

Preparing Your House For Market



How to Start Your Home off Right

You know the feeling. You see a beautiful house and you just know that you would like to live there.

That is what you want prospective buyers to feel when they see your home, even more when they are in your home. The deciding factor in most home sales is the "Curb Appeal" and attractiveness of a home.

Do the repairs necessary to make your home look its best. A word of caution, once you start making improvements to your property it is hard to know where to stop. Be careful not to invest in overly-expensive or large scale improvements like room additions and new plumbing systems. Making major repairs will only return you a fraction of the cost. In most cases you would be better off to disclose the problem and adjust the sales price accordingly.

Invest your improvement dollars and energy into clearing the clutter, cleaning and painting. You will definitely realize more cash at closing time than you will have spent for the cleaning and painting supplies. That goes for cleaning up outside your home as well.

Be as objective about your property's appearance as a buyer will be. Does that little crack in the wall need to be fixed? Yes! It may cause doubts about how well built the house is. How your home is decorated is not as much a factor as being clean, neat and in good repair.

The first look a buyer will have at your home is when they pull up in the driveway or in front of your home. Be sure the landscaping and general appearance is attractive and neat. A trimmed lawn, cut shrubbery, trees free of dead limbs, weeded flower beds, a swept and stain-free driveway, clear sidewalks and gutters, etc. will assure a pleasant first impression. A great way to improve your curb appeal is landscaping in scale with the home. Overgrown trees and shrubs are easy to overlook. Put in plenty of flowering plants any time of the year. It is an easy low cost way to beautify the exterior of your house.

As they approach the front door, little things will mean a lot. A clean, freshly painted front door, polished door knob and knocker, clean surrounding windows, screens and window sills will all be noticed. Once inside, the senses take over. The prospective buyer will notice odors and light. Open your curtains, drapes and blinds it will brighten your home. Fresh cut flowers add color and appeal. If the interior of your home needs painting consider a light, neutral color making the house appear larger.



Cathy Staup
can get your
listing off to
the right start!
206-276-1070



Making your home feel inviting

Tour Model Homes and Open Houses to really gain a feel for what buyers are seeing

Vacant homes appear smaller than they really are. It works the opposite of what you would think. It is true, staged homes sell faster and for more money than a vacant home. You want your home to be warm and inviting, in the colder months leave the heat on!

Make sure all rooms are clean and neat. Fingerprints, cracked plaster, and clutter should be eliminated everywhere. They say "everything in its place" and that is true when selling your home. Fresh paint, polished woodwork and clean windows inside and out will always improve the look and value. Kitchens and bathrooms are the rooms that can really sell a house or turn a buyer off. Make them sparkle. Fresh, plush towels, cut flowers, a new shower curtain etc. will add luxury and glamour to the most ordinary bathroom.

To make living, dining and bedrooms look big and airy remove some of your furniture. The rule of thumb is to remove approximately 1/3 of your furniture. Put away knickknacks, collections, personal treasures and mementos, pictures, toys and other unnecessary items. You want a buyer to see themselves living in the home not have them feel as though they are walking through your home. Unnecessary clutter will draw attention away from your home's features and make it appear smaller and messy. Put away dishes and store counter top appliances. Have the carpets cleaned.

Visit local model home tours and open houses for other ideas. Do everything possible to make your home look its very best. It does not take much money, just your time and energy. Get rid of the junk and anything you have stored in closets and the garage you do not use or love. Have a garage sale. Do it now rather than move it to your new home.

To add warmth and charm to your house when prospective buyers visit, play soft music. Burn a lightly scented not overly perfumy candle before hand and unplug those room fresheners. You don't want a buyer to wonder what you are covering up. Turn on all lights, lamps and chandeliers to make your house glow even in daylight. Whenever possible pets, children and you should not be present at a showing. You want prospective buyers to feel comfortable in your home without distraction.

An important point to remember is never have to apologize for the appearance of your home. Keep it "ready to show" all the time!



Print and
keep for
your
records

Exterior Checklist

Lawns and Trees

OK

Needs Work

- Is the lawn green, weed-free and mowed?
- All pet droppings cleaned up?
- Are shrubs and trees trimmed?
- All necessary weeding completed?
- Are edges trimmed?
- Flowering plants for color?

Garage and Driveway

OK

Needs Work

- Are the drive and walkways clean and clear?
- Are there autos or campers in the driveway?
- Does the garage door operate properly?
- Is the garage clean and tidy?
- Workbench clean and clutter free?
- All junk removed?

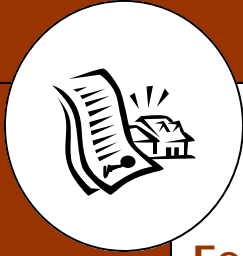
Pool and Spa

OK

Needs Work

- Is pool/spa clean?
- Is equipment in good working order?

Things to do:



Exterior Checklist Continued

Fencing and Gates

OK

Needs Work

- All gates operate properly?
- Fencing fresh stain or paint?
- No holes or repairs needed?

Don't
forget the
details...
Buyers
won't!

House

OK

Needs Work

- Does the paint look fresh?
- Are doors painted or stained?
- Does hardware work?
- Does the siding need repair?
- Are stucco walls free of cracks?
- Are bricks secure and undamaged?
- Outside windows clean and working properly?
- Does the doorbell work?
- New or clean front doormat?
- Do exterior lights work?
- Walkways are clean and free of toys and clutter?
- Trash cans are out of sight?
- Gutters and downspouts clear and fastened?
- Is roof clean and in good condition?

Things to do:



Interior Checklist

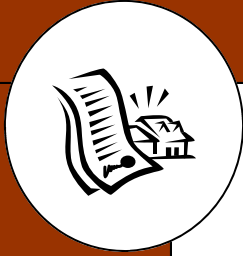
Is there anything about the inside you would want changed if you were buying it today?

Kitchen

OK Needs Work

- Are ceilings and walls clean?
- Paint or wallpaper in good condition?
- Are sinks clean and not leaking?
- Are faucets dripping?
- Pantry is clean and neat?
- Cupboards are clean and neat?
- Drawers are clean and neat?
- Drawers and cupboards operate OK?
- Fresh flowers or plants?
- Refrigerator clean inside and out?
- Oven is clean?
- All appliances in working order?
- Are floors clean and in good condition?
- Light switches & fixtures work and are polished?

Things to do:



Interior Checklist Continued

Living Room

OK Needs Work

- Overall appearance?
- Paint and wallpaper look fresh?
- Carpets are cleaned?
- Floors in good condition?
- Curtains, windows and sills are clean?
- Doors are polished and operate OK?
- Excess furniture removed?
- Room is free of all clutter?
- Fireplace is clean?

Dining Room

OK Needs Work

- Paint and wallpaper look fresh?
- Floors and carpets are clean?
- Curtains, windows and sills are clean?
- Doors are polished and operate OK?
- Room is free of all clutter?
- Light switches & fixtures work and are polished?
- Excess furniture has been removed?

Things to do:



Interior Checklist Continued

Bedrooms

OK

Needs Work

Ceilings and walls clean?

Paint and wallpaper look fresh?

Floors and carpets are clean?

Doors are polished and operate OK?

Closets are neat and tidy?

Closet doors work properly?

Rooms are free of all clutter?

Excess furniture is removed?

Bedding is neat and clean?

Dressers and closets are neat and tidy?

Light switches & fixtures work and are polished?

Curtains, windows and sills are clean?

Things to do:



Call me
anytime for
tips and
tricks to set
your home
for success!
206-276-1070

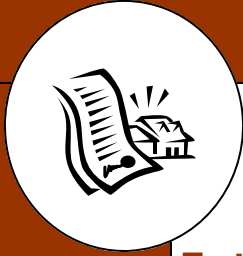
Interior Checklist Continued

Baths

OK Needs Work

- Ceilings and walls clean?
- Paint and wallpaper look fresh?
- Floors and carpets are clean?
- Toilet sinks and tubs scrubbed?
- Toilet seat is clean and firmly fastened?
- Toilet paper present?
- No leaks or drips?
- Fixtures sparkling and operate OK?
- Tile is clean and un-cracked?
- Caulking is in good repair?
- All cabinets are cleaned out?
- Light switches & fixtures clean and polished?
- New shower curtain?
- Are towels fresh?

Things to do:



Don't neglect those unseen places.. That is just where the buyer will look.

Interior Checklist Continued

Entryway OK Needs Work

- Paint and wallpaper look fresh?
- Floors and carpets clean?
- Clean and uncluttered?
- Light switches & fixtures clean and polished?
- Excess furniture removed?

Attic OK Needs Work

- Clean and clear of cobwebs?
- Is storage neat and tidy?
- Light fixtures work?
- Stairs are in good shape and clean?

Basement OK Needs Work

- Overall appearance?
- Clean and uncluttered?
- Light switches & fixtures work?
- Storage is organized?
- Smells fresh and aired out?

Things to do:



Visit my
website for
more
valuable tips
and articles:
PositivePath
Home.com

Interior Checklist Continued

Laundry Room OK Needs Work

- Overall appearance?
- Ceilings and walls clean?
- Washer and dryer clean and empty?
- Floors and carpets clean?
- Light switches & fixtures clean and work?
- Cleaning supplies put away and tidy?

Heating / Cooling Systems OK Needs work

- Furnace clean and serviced?
- Hot water heater in good working condition?
- Air conditioner is clean and working?
- Heating and air system filters replaced?

Things to do:

Experienced Real Estate expert, Cathy Staup of Cathy Staup Homes specializes in quality properties in Puget Sound, WA. Buyers, Investors and Sellers alike benefit from her market experience, negotiation skill and ability to adapt and excel in a constantly changing industry. Visit www.positivepathhome.com for up to the minute real estate news and information.