

The 29 Critical Things that Allow a House to Sell Quickly and for the Most Money

1. It is important to make certain that the first impression is a favorable one.
2. You'll never have more activity on the home than you will in the first three to four weeks of the listing. The reason is simple: there are buyers out there who have seen everything available and for one reason or another, haven't bought. They are just waiting for something new to come on the market.
3. When that new property does hit the market, buyers and agents both will scramble to look at it. It is common knowledge that the property will usually sell for the highest price during this time. After the initial surge of interest, the only people to look at it will be those buyers new to the marketplace.
4. Make your home look and feel like a builder's model home. Everything should look like it belongs even if it means storing some things until the home is sold. You are trying to create a feeling that makes potential buyers want to move in.
5. Don't wait to see if the house will sell first before implementing these making repairs or replacing items. Once you do decide to do something, don't do just the easy ones or just the bare minimum.
6. The property needs to look good from the street, up the sidewalk, on the front porch, throughout the house, in the darkest closets, and even in the attic. You definitely want to give the impression of a well cared for home.
7. You want the prospective buyer to feel that this home is quality all the way through, not just on the surface.
8. You are competing with every other home that is currently for sale: new and pre-owned, your area and other areas, those listed with agents and those trying to sell themselves; even with the foreclosures in the market.
9. Your property must appeal to owner occupants who will pay the highest price for the property because they are going to live there as their home.
10. Typical buyers put all of their savings into the down payment and closing costs and don't have anything left over to improve the home such as replacing old, worn-out things. Those buyers will have to live with that carpet until they can afford to replace it.
11. If buyers have a choice of two comparable properties similar in price, they'll choose the one in the best condition. Just as on the other hand, if two properties are similar in condition, the buyers will choose the one that is less money.

12. Stand at the street and look at the house. If all you can see are trees and shrubs, you have some yard work to do. One of the easiest things to do is trim the shrubs that are overgrown. They should be lowered to a height near the bottom of the windows. If there is ivy growing on the side of the home, remove it.

13. If there are tree branches hanging low in the yard, they need to be pruned. A simple rule of thumb is to have all the limbs high enough so that you can walk under the tree.

14. Invest in a few flats of flowers such as petunias or periwinkles that will last the entire growing season. They will add color and beauty to the front of your home. Consider putting some nice looking flower pots on the porch with red geraniums or some other blooming plants in them.

15. Look at the front door and the area around it. Give it a fresh coat of paint. If the doorbell is broken, replace it. Wash the mail box. Keep the porch swept. Get an attractive mat for people to wipe their feet.

16. Air out the home. You are the last person to notice any peculiar odor in your home that may be blatantly obvious to visitors. Go on a search to find the offender. It may be a kitty litter box or a dog bed. It might even be a mildewed shower.

17. Wash all the windows in the house, inside and out. While you're at it, clean the window sills and the bottom of the window jambs, and wash the blinds.

18. If it has been over a year since you've had the carpets cleaned, now is the time to do it. The bare floors should also be waxed or polished, even if they're supposed to be "no wax."

19. Put bright light bulbs in every socket made for a bulb. Buyers like "bright and cheery" so you have to keep it from looking like a dungeon. You'll also want to keep the drapes and shades open during the day, even if you're not in the habit, because it will make the property look better.

20. Clean out all of the closets, cabinets, and drawers. Get rid of things you haven't used in the past five years. Pack up everything that you haven't used in the last year.

21. Closets should look as they have enough room to hold additional items. You might need to box up off-season clothes to make it look that way. Get everything off the floor and don't have the shelves piled to the ceiling.

22. Even though it may be inconvenient, you will be far better off by selecting the furniture pieces that look best and putting the others in the garage, basement, or better yet, in storage. You can rent a mini-warehouse for a few dollars a month.

23. Go over the kitchen like a health inspector. Clean the oven and keep it that way, even if it means eating out more often. After cleaning the range, put new drip pans under the burners, or at least, cover the old ones with foil. Clean around the seal of the door of the dishwasher.

24. Bath tubs, showers and sinks should be freshly caulked. All the grout should be clean and in good condition. There are excellent cleaners that will do the job without tons of scrubbing. There should be no leaks in the faucets or traps.

25. Keep children's toys out of the front yard and off the sidewalks and front porch. Get the teenagers and children to understand the importance of keeping the house looking good while it is on the market. Take down the posters until the house is sold.

26. Clean the ashes out of the fireplace during the season that it isn't being used.

27. Be sure there is a light in the attic so it is easy and safe for people to walk.

28. If you don't have time for a garage sale, consider donating things to charity. Make a list of all the items and their estimated value, and be sure to get a receipt. The donation is tax deductible and may be worth more to you than the time and effort you'd put into a garage sale.

29. The pool needs to be sparkling and free of leaves.

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