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TIPS ON SPRUCING UP YOUR HOME PRIOR TO SELLING

Are you thinking of selling your home in the near future? If so, it's a good idea to look at your home objectively. An attractive, well-kept home generally has a better chance of selling a little faster. Also, the old adage "first impressions are lasting ones" is very true.

It is usually not a good idea to undertake major renovation projects simply to sell your home. There are no guarantees that you will be able to recover all of your costs. Instead, consider what types of minor cosmetic improvements can be made, like general cleaning, painting, floor refinishing and so on. These projects generally do not require a lot of capital and your home can be greatly improved by them. Consult with your REALTOR to see what types of improvements make the most sense.

Start with the outside

An inviting exterior ensures potential buyers will inspect the interior, so it is important to keep your lawn and hedges trimmed and edged, the flower beds cultivated and your yard clear of clutter and refuse. If you have any loose siding or pavement, it is a good idea to get these items repaired. Make sure any cracked or broken windows are repaired.

You may also want to consider painting the exterior of your home to spruce it up a little. If you have aluminum or vinyl siding or trim that is dirty, hire someone to clean it with a power washer if you can't or don't want to wash it yourself.

The inside story

You can do a lot on the inside of your home as well, without spending a great deal of money. Two primary areas to keep in mind are the kitchen and bathroom. These two rooms are generally of prime interest to potential buyers. Make sure they are clutter-free, bright and spotless.

Give your home a thorough cleaning. If you have been cooking, ensure you air the home prior to its showing. Make sure any wood and tile floors look clean and bright.

Home showing checklist

In addition to the information outlined above, here is a brief checklist for you to run over before your house is shown.

- Whenever possible, try to be out of the house when the REALTOR is conducting a showing. (Potential buyers often feel like intruders when homeowners are present.)
- Keep pets well out of the way - preferably out of the house during the showing.
- Make sure your home is tidy and well aired.
- Keep all stairways free of clutter.
- Remove any items (like chandeliers) that will not be included in the sale of the home.
- Do not keep money or jewelry in plain sight during a showing.
- Ensure that every room is adequately lit.

Ask your REALTOR for his or her advice to better prepare you for a showing or open house. By following these relatively simple tips, you will feel proud of your home and potential buyers are sure to appreciate it.