

SHOWING YOUR HOME TRICKS

When you have your home on the market, it needs to be ready to show at all times. Now of course you won't have someone showing up at 7:00 a.m. or 10:00 p.m., but during reasonable hours, your home could be shown multiple times through the day and evening.

Having your agent put a lock box outside will allow them easy access without bothering you. Lock boxes contain a house key, and only licensed agents will have access.

If you have indoor pets or some other situation where a lock box wouldn't work, agents can schedule appointments, which gives you a little advanced notice. Keep in mind that they could call 10 minutes before a showing although usually you will get an hour or two notice. Therefore, the best plan of action is to be prepared at all times. If an agent requests a showing and you refuse, instead of rescheduling, more than likely the potential buyers will just move on to the next house, meaning you've lost a possible sale. You never know what a showing will turn into a contract.

Stay away

If possible, don't be home when agents show your home. This allows the prospective buyer to look around at leisure and ask questions without pressure. If you're home. For example, in the middle of cooking dinner, stay out of the way and don't volunteer any information unless directly asked a question. Otherwise, let the agent do the talking.

Environment

If your home is being shown in the summer, make sure your home is cool on the inside just as you would keep it warm in the winter. You want to do everything possible to make your home feel like a home, which is what appeals to potential buyers and it leaves a lasting memory.

Cleanliness

Your home doesn't have to look like it just came off the cover of Better Homes and Gardens, but you should do your best to have it clean and tidy. Make sure there are no papers scattered about, the sink is empty of dirty dishes, toys are picked up and put away, and things are dusted and vacuumed.

Lighting

When you know someone is coming, ensure that appropriate lighting is on. At night, this would include front and backyard lights. This provides a cozy feeling and makes your home more inviting.

Repairs

If you notice rooms or areas that need paint touch-up or complete repainting, this is the time to do it. Make sure there is no torn wallpaper, gouges in the wall, etc. These types of things should all be fixed prior to your home going on the market.

Fragrances

Try to avoid scented sprays such as room fresheners or carpet deodorizers. Even if you use these products on a normal basis, to the buyer, it might appear as though you're trying to mask some other type of odor. If you do want to have a nice fresh fragrance, consider fresh cut flowers, potpourri, or a soft-scented candle. A great home remedy is to mix one tablespoon of each - nutmeg, cinnamon, ginger, and pumpkin spice. Pour all into a small saucepan filled with one cup of water, blend well, and simmer. Another option is to place a couple drops of vanilla extract directly onto the stove burner and heat quickly. The aroma is wonderful. Either option will give your home the fragrance of a nice home-cooked meal. Just don't use anything too overpowering since you don't know if the potential buyers have allergies or not.

Visuals

Set a bowl of colorful, fresh fruit out on the kitchen table. Perhaps a soft throw blanket over the back of a recliner, magazines neatly fanned on the coffee table, or a couple candles glowing in the bathroom. These things make your home more homey and inviting. Just take a quick look around each room and see if there are things you can do to add a nice, finishing touch. If you need more ideas, look through some home decorating magazines for quick ideas.

Trash

Make sure the trashcans in all rooms are kept emptied, especially the kitchen trash where food items are thrown, and bathroom trashcans that might contain personal items. When people look at your home, you want to leave a positive impression. Seeing overflowing trash isn't the way to go about it.

Don't forget the garage

Make sure you don't forget the garage. Keep your tools and storage items neatly arranged. If there are oil stains on the garage floor, use some sand and newspaper to wipe it up. This is just another room of the house and it should get the same level of attention.

Pets

This can be a little tricky. Make sure your listing mentions that you have pets. First, you don't want them to accidentally escape and second, you want people who might have allergies or be fearful of pets to be aware they're in the home. If possible, remove your pets prior to the showing. If you can't do this, try to put them in a kennel, the backyard, or garage where they will be out of the way.