
- Master bedroom: aim for restful, retreat, sanctuary
- Organize children’s toys: Categorize and Containerize
- Depersonalize children’s rooms: remove posters, memorabilia
- Lighting: Make sure there’s just enough and it has a purpose.
- Clean out what opens
 - Cabinets, dresser drawers, closets

Attic, Basement, Garage:

- Clean out or organize any area that you walk into.
- Box items you are taking with you to minimize clutter.
- Rearrange or consolidate all storage to maximize space.
- Increase wattage in bulbs.
- Create a workbench area if there isn’t one.
- Do a good sweeping, no cobwebs!
- Rearrange garage so a car can fit in.
- Think zones, not haphazard: work bench, gardening, auto supplies, sports equipment, camping, kid’s toys

Great References:

Refer to these books for more ideas on selling your home for top dollar!

- “101 Easy Ways to make your home sell faster” by B.J. Hall
- Dress your House for Success by M. Webb and S.P. Zackheim
- 50 Simple Steps you can take to sell your home by I.R. Glink

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