

Seller's Guide

Provided By The Colwell Team
For Your Convenience

Listing Contract

You will sign a contract with you agent detailing the specifications of the sale of your home. With your Realtor's expertise, you can determine the asking price of your home. Your Realtor will also provide you with a Comparative Market Analysis (CMA). This will allow you to compare your home in relation to others in the area.

We will have a sign at your home to advertise the sale, as well as ads in local newspapers and Real Estate magazines. We will advertise online and us the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) to allow other realtors and potential buyers to access information on your home. We can also discuss other marketing options, such as open houses.

Beautifying Your Home

In order to make your home the most desirable, please use the following guidelines to ensure that your home is at its best when potential buyers are investigating. Every little detail counts for a buyer. We want to make a difference between your home and all the others a buyer will be viewing.

The Exterior

Make a good first impression! You only get one chance for that! Use the following list to help you get the exterior of your home in peak condition. Remember that just because an agent is not showing your house at a given time, potential buyers could be driving around, looking at your home from the outside.

Mow the lawn.

Trim all trees & shrubs around house.

Rake leaves.

Weed & remove dead plants.

Plant a few flowers or shrubs to look freshened up.

Put away hoses, tools, building materials, and toys.

Remove screens while selling.

Keep windows clean.

Clean front door & put on a fresh coat of paint, if needed.

Check for broken roof shingles, shutters, siding, gutters, or windows.

Seal or resurface driveway.

Clear patios & decks of grills and potted plants. The more you clear off, the larger the space will look.

Dress up garden with fresh mulch.

Power wash siding, if necessary.

Remove any personalized items, like plaques or labeled mail boxes.

Get a new door mat.

Make sure the door handle & locks are in proper working condition.

Hang a simple grapevine wreath on the door.

The Interior

Depersonalize and Declutter!

It is imperative that you depersonalize your home. Any potential buyer who sees personalized items in your home will have a hard time picturing themselves in the home. Put away photos, sports trophies, souvenirs, etc. Remove all the items from the home entirely. This will help declutter the clutter.

Decluttering your home may be the hardest part of the selling process, but also one of the most important. Take a step back and imagine yourself as a buyer. Have a friend help you see the clutter in a new eye.

Basements, attics, sheds, and garages are clutter & junk havens. These areas should be as empty as possible, so that the buyer can better picture themselves utilizing the space in their own way. It can be wise to rent a storage unit when preparing to sell & move. You can remove things from your home that may not be conducive to selling. Use the following list to get your interior up to par for selling!

Kitchen:

Clean kitchen from top to bottom.

Clean oven & stove, or have professionally cleaned.

Remove all items from outside of refrigerator.

Clear countertops.

Put away small appliances.

Clean inside dishwasher. Use a powdered lemonade mix to freshen smell and clean. (Try Countrytime. The citric acid will help!)

Clean out drawers to maximize space.

Paint kitchen a neutral color.

Light wood is best for kitchens cabinets. Paint or refinish.

Change cabinet hardware or thoroughly clean.

Remove pet dishes, little boxes, and toys from kitchen.

Have appliances updated. Avocado green and harvest gold are currently not popular colors.

Discard old food and leftovers from refrigerator.

Repair squeaks or drips.
Repair broken appliances or binds in drawers.
Empty trash cans every time you leave, even if there is a cover or lid on the can,
or if it is stored under the sink.

Foyer:

Use bright light bulb in foyer lighting fixtures.
Clean all lighting fixtures.
Spotlessly clean woodwork and carpet.
Repaint walls if necessary (stay neutral).

Living Room (can be applied to entire house):

Discard worn furniture.
Remove some furniture to open rooms and create illusion of space.
Clear away magazines, books, toys, and other unnecessary items.
Take down pictures & patch walls.
Add lamps to dark areas.
Set out fresh flowers.
Open curtains.
Put away political or religious mementos.
No animal fur rugs.
Silence squeaky floors.
Use half curtains to disguise bad views.

Dining Room:

Use a white tablecloth on table.
Use a centerpiece on table.
Light, then blow out candles.
Clean chandelier/lighting fixture. Most glass can be run through a dishwasher.
Remove valuables.
Put fresh cut flowers out.

Bathrooms:

Scrub floor & countertop/sink.
Clean mirror until it shines. Use a solution of 1 part ammonia to 3-4 parts water
in a spray bottle. Use a lint-free rag to prevent dust from paper towels.
Clean ceramic tile & grout.
Repair loose or cracked tiles.
Downplay dated tile with white curtains and towels.
Buy a new shower curtain, avoid patterns.
Shine chrome fixtures. Use a stiff wire brush with white vinegar.
Remove stains from sink.

Remove personal toiletries from display.
Glue down peeling wall-paper.
Use fancy basket for magazines or books.
Replace toilet seat.
Repair/clean or replace exhaust fan.
Install GCFI outlet.

Bedrooms:

Keep simply furnished.
Define areas using furniture placement.
Store off-season clothes elsewhere. (Pack them up and store them in a storage unit).
New bedspread, if necessary.
Make beds every day.
Keep headboards clean and free of clutter.
Put away children's toys.
Remove bulky furniture.
Remove dark or outdated wall-paper.
Clean out closets and make them appear large.
Install closet organizers.
Organize shoes on a shoe rack.
Don't store valuables in sight.

Family Room/Basement:

Clean fireplace or woodstove.
Replace carpet if it is a loud color or heavily worn.
Remove all books, toys, magazines, or work furniture that would influence the buyer's use for the room.

Unfinished Basement:

Keep floor clean. Paint is cheap and takes only a few hours. It will keep the dirt off the surface better, as well.
Change furnace filters & clean appliances.

Laundry Room/Area:

Keep appliances clean and laundry essentials stored out of sight.

Garage:

Store everything neatly stacked and sparse.
Remove oil stains
Paint with concrete paint to keep clean & freshen look.

Showing Your Home

Try to leave the home whenever your house will be shown. Take the kids & pets and go for a walk, go to the neighbors, or to the store. It may be inconvenient, but the buyer's will be most comfortable to investigate the home without you there. If you leave your pet, be sure to put them in a kennel, and away from the majority of the living area.

Make sure your home is readying for a showing at ALL times.

Cleanliness & Odor Control:

Keep the home spotless. Remember that buyers will be comparing your home to brand new homes. Make sure your home can keep up.

Buyers will be turned off by even the slightest odor. Smoke, pet, and cooking odors are the most common problems. Clean the areas thoroughly using products specifically designed for the problem odor. A product called Simple Solution can be used for most organic stains. It is available at most pet supply stores. Air out the home regularly. This will give the home a fresher smell. Try adding a few drops of vanilla to a small pot of water on the stove. Or you can add a few drops in your oven and warm to 375 degrees. Try baking cookies or bread before a showing. Garlic, onion, etc. are common cooking odors that can turn a buyer off. Use a lemon to eliminate odor left from cooking. Add a few lemon slices (without the rind) with a couple of ice cubes to the garbage disposal and turn on. If you do not have a disposal, squeeze the juice of a few lemons into the drain, and let sit for 5 minutes. Rinse thoroughly.

During a Showing:

Make sure you leave every light on.

Leave the premises.

Keep drapes and shutters open.

Turn off the TV!! Turn on soft music, very low. (Try easy listening or jazz.)

Leave all interior doors unlocked.

Remove all astrays.

Run vacuum every day before leaving.

After showering, dry stall and tub with a towel.

Let the agents do the selling.

Home Improvement Benefit Breakdown

The following are percentages of your investment you can gain back at resale:

- 150% Kitchen-This can be a huge asset. Just remember to keep it simple.
- 100% Revitalized Lawn & Garden-Curb appeal & exterior appearance go a long way.
- 100% Fireplace-Energy efficient fireplaces are best.
- 90% Second Bath-This can make all the difference to a buyer, but beware of splurges on heat lamps and whirlpools.
- 80% Room Addition-Try a family room or an extra bedroom.
- 60-80% Remodeled Bath-A master bath is on most buyer's lists. Try installing 2 sinks if you only have 1 bath.
- 70% Expanded Master Suite
- 70% Deck
- 50% Exterior Paint
- 50% Finished Attic
- 40% Finished Basement
- 40% Heating Systems
- 35% New Windows & Doors
- 30% Garage
- 0% Swimming Pool-Unless you live in Southern California, this can detract from your resale profit.

Accepting Offers

When a contract is submitted, you and your agent will go over the details. You may choose to accept, deny, or counteroffer the contract. Once accepted, the contract must be ratified. Once ratified, you are well on your way to completing the sale. Begin packing, if you haven't already. Wrap up loose ends, complete home projects promised in contract, and schedule to be present for settlement.

Settlement

At settlement, the title company representative will go over every document with both you and the buyer(s). You will receive a copy of all settlement papers for your records. After signing on ALL the dotted lines, you are ready to move on to your new place! Remember to bring any crucial information pertaining to the home, as well as the keys! Enjoy your next place!