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Create a Desirable Home, Inside & Out

It is important for you to realize that for most buyers purchasing a home is an emotional experience. Contrary to popular belief, no home is perfect. All homes have some faults, even the most expensive ones. With this in mind, try to picture your home with a critical eye, after all, this is how the buyers will be viewing your pride and joy as they walk through.

Let's Start Indoors...

Cleaning & Organizing Your Home

This is perhaps the most important "improvement" of all and costs next to nothing. Windows must sparkle inside and out and closets and cupboards should be orderly and clutter free. Rugs should be shampooed and floors polished. This is the time to have that garage sale you have been putting off. Eliminate over-crowded rooms by disposing of large bulky furniture and bric-a-brac. Try to create the illusion of spaciousness in your rooms. Appliances should be cleaned inside and out and be in good working order. Keep in mind that the buyer's home inspector will be testing them.

Painting: a little paint goes a long way

Paint and freshen your rooms with colors that are in vogue. "Dated" colors, quite simply, date your home and make it appear neglected even if it isn't. Colors that are too shocking are not desired either. You don't want your chartreuse master bedroom with red trim and doors to be the focal point of the conversation.

Home Repairs

Alas, all those minor flaws that you thought would fix themselves, haven't. Don't count on the buyers to overlook these tiny imperfections - they won't. In fact, they'll be looking for a "break" in the price because of it. Those doors and windows that stick, the leaky faucet, the unsightly caulking around the tub, the doorbell that doesn't work, the burnt-out light bulbs, the charred spot on the kitchen countertop and doorknobs that come apart in your hand or don't lock properly if they lock at all, are, I'm sorry to say, a turn-off. Fix them.

Decorating

Since you want your home to appeal to the broadest spectrum of buyers, adding special touches to create warmth and ambience is a definite plus. A vase of fresh cut flowers, a plateful of cookies on the kitchen counter or books and magazines carefully displayed on the coffee table are pleasing to the eye. Rooms can be too cluttered or too sterile. Try to be objective and create a balance between the two. Buyers that bring their children to view homes with them may be less than pleased with your artistic taste, so and store questionable items and artwork away for the time being.

Exterior

Curb Appeal

Does your home have it? When a prospective buyer pulls up in front of your home is he/she visually impressed with what he/she sees? Remember, a buyer's first impression will determine whether he wants to walk through the front door or not.

Landscaping

If your yard is well landscaped and sculpted, chances are your home will fetch a higher price. Regularly water and mow your grass, clip hedges, prune bushes and weed. Bring colour to your garden if seasonally possible with flowering baskets and tubs of flowers.

If you have one, set up your sundeck and/or patio with outdoor patio furniture. Repair any fencing that needs mending. If you have a view property make sure that any greenery is trimmed back so that the full impact of your view is not impaired. Add a little fertilizer to your lawn for instant growth of fresh green shoots.

Front Door & Entry

This is the feature of your home that the buyer sees first so extra attention here is essential. Make it welcoming by purchasing a new doormat and mailbox. Polish the brass doorknocker until it gleams or set out pots of geraniums. A flower wreath on the door or if you have a porch, a cedar bench to sit on would be a nice touch. Most importantly and if needed, repaint or re-stain your door.

Outside Cleaning

Scrub or power wash away all traces of moss, mildew or algae. The siding on your home, the cement or brick walkways, the roof or the sundeck may need this attention. Green slime on the outside of your house may give the appearance that it has been neglected. Clean and repair any dripping gutters. Power wash any dirt and grime from car pads and driveways. Repair cracks and potholes.

Pools & Hot Tubs

Keep your pool and hot tub covers off if possible. A clean clear swimming pool or a steaming and bubbling hot tub can look irresistibly inviting.

Garage

Try to make your garage neat and orderly. Discard virtually everything in the garage that hasn't been used in years.