

Open House!

**SELLING YOUR
HOUSE?**

**Follow these
simple guidelines
to make sure you
get your price!**

**Special Report Presented
by**

Randall Brennan
Equity Colorado
303-909-2365
RandallBrennan.com

SELLING YOUR HOUSE?

Follow these simple guidelines to make sure you get your price!

You've decided to sell your home. Whether you are under pressure to sell quickly or have all the time in the world, first attention should be paid to making your property as appealing as possible. Your aim is to draw attention to the best features of your home in order to satisfy a sensible and conscientious buyer. Besides presenting all that is attractive about your home and neighborhood, you will want to eliminate anything that could distract potential buyers from the real value of the property.

What's good about your house and its surroundings?

The first thing to do is to make a checklist and do your own inspection as if YOU were buying, not selling. Walk around the neighborhood. Approach your house as if you were a stranger. Enlist friends and family to help you assess the appeal of your home and how to present it in its best light:

- What is your impression of the neighborhood?
- What are the selling points of the house and its surroundings?
- Are there schools, shopping, recreational and health facilities nearby?
- Is there easy access to public transport and highways?

If the property is in a busy neighborhood filled with children it will attract certain buyers, if it is in an out-of-the way adult community area it will attract others. Practice describing your home in a positive, enthusiastic manner; if you believe it, so will your buyer!

Be realistic. There is a market for everything from "fixer-uppers" for the handyman to low maintenance homes for families who want to spend their time and effort on activities outside the home. If you pay attention to what your house has to offer you will be able to attract a buyer who wants what you are selling and will pay your price.

Work from the outside in.

The old saying that you never get a second chance to make a first impression also applies to real estate.

The first thing anyone sees of your house is the outside, - what real estate agents call "curb appeal" - so take a look at your house and yard with a critical eye. Look for chipped or faded paint, warped fence boards, oil stains in the driveway, stains on the patio, missing shingles or other signs of ill-repair. You want the exterior to attract the buyer. You want the buyer's first impression to be "This could be the one!"

Inside your house – make it inviting!

First impressions on the inside are equally important. Walk into your home; your first impression should be one of cleanliness, open space, lots of light and a fresh smell. Do you feel welcome and comfortable? You'll sell your home if prospective buyers can start to think of how comfortable it would be to live there.

What's under the surface?

Being up-to date on maintenance and taking care of needed repairs guarantees an attractive product for a buyer. It also creates confidence. Make sure that there are no cracked windows, holes in the walls, or stains in the ceiling, all of which indicate maintenance problems. If you have been putting off replacing the furnace, fixing the roof or broken front step or replacing windows, insulation or weather stripping, now is the time to take care of it. A well-maintained house puts the buyer at ease, confident that there will be no surprises. It can make a significant difference in selling price and how quickly your house will sell.

Preparing to put your home on the market – 10 important steps:

- 1) Find a real estate agent with a track record of selling properties in your area. Don't be afraid to ask for references or ask friends for help in choosing an agent.
- 2) Identify any major repairs that are needed and hire reputable professionals to do the work. Fix any leaks in the roof, dripping taps, electrical problems.
- 3) Start with the outside. Keep the lawn mowed, flowerbeds and hedges weeded and trimmed. Remove all the dead vegetation. Spruce up gardens and walkways with bright annuals – pots of impatiens, pansies or geraniums can be placed anywhere that you could use a splash of color. Wash fences, windows and shutters and clean the eaves. Sweep and scrub down patios and pathways. Store the kids' toys and garden tools neatly in the garage or toolshed or at someone else's house!
- 4) Make sure that regular maintenance is up to date: this can include having the chimney and pool maintained and the carpets professionally cleaned.
- 5) Paint is relatively cheap and a coat of paint where needed, inside or outside, can make a world of difference. When choosing colors, put yourself in the shoes of the buyer. Stick to neutral colors that not only allow the features of the house to be seen but will also encourage the buyer to imagine how their "stuff" will look in your home.
- 6) Kitchen cupboards outdated? A cheap fix up can include a fresh coat of paint on kitchen or bathroom cupboards and replacing the handles on drawers and cupboard doors. All are inexpensive ways to modernize and brighten areas that need a little perking up.
- 7) Clean! Clean! Clean! Clean your windows and blinds. Wash the curtains. Check doors, light switches, doorframes and baseboards for smudges. Get up on a chair or stepladder and dust your ceiling fans. Don't forget to dust the ceilings and light fixtures. Check corners for cobwebs.
- 8) Replace burned out light bulbs and make sure the lighting in each room is appropriate. Track lighting can brighten up a dark room and is inexpensive to install. Table lamps can soften the light in a bedroom or den.
- 9) Ask a friend to pose as a "buyer" for you. Prepare the house to show and have your "buyer" come to look it over. Then have the "buyer" tell you frankly what their impression was, what they liked, what they disliked. There's nothing like a fresh set of unbiased eyes!

- 10) Pay attention to safety. Make sure there are well-maintained smoke detectors and fire extinguishers and unobstructed access to outside doors. Eliminate clutter in basements and attics, particularly near electrical outlets, furnace and hot water heaters.

A place for everything and everything in its place.

No matter what your lifestyle, when you are showing your house you want the cupboards neat, the counters and stovetop clear and clean. Clear out the clutter and make optimal use of your space. Do an inventory with a critical eye and use this opportunity to get rid of everything you no longer want. Have a garage sale. Give away the things you're never going to use again. If you just can't part with some of the treasures that are cluttering up your house, put them in storage.

Use this opportunity to do a thorough clearing-out. Remember that every nook and cranny is going to be looked over – under sinks, in the linen closet and storage areas. Make sure they are clean and neat.

Don't despair if you're selling a small home.

Don't be discouraged if the house you are selling is smaller than average. Although the median size for a typical new single-family house today is 2,100 square feet (up from 1,400 in 1970) there is still a strong demand for smaller dwellings as entry-level homes for first time homebuyers. Statistics indicate that first time homebuyers comprise a healthy segment of the market so there is a sizable market for your "cozy starter home".

You can make the most of your small space by:

- Eliminating the clutter from the outside and the inside - Make sure that what the buyer sees is the house!
- Emphasizing "bright and roomy" - A small room will look larger if the ceiling is painted a lighter color than the walls. Strategically placed mirrors also make a room look bigger
- Placing furniture against walls to open up as much floor space as possible - Eliminate over-crowding and open up space by storing furniture, knickknacks, pottery and anything else that draws attention to the small space
- Keeping floor coverings light - You can camouflage dark or worn carpets with strategically placed furniture and soft colored throw rugs
- Keeping window treatments light and soft - If your heavy dark curtains make the room look dark and dull replace them with inexpensive neutral colored verticals or light drapes
- Using accessories - Tall narrow mirrors, pictures and plants make a room look bigger than low, wide pieces
- Paying attention to external space - A porch with comfortable chairs or a back yard patio with table and chairs tastefully decorated with planters of bright flowers or small shrubs are a pleasant extension of the family's living space

OPEN HOUSE – Are you ready???

Here are some finishing touches and last minute preparations that will make your open house a success:

- open all drapes and window blinds
- ask a neighbor to take your pets for the day
- make sure counters, dressers, desks and sinks are clean
- scrub and shine the bathroom – tub, sink and toilet, walls and mirrors
- have a fire in the fireplace on cold days
- There is nothing more welcoming than the smell of home cooking. An apple pie or cinnamon buns fresh from the oven create an immediate aura of comfort. Use your imagination!
- Indoor plants create a warm and friendly atmosphere. Fresh cut flowers inside the front door, on the dining room table and in the bathrooms are pleasing to the eye and make your house smell wonderful. Your florist can advise you on the most fragrant and attractive arrangements, what heights and colors look best in different areas.
- Send young children to visit friends or relatives for the day so that you can concentrate on the task at hand – **SHOWING YOUR HOME!**
- Check your yard and surrounding areas for unsightly garbage. Check the sidewalks in front of your neighbor's homes as well.

Emphasize the good points of the neighborhood and the house!

Whether you are selling a townhouse or detached home, property with a large yard or no yard at all, present all the features of the home in the most positive light. A small home is easy to care for; a larger home provides “room to grow” and space for different activities. If the home is near to shopping, schools and transportation, emphasize that. If it is far from the bustle of commerce, off the beaten track, quiet and private, that is also a selling point.

In Conclusion:

No matter the size, location or age of your home, following these guidelines will help you present the best qualities of your home to prospective buyers. When a buyer enters a home that is clean, fresh and uncluttered with minimal “weird” art, furniture, carpets and window coverings, they can begin to envision your home comfortably filled with their own furniture, possessions and family. That's the first step to selling your home for the price you want!

Your investment in needed repairs and your time spent making your home spotless, bright and clutter free from top to bottom will pay off. Make your property the best it can be and anticipate the needs and desires of a buyer. Be a **PRO-ACTIVE SELLER**, your house will sell faster and for a higher price and you'll be on your way to your new life!

Additional Information:

- Building Centers – are a great source of free information on minor repairs and renovations.
- www.HGTV.com
- www.improve.net
- www remodel.com
- www.buliderOnline.com
- HomeImprovement.com