



HOME ENHANCEMENT GUIDE

LITTLE THINGS CAN MAKE
A BIG DIFFERENCE



COLDWELL BANKER

**SCHMIDT FAMILY OF
COMPANIES**

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At COLDWELL BANKER®, our goal is not simply to sell your house, but to help you realize the best price obtainable for your property in the shortest period of time. To help achieve this goal we have developed this exclusive Home Enhancement Guide.

Based on proven marketing techniques, this informational guide highlights practical ideas on how to successfully prepare your house for sale. These suggestions require a minimum amount of time and expense to complete and are designed to make your house stand out from the competition.

Your Realtor® is ready to assist you in developing a home enhancement plan for your property that will take full advantage of the ideas in this guide.



FIRST IMPRESSIONS

THE 15 SECOND RULE

Within 15 seconds a buyer has developed an opinion of your property. You have probably heard how important first impressions can be. But did you know that within 15 seconds a buyer has developed an opinion of your property? This is why establishing the right first impression is critical to achieving a successful sale. The following is an outline of those elements which create the overall first impression, including suggestions on how to make sure the buyer reacts as favorably as possible.



THE MODEL HOME EFFECT

The best way to make a buyer “feel at home” is to create an environment similar to that found in a model home. Obviously, you cannot recreate the feeling of a perfect display home without starting from scratch, but there are some valuable techniques to be learned.

The Key Points of a Model Home Are:

- The environment is neutral.
- The colors and interior decorating accent the home’s features.
- The smell is new and clean.
- The sound is either quiet or enhanced by subtle background music.
- All details are looked after, from manicuring the lawn to a floral arrangement in the entry.

EXTERIOR

THE HOME FRONT



A freshly painted fence gives a home an appealing & crisp look. Your property's landscape is not limited to the lawn & shrubs but encompasses everything from the street to your doorstep. For this reason, you must make sure each component of the visual landscape looks its best. The real estate industry refers to this as "curb appeal."

STREET

Make sure the street in front of your house is free of litter and debris. If necessary, give it a fresh sweep.

FIRE HYDRANT

Although you do not own the fire hydrant in front of your house, you should still be concerned about how it looks. If it needs a freshening up, get permission from your town and paint it.

SIDEWALK

Sweep your sidewalk if needed and remove weeds that may be growing between cracks.

FENCE

A freshly painted fence gives a home a crisp look. You should never let a peeling, tired-looking fence or squeaky gate stand between a prospective buyer and a positive first impression.

MAILBOX/LIGHT FIXTURES

A quick painting of an old mailbox will let the buyers know you care about the details. If outdoor lamps look rusted and worn out, new ones will cast a positive light on your property.

EXTERIOR

NEATLY TRIMMED SHRUBS ARE ESSENTIAL

LANDSCAPING

Neatly trimmed shrubs are essential. Taking the time to do this costs little, but has a big impact. Besides being freshly mowed and trimmed, a lawn should look healthy. If there are spots that look beyond help, a little sod goes a long way to restoring the look of a well maintained lawn.

DRIVEWAY

There are two elements of the driveway with which you should be concerned. The first is its surface condition. If stained or worn looking, consider resealing it with a quality sealer product. Second, is the appearance of the car parked in the driveway. A clean well maintained automobile will make a much different statement about your property than an unattractive, poorly cared for car. If you think your car will be a detriment to the look of the property, park it down the street.

PAINTING

A fresh coat of paint can be one of the best investments you can make to increase the value of your property. If you do not want to spend the money to paint the entire house, consider just the shutters or the front of the house.

FRONT WALKWAY

Like the sidewalk, the walkway should be clean and free of weeds. If sections are badly cracked, consider having them repaired.

THROUGH THE BUYERS EYES

Home Exterior Key Points:

- Does your yard look well maintained?
- Are the trees and bushes trimmed?
- Is your lawn mowed and edged?
- Is your lawn free of weeds?
- Are the decks and patios clean?
- Does your house need painting?

EXTERIOR

A CLEAN WALKWAY

SIDING

If you have a vinyl siding, have a cleaning service wash or repaint it using a product designed for these materials

WINDOWS

Attractive windows can help increase the appeal of your property. Things to double check are replacing cracked or broken glass and make sure all windows are sparkling clean. You can also add shutters or window flower boxes to frame your windows. Be sure to touch up any paint as well.

GUTTERS/DOWNSPOUTS

Neat looking gutters and downspouts make a house look shipshape. Consider replacing highly visible ones if they are in need of serious repair. If run off areas are eroded, you can install concrete spillways.

ROOF

The roof may be the single most important aspect of your home front. A well-maintained roof will say a lot about the overall condition of the property. Replace or repair any broken or missing shingles or tiles as well as any damaged flashing, eaves, and fascia boards. If the roof is old, be sure to have the work done before any showings.

DOORWAYS

Doorways inside are the focal point of your home. Repaint the door and replace any damaged or worn hardware, kick plates, and house numbers. Flower boxes or planters can pleasantly frame the door and a new light fixture can add easy curb appeal.

THROUGH THE BUYERS EYES

Exterior Walkway At A Glance:

- Are there any exterior holes or cracks?
- Are your walks and porches clean and in good repair?
- Does your roof leak or sag?
- Are any shingles or tiles missing?
- Is your chimney in good shape?

INTERIOR

APPEAL TO THE SENSES

People react more favorably to property shown under bright light. There are many ways to create a more exciting and saleable interior at surprisingly little cost. We will briefly discuss the sensory selling tools that can have enormous impact as well as provide suggestions on how to improve each room.

LIGHT

It is proven that people react more favorably to property shown under bright light than dark. The following steps should help you keep your room as bright as possible.

- Keep windows clean.
- Use adequate wattage in light bulbs.
- Consider replacing old fluorescent lamps which darken with use.
- Use mirrors to magnify the feeling of light and space.
- Use light wall colors.
- Open drapes and blinds and turn on lights prior to showings.



COLOR

A fundamental rule when selling your home is to keep colors neutral and light. The following are specific suggestions to help.

- White, beige, and gray are the most popular exterior colors.
- Shades of white, off-white, and very light pastels are the safest choices for the interior.
- Avoid highly patterned wallpaper whenever possible.
- Try to limit bright colors to fun accents like fresh flowers, towels, area rugs, and shower curtains.



INTERIOR

PEASE & QUIET



SMELL

The smell of cleanliness is important and has more impact than you might expect. It can work for or against you.

- The smell of newness is positive. This can be achieved by applying a fresh coat of polyurethane to natural wood or latex paint to walls.
- Beyond actually cleaning, lemon oil or lemon wax can create a lasting scent of freshness. Fresh flowers can also be effective.
- Sweeten the refrigerator with a box of baking soda.
- Smells to avoid include strong pet odors, tobacco, and cooking oil or gas.

SOUND

The sound of peace and quiet are some of the best sounds to have when your home is being shown to a prospective buyer, but there are other sound considerations of which you should be aware.

- Avoid barking dogs and noisy children if possible.
- Avoid sounds of work like vacuums, dishwashers, and lawn mowers.
- Make sure there are no sounds of mechanical problems like banging pipes or faulty appliances.
- Music can be effective in creating a pleasing atmosphere.

THROUGH THE BUYERS EYES

Home Interior Key Points:

- Are your carpets clean and in good condition?
- Are there any pet or cigarette odors?
- Do your walls have any cracks or holes?
- Do your walls need painting?
- Do your ceilings have any water stains, cracks, or peeling paint?

PACKAGING THE INTERIOR

MAJOR IMPACT

ENTRY

The entry is where the first impression of the interior is created. Here you have the opportunity to make a big statement in a small area.

- Repaint the entry using light neutral colors.
- Move a prized antique or attractive furnishing to the entry where it will have maximum impact.
- Apply a fresh coat of polyurethane to a wood floor.
- Tile or linoleum flooring should shine.
- Replace switch plate covers.
- A new hall fixture can make a great impression.
- Make sure the room is well lit.



FOCUS ON PERSONALIZING YOUR HOME

When considering a home to purchase, the buyer often visualizes what it would be like living there. If the home is dominated by strong personal statements, buyer are less likely to feel comfortable and therefore less able to visualize the property as their own.

Personal Statements are reflected in many areas:

- Unusual wall colors or heavily patterned wallpaper.
- Heavy odors from pets, tobacco, or cooking.
- Sounds of loud music or television.
- Noisy children or barking dogs.
- Strong political or religious statements.
- Unusual art or furnishings.

PACKAGING THE INTERIOR

INCREASE THE APPEAL



KITCHEN

The kitchen is perhaps the most important room in the house. It can have a major impact on the value of the property. If your kitchen needs some real help, you may want to make extensive improvements.

- Make sure the room is virtually spotless and smells fresh. Try putting a quarter section of lemon in the disposal and grinding it up.
- Consider replacing outdated light fixtures with new lighting.
- If your appliances are dated, consider having them professionally refinished or purchasing new appliances.
- Spruce up kitchen cabinets by installing new knobs or hardware.
- If your cabinets look especially old, you can have a professional replace the doors or door fronts.
- Remove small kitchen appliances and gadgets from counter tops to create an uncluttered look.
- Organize your kitchen cabinets to demonstrate how much room you have. Cabinet organizers are a good investment for this.
- Chipped or damaged counter tops should be repaired or replaced.
- If your linoleum floor is badly worn, replace it with neutral flooring or tile.
- A freshly painted kitchen may be well worth the investment.

THROUGH THE BUYERS EYES

The Heart of the Home:

- Are your appliances clean and in good working order?
- Are your cabinets clean and in good condition?
- Are your counter tops free from stains and scratches?
- Is your tile grout clean?
- Is your sink stained, chipped, or in need of recaulking?

PACKAGING THE INTERIOR

LEVELS OF ENHANCEMENT

Focus on the impact of small details. Small details make big statements about the perceived condition of your property. A house that shows poorly as a result of an overgrown lawn, peeling paint, or the smell of mildew may create the overall feeling that the property has not been cared for. If your home leaves a buyer with this impression, it could cost you valuable time and money.

BATHROOM

The bathroom has become an important selling factor in today's home. It is a room that has moved from the utilitarian to the exciting. There are many ways you can improve deficiencies and create interest through various levels of enhancement.

- Add color and richness with new towels and a shower curtain.
- Refinish an old porcelain tub using a porcelain finishing service.
- Place a vase of fresh flowers on the vanity.
- Replace an old toilet seat with a new one.
- Replace old light fixtures.
- Place all personal care articles out of site.
- Freshen the air with lemon scented products.
- Replace an old towel rack with a new one.



THROUGH THE BUYERS EYES

Home Exterior Key Points:

- Do your faucets shut off completely?
- Do all sinks, showers, and tubs drain freely?
- Are your toilets in good condition?
- Are your shower doors clean and shiny?
- Do your tubs or sinks need caulking?
- Is your floor in good condition?

PACKAGING THE INTERIOR

ELEGANT & IMPRESSIVE

LIVING ROOM

The living room is an area we do very little living in yet it is a major selling point of a house. Buyers look for elegant and impressive living rooms to make the right statements to their friends and relatives.

- Using mirrors whenever possible to enhance the perception of size. The strategic placement of a mirror over a mantle or across from a window can make a room look brighter and larger.
- A fireplace is one feature that everyone can appreciate so make sure it shows well. Sweep it clean and make sure the screen is in good condition. For showings during winter months, make a cozy fire. During warmer months, dress up the hearth with indoor plants or dried flowers.
- Use inexpensive freestanding accent lights to create dramatic visual effects behind large plants or pieces of furniture.
- Professionally clean wall-to-wall carpet or large area rugs. Sand and refinish hardwood floors.
- Clean all windows and light fixtures.
- Make sure all cosmetic cracks are repaired (this applies to every room in the house).
- Use lemon oil on hardwood furniture to create the right look and aroma.
- Liberal use of fresh flowers and plants will enhance the environment.



PACKAGING THE INTERIOR

FULLY UTILIZE THE SPACE

BEDROOMS

The bedrooms can do as much to sell your house as they can to turn off a buyer. If the room doesn't make a buyer feel comfortable or relaxed, it may turn them away from the sale.

- Make sure the bedrooms are absolutely spotless. Rugs should be cleaned, windows washed, and fresh smells from flowers or lemon oil should be in the air.
- Organize closets to increase their perceived size. Closet organizers do a great job of helping fully utilize space.
- Bedrooms should be well lit. You may want to install additional lighting in the master bedroom.
- A ceiling fan can be an attractive and practical accent to any bedroom.



THROUGH THE BUYERS EYES

Interior Key Details:

- Is your fireplace clean and the screen in good shape?
- Are all the drapes, shutters, and shades clean and working?
- Are the window screens bent?
- Do all windows open and close easily?
- Are the windowsills clean?
- Are your doors in good condition or do they sag or stick?
- Are all the locks in working order?

SPECIAL FEATURES

THE EXTRA DETAILS



BASEMENTS AND ATTICS

The look of the basement and/or attic can say more about the condition of your house than you may think. A buyer who sees a meticulously cleaned and organized basement and/or attic will have much more confidence in your property than if it were in a state of disarray.

- Paint a bare cement floor with an oil-based neutral gray.
- Paint the stairway down to the basement and the stairway up to the attic.
- Clean the boiler of the furnace room as well as the heating plant.
- Make sure there are no signs of pest infestation. If needed, call in a pest control company before the property is shown.
- Hang as many objects as possible on the walls to minimize floor clutter.
- Clean and organize your laundry area.
- Make sure all lights are working.
- Eliminate dampness with a dehumidifier.

THROUGH THE BUYERS EYES

The Extra Home Details:

- Is your basement, attic, and garage organized and well lit?
- Are those extra spaces clean and swept?
- Are the stairs in good repair?
- Are there any signs of insects or rodents?
- Are there any stains or spills in the basement or garage?

SPECIAL FEATURES

WELL ORGANIZED & CLEAN

SWIMMING POOL/SPA

The swimming pool or spa should be sparkling clean and in good operating condition

- Repair or replace broken tiles.
- Patio and decking around pool should be clean and cracks repaired.
- Pool filters and heating equipment areas should be cleaned.
- Replace worn or broken pool equipment, brushes, hoses, sweeps, pool covers, etc.
- If your pool is stained, you may want to have a professional service drain and acid wash or refinish the surface.



GARAGE

A well-organized garage says a lot for your house.

- Keep the garage neat and organized.
- Clean up any oil stains from your car.
- Paint the garage floor in an oil-based neutral color.
- Install a garage door opener.
- Hang gardening tools and loose articles on the wall.
- Hold a garage sale to dispose of unused items that create clutter and may distract a potential buyer.

THE END RESULT

ATTENTION TO DETAIL

By showing attention to detail and understanding the buyer's need to visualize your house against a neutral backdrop, you can dramatically increase the saleability of your property.

I will be happy to assist you with recommendations to help your house sell for the highest price obtainable in the shortest possible time.



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