

HOW TO MAKE YOUR HOME SELL FAST

The Home Owners Guide to Help You
Stage & Sell Fast for the Maximum Profit!



By Room Decoration DIY



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Stage & Sell Fast for the Maximum Profit!

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FOREWORD

We all want to get the highest possible price when we sell our home. While some things like location and the economy are out of our control, there are many things that we can do to ensure that we receive top dollar.

We cover a lot in this book. Don't feel like you have to do everything in here. We don't just talk about staging your living room and bedroom, we cover the whole house inside and outside.

Our goal was to make a sort of checklist (*page 14*) of all the things you should consider when it's time to prepare your house for sale.

You are probably already aware for the obvious things that need attention in your house. Maybe you have a broken railing on your front porch. You would definitely want to take care of that. First impressions last forever.

Ultimately the goal is to not put yourself in a weak position when it comes time to negotiate. If a buyer sees flaws, they will use that to bring down the price.

If you have major issues or several minor issues, you might find that no offers are coming in. This can be stressful and the longer it takes to sell, the less likely you are going to get the price you really want.

Your ideal position is where you get multiple offers. Yes, we are talking about a bidding war. It's the best place to be because you will probably get much more than your asking price!

That's where you want to be. If you do everything you can to make your house have a WOW factor when people come in the door then you are going to reap the rewards of your efforts.

It can be overwhelming so get some help if you can. We organized the book so that you can easily skip sections if you know that part of your house is perfect the way it is.

Without further ado, let's get to it and give your house some WOW factor.

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You are encouraged to print this book for easy reading.

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Selling Homes in the World of Real Estate: Introduction

In order to revive the nearly unprofitable real estate market it is important that more and more homes are staged. This is a simple concept that ensures that a particular house that is for sales find appeal with more and more buyers.

Apart from getting a large number of buyers so that the seller can strike a good bargain, it is also equally important for the seller that his house gets sold of quickly. It is important to increase the demand so that the market can get more lucrative.

This is the primary reason why real estate agents are fast hiring, or themselves turning into 'staging professionals'. These professionals help in building homes that find maximum appeal to the seller in terms of their tastes and preferences.

And it is a fact that staged homes bring as much as 15 percent more revenue that those that are not. People are constantly looking for a house with more space. Many look at it as an investment that how much they will gain when they in turn sell it. Keeping all this in mind a professional stages houses.

Therefore, those people who want to sell their houses enlist the services of such staging professionals who, on being hired, help the owners to prepare their houses for sale.

They are specialized to so such a job. And indeed, the sellers see the difference in the demand for their property and the price that is coming in, before and after the staging professional has done his job.

Sellers generally use services of the agents who report to the seller that their house is not getting a good offer. They cannot, however, pinpoint the problem. They cannot understand the nature of renovation the house needs. Staging professionals, being specialized at these things, have a good idea of what the buyers are looking for and are effectively able to help the seller.

It is true that different buyers have different tastes, but with some things one can never go wrong. And this is precisely the principle that staging professionals follow. Staging of a house is done on the fundamental belief that a well staged house will cost money. The seller will have to pay for the renovation and the professionals fees.

It will still be more profitable than reducing the selling price of your house. According to a survey, 50 percent of the sellers are willing to spend about \$2000 on staging, while 50 percent of them are willing to go up to \$5000.

Staging professionals have a clear idea about the kind of colors that sell, the kind of furnishing in the house that makes it more appealing to those who come to have a look at it. They also have a clear idea of how the space inside the house must be used for optimum utility, which seems to be a major concern for all buyers.

It is a fact that well showcased houses sell 84 percent faster than those that are not. Staging professionals are not into house building or house designing. They merely advise the agents or the sellers themselves on the strategy to use while re doing their house.

Here are a few standard tools they use:

- **Color:** A tried and tested palette that professionals use can never go wrong. Though trends keep changing but there are some basic colors that never go out of vogue. Professionals generally work with neutral colors that have a wide appeal.
- **Furniture:** Professionals have just the precise idea of how to furnish and accessorize the house.
- **Space:** Optimization of space must be done well and professionals can tell you how.
- **Budget:** They also work with economical budgets. And indeed that is what the seller wants to maximize his profit from selling his house.

There are several seminars arranged from time to time from which professionals can take valuable advice. Trends keep changing from time to

time and a good professional must necessarily keep himself updated about those recent developments.

On the basis of such knowledge he can suggest to sellers or their agents what to do with their house while selling.

The professional keeping himself abreast of the latest developments even increases the sellers faith in him and is a sure shot tool of success for the professional. After all, nothing is more valuable than the professional being able to get the house sold faster for a good price.

What Keeps A Home From Being Sold?

Selling houses needs the agent and sellers to have a certain kind of experience. It is a fact that houses cannot always be sold on the spur of the moment. It needs proper planning and there is always a cohesive way to go about it. One of the other hassles that those who need to sell their house need to go through are the legal and technical formalities that form such an important part of the whole process.

The legal paperwork that selling a house involves is far greater than you can imagine. It needs proper professional aid. If you are capable of doing it yourself, then it is an additional advantage, but you must be very careful. Any small error in any detail that you may have provided can cost you a lot of money.

The following is a basic checklist you must always refer to when you try and show your house to prospective buyers. You need to take care of these things so that you do not put them off, thwarting your chances of actually striking a good bargain:

- **De-clutter:** Any home with a lot of clutter, that is to say, a house that has not used up its space in a proper manner stands very less chances of getting sold faster for a good price. More and more people these days are looking at optimizing the space within the house. Because of increasing population, the living area for most people is decreasing. So within whatever space they have, they would like to have it done well.
- **Make Beds:** In case you are in a habit of leaving home each morning for work without having made your beds, you are in trouble. Your agent may bring prospective buyers to your house and they may find beds not made. This is nothing major but it just gives a very negative impression. If you cannot make your beds in the morning, you can talk with your agent and ask him to avoid bringing in people before a particular time, or bring them only during weekends, the only time you make your bed!

- **Clean Closets:** Make sure your closets and drawers are neatly arranged. It just gives an impression of order within the household. Cluttered closets symbolize chaos and give a wrong impression of your house to buyers.
- **Light:** Make sure that you have your curtains drawn to let in enough natural light. Use natural light as far as possible. Artificial lighting can be used to enhance the interiors of your house, but just relying on artificial lighting gives a gloomy impression.
- **Leave your house:** Let the agents do the showing around. If someone has come to view your house that they might buy for a huge sum of money, they want to have a look at it well. In the presence of its current residents, viewers cannot frankly view the house well. They cannot open and inspect each cabinet.
- **Clean yard:** Make sure your yard is clean and tidy as well. As with beds and closets, this too plays a major role in forming a good impression.
- **Be Accessible:** You may have a very erratic schedule, but you must make sure that you are available for prospective buyers whenever they have to make a phone call to you to ask you things about your house. This is one way in which you can ensure your house gets sold quickly. Untraceable owners lose many a prospect just be being inaccessible. Keep your agent or Realtor abreast of the kind of schedule you follow.
- **Dogs and pets:** If you have strange fascination for weird pets, or even for something as harmless as a dog, make sure you send him for a walk. People who come to view your house may not be very impressed by your animal. On the contrary, if they do not like animals, they may feel uncomfortable, and be unable to inspect your house well.
- **Smell:** Make sure your house does not stink under any circumstances. It is a major put off.

- **Check Regularly:** You must inspect your own house to see everything is in place, especially the above items. Do a regular check up, may be once a week. Arrange the closets, mow the yard. Make sure everything looks vibrant and happy. Never, however, give a false impression. Show your house just as it is, reflecting all the good times you have spent there.

Tips on How to Make a “First Good Impression” of Your Home

Presentation. Yes, that is the keyword you always need to keep in mind. “First impression is the last impression” is a proverb that not many people are willing to buy into these days. But in case of homes, especially an old home that you are showcasing to others, this may very well be the case. It is a time tested way to make sure that your house gets liked by whoever comes to view it.

To make sure that you make a good impression on the prospective buyers, you need to make sure certain things in your house are fixed. As someone living in the house, many things might be normal to you because you have gotten used to them.

But to an outsider, these things are not normal. On the contrary they are an anomaly and will immediately be noticed by them.

Any crack in the ceiling, any broken piece of furniture must be fixed before you start showing your house to outsiders. The sure shot way to find out these anomalies is to ask your agent what he finds amiss.

Here’s what you need to Look out for:

OUTSIDE

1. Mow the grass and trim the edges
2. Weed the garden and clean the drive. Remove the leaves.
3. The grass beds must be weeded and cleaned
4. Shrubs must be trimmed so that they do not look untidy
5. Wash the house from the outside
6. Keep the garage in a neat and tidy condition
7. Keep the back door clutter free. You have been used to dumping all extra and unwanted items there. But now you need to pick them and put them in their proper place.

INSIDE

Kitchen

1. Clean taps and fitting well and make them shine.
2. Polish counters, cabinets and other furniture around your kitchen.
3. Clean the floor too. If it is high gloss type flooring, make sure it glosses! Use a good floor polish to make that happen.
4. Cupboard doors must also be cleaned thoroughly.
5. All equipment in your kitchen must look good. Clean the casing of the refrigerator and dishwasher and any other equipment around.
6. Make sure your oven is in a good condition.
7. Make the stove top shine. You can use one of the many stove polishes available to do so.

Bathroom and Lavatory

1. Taps and fittings must be taken care of. Polish and clean them.
2. Take care of the vanity unit. If it is made of high gloss material polish it well.
3. Lavatory seats must also be polished and cleaned well.

Laundry

1. Keep the laundry room clutter free. You don't want it to look as dingy as you have always been used to keeping it to the prospective buyers.
2. Paint it if that needs to be done.
3. Polish the tub.
4. Make sure the washing machine is in a good condition.
5. Clean up all the extra things you have been dumping there without even realizing.

Bedrooms

1. Make beds before leaving your house each day.
2. Keep your closets and drawers tidy.
3. Be open to prospective buyers wanting to inspect them.

Living Room

1. Keep it tidy.
2. Make sure the curtains and drapes are washed and tidy.
3. Potted plants that have not been taken care off must be removed.
4. Buy new one if required.

Dining Room

1. Keep your table well polished. There are lots of varnishes available in the market. Invest in a good one.
2. If your table is anyway old and rusty, cover it well with a good table cloth.
3. Place flowers and vases over it to make it look decent.
4. Get proper drapes and curtain for the dining room.
5. Keep this area clutter free as well.

General

- 1. Any doors around the house must look like they are always in use.** That is to say, they must be well oiled. Creaking doors give a very wrong impression to those outsiders who come to view your house. They make the viewers feel that the house has not been much in use and taken care of. You must take care of this small aspect.

- 2. Place potted plants wherever required.** It adds glow and vibrancy to your house and also makes it look a prosperous place to live in.
- 3. Provide the house with good lighting so as not to make it look dull.** Let as much natural light come in as possible.

Quick and Easy Ways to Sell Your Home

The omission of a middle man is perfectly justifiable if you can manage to sell your house without enlisting his help. This particular tactic is not very difficult to understand. You can save a great deal of money if you don't have to pay real estate agent commissions.

Moreover, by doing so, that is, removing the middle man you can also afford to lower the price you have quoted for your house, leading to the much faster selling of the house.

However, with this decision to sell your house without the help of a real estate agent means that the work to be done on your part increases. Such work for the agent is part of his daily routine takes the stress off your shoulders.

For you, though it maybe new, it is not impossible to accomplish, and you will soon find how.

The first thing an agent will do when you hire him is he will come and see your house for himself. He will need to know whether your house is in a presentable condition. Then he will go about telling you what are the things that need fixing and altering. He may even consult a staging professional at this stage. Note that if you let the real estate handle the staging of your home, they will likely recoup the expenses by way of a higher commission.

If you can take care of the staging on your own, you will probably be able to get the agent to take a lower commission.

Therefore, this is the first thing you must find out for yourself too. Is your house in a presentable condition? The following are the areas you need to look out for:

1. Floors and ceiling
2. Bathroom and kitchen fittings
3. Lighting and ventilation

4. Doors and windows
5. Paint, both on the inside and outside
6. Drainage system around the house
7. Condition of driveway and walkway
8. Home Improvements

Besides these general outlines you can take some forward steps to ensure that your house gets sold quickly and without much hassle.

- **Cosmetic Improvements:** You can alter the decor of your house a bit by repainting the wall, re-doing the furniture and optimizing the living area. You will have to keep the latest trends in mind while doing so. Taking help of a staging professional can also help here. You can make your house look inviting, as a result of which it may look impressing. You can decorate it with proper lighting and plants, etc. Basically, you need to make sure all the furniture, kitchen and bathroom cabinets and equipment, etc are all in good condition.
- **Target Buyers:** You need to know the kind of people that will be moving into your house. You need to analyze what kind of people will prefer a house in the locality in which you are now living. You can take the example of the neighbors that have just moved in. Though people differ, but some traits remain the same. Knowing your target customers will help a great deal in staging your house.
- **Buyers' Needs:** People are very finicky about the kind of house they prefer and they are not wrong in thinking so. Though you cannot guess each of those small details, you can satisfy some of their broader concerns which may pertain to security of the neighborhood, connectivity (with the market place, their work place, their children's school, etc), and comfort.
- **Pricing:** At all costs, keep the pricing very realistic. There is no point just thinking about your own profit, because quoting such a high price would mean that your house does not get sold quickly. Do your research so you have a good understanding of how much buyers

are willing to spend on a house like your in your area in the current market. Then you can figure out how to position yourself competitively. If it's a hot market for instance, you might consider pricing slightly lower than you expect to sell for in order to attract multiple offers and a potential bidding war.

Also decide on how you would like to attract buyers and what kind of advertisement would you like to place and where. Negotiate the price and terms of purchase and sale very carefully. You need to be extra careful while doing so especially because you are not enlisting the services of a real estate agent for whom these clauses are quite normal.

- **Legal Guidance:** Never refrain from seeking legal help when in doubt. Rather, it is always better to hire a lawyer even if it means you will have to pay him a portion of your profits earned as fees. There are very complex land and property-related issues that you might not be familiar with. You do not want to get caught unawares in case something untoward may happen.



HOME STAGING CHECKLIST

When you get ready to place a home on the market for sale it becomes a product. And just like any product on the shelves at your local store it has features and benefits, pluses and minuses. And there are other products to compete with. To gain an edge in your marketplace you must be priced right and look better than the competition.

When you sell your home you're going to have to move. When you move you're going to have to pack. Most of the principles of staging just mean you're going to have to pack up some of your things early. It's a little bit of work but you're going to have to do it anyway. So do it now so you can get top dollar for your property in your marketplace.

Things to Keep In Mind:

- ✓ Buyer's only know what they see, not how it's going to be.
- ✓ You can't sell it if you can't see it.
- ✓ You can't sell it if you can smell it.
- ✓ The way you live in your home and the way you market and sell your house are two different things.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

- In every room, stand in the doorway and look at the room through the eyes of a buyer. What do you see? Be tough on yourself: What can you do without while your home is on the market?
- Most carpets need to be cleaned. Have them professionally cleaned before coming on the market. If they need to be replaced you should replace them unless you don't want to ask top dollar.
- Check all light fixtures. Are they working properly? Replace all burned out light bulbs. Look for dark hallways and corners and increase the wattage of bulbs in those areas.
- Make sure there are lamps with adequate bulbs in dark corners and turned on for showings.
- Repair and repaint cracks on all walls and ceilings.
- Repair or replace broken light switches and switch plates. Clean any dirty areas around them.

- Keep all curtains and blinds open during the day to let in all light and views. The extra cost of heating or air conditioning is a necessary cost of selling.
- Pack up all valuables to protect them. If necessary, take them to a safe deposit box.
- Take a hard look at those beloved house plants. In most cases they need to be pruned and/or the number of plants reduced to create more space. If plants don't look healthy and are barely clinging to life give them away.
- Fireplaces need to be cleaned out. Glass doors should be cleaned. Mantels and hearths need to be cleared off except for a very few necessary items.
- To create more space you may want to remove some furnishings.
- Pack up all collections (you need to pack them sooner or later anyway). They distract buyers from the desired focal point...your home.
- Reduce the number of books on bookshelves. Pack up the books early!
- Reduce the number of family photos on shelves, pianos and tables.
- Reduce the number of wall hung photos and paintings in every room to one large piece on a wall or a small group of three. Make sure they are hung at eye level. Most people hang their pictures too high.
- Be sensitive to odors because buyers are!
- Wash all windows inside and out and make sure they operate freely.
- Repair items that are broken. This will show that your home is well taken care of. In most cases, buyers will ask for them to be repaired anyway, so do it now.
- Rearrange furnishings or move furnishings from room to room as needed to create more space.
- In general, pack up the little things. Little things create clutter and they need to be packed up anyway, so pack them up now.

Living Room, Family Room, Den

- Clear off all coffee tables and end tables. Keep decorative objects on the furniture restricted to groups of 1, 3, or 5 items.
- Remove all ashtrays.

Dining Room

- Clear off dining table except for one nice centerpiece.
- Remove extra leaves from tables to make the room look bigger.
- Remove extra chairs from table if they crowd the table or fill up corners of the room. Four or six chairs are enough.

Bedrooms

- Make beds daily.
- Invest in a new bedspread if necessary.
- Clear off bedside tables, dressers, etc. except for a very few necessary items.
- Store extra books and magazines underneath the bed.
- Keep closet doors closed. If you have a walk-in closet keep the floor clean and free of laundry and clutter.
- Remove all posters tacked on walls and repair holes in walls.

Laundry Room

- Put soaps and supplies in cupboards.
- Keep counters and sink clean and empty.
- Make sure that light bulbs are working and have adequate wattage. Most laundry rooms are too dark.

Kitchen

- Put soaps and supplies in cupboards.
- Clear all unnecessary objects from the kitchen counter tops leaving only a very few items you use on a daily basis.

- Clear refrigerators of magnets, pictures, messages, etc.
- Clean tile grout with bleach if needed.
- Repair broken tile or loose corners on Formica counters.
- Clean the stove top and oven. Replace burner pans if they are badly stained. Clean all exhaust fans, filters and hoods.
- Keep the kitchen sink clean and empty on a daily basis.
- Keep all soaps, sponges and cleaning supplies out of sight under the sink.
- Empty the garbage regularly to reduce odors.
- Move cat and dog dishes so they don't interfere with the buyer's walk around the room.

Bathrooms

- Clear off all surfaces. Put toiletries in drawers or cabinets and only keep a few necessary items out in baskets or a tray.
- Make sure you have a bottle of hand soap or a clean bar of soap.
- Coordinate towels in one or two colors. Fold in thirds on towel racks daily. Purchase new towels if you need to.
- Clear all items out of shower stalls and tubs except for necessities.
- Clean or replace the shower curtain.
- Repair any cracking or peeling areas and clean any moldy areas. Paint if necessary.
- Many tubs and showers need a fresh new bead of silicone caulking around the edges to make them look neat and clean.
- Take all cloth toilet lid covers off and keep toilet lids closed.
- Hide garbage can and cleaning supplies out of sight.

Closets:

- Make sure you can open the door freely without any thing falling on potential buyers.

OUTSIDE OF YOUR HOME

The first impression when a buyer drives up to your home is critical. Walk across the street and look at it through a buyer's eyes. Be tough on yourself. What do you see?

Trim and House Paint

- Take a hard look at the front door and trim. Give special attention to this because this is where buyers will get their first opportunity to make a close inspection of your home. Does it need repainting or staining? Repainting the doors and trim to help make the house look crisp and in good condition is one of the least expensive things you can do to dress up a home.

Decks, Porches and Patios

- Sweep all walkways and patios, porches or decks. Remove all moss.
- Decks should be pressure-washed, stained or painted if needed.
- Clear patios or decks of small items such as little plants, flower pots, charcoal, barbecues, toys, etc.
- If you have outdoor furniture create one simple room setting of clean furniture so buyers see how they can use the space.

Roofs & Fences

- Check gutters and roof for dry rot and moss. Make sure they are swept and cleaned.
- Repair broken fences and gates and paint if necessary.

Landscaping

- Look at all plants. Plants are like children...they grow so fast. Prune bushes and trees. Keep plants from blocking all windows.
- Remove any dead plants, weed all planting areas and put down fresh mulching material.
- Keep your lawn freshly cut, edged and fertilized during the growing season.

General

- Go around the perimeter of the house and remove all garbage cans, discarded wood scraps, extra building materials, etc., to the garage or, if applicable, take them to the dump.
- Remove all plastic storage containers, children's toys and any unnecessary objects.

Garages

- Sweep out and organize. Keep storage in garage neat.

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