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How to prepare to sell your house this spring

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With spring in full swing, it's a popular time for homeowners to consider selling their homes. It can be daunting to think about listing your home so where do you start?



Being able to get the best first impression is crucial, according to Julie Sirois, a realtor with Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices New England Properties. That first impression starts with the photos you take. There are some buyers, especially in the high-end market, that are still buying sight unseen and go off of the photos. Before your home even hits the MLS, you'll have some work to do to best present it. You'll want to start with curb appeal, Sirois said, since that is the first thing a buyer will see online or when they pull up to the driveway. Some things you'll want to consider are mulching, cutting the grass, washing the house, addressing any wood rot issues and cleaning up the shrubs and plants.

"This is your first impression of the home so make it count," Sirois said.

From there, address any maintenance items — even small ones.

"If a buyer can see small maintenance issues, they worry about what they cannot see," Sirois said.

"Take care of those in advance."

Those small maintenance items can be anything from chipped paint to scuff marks, burned out bulbs or ripped screens.

You will want to remove any pet items in the home. This will help eliminate any odors.

- Note

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Removing pet items will help any buyers who have allergies or are not fond of pets," Sirois said. Make sure to address clutter. "Anything smaller than the palm of your hand should be put away," Sirois said of the general rule declaring what is clutter and what is not. Start packing. You'll ultimately be moving anyway so start that process."

You will want to remove unnecessary furniture, she said. It makes the space look small.

Another thing most homeowners don't think about is their personalization. These are things such as family photos, collections or sports memorabilia.

Buyers basically want to envision themselves in the home," she said. "Too many personalized items makes it feel like the seller's home and not a potential home for themselves."

When it comes to storage spaces, you could have all the storage in the world in a home, but if it looks packed to the brim and doors won't close, that won't be a selling point.

"If storage spaces are overflowing, it looks like there's not enough storage space," Sirois explained.

"Think about open closets, the basement and the garage. Pare down storage spaces. It's a better look for showings."

Most people do think about paint when they are about to sell their home, but it's not just about fixing chipping paint.

"If the home already has neutral colors and it's in good condition, there's no issue," she said. Light neutrals are best. Buyers can envision their own belongings there instead of being overwhelmed by color."

Sirois said you don't just have to paint the home gray. *-Note*

You can go white or warmer beiges. It just has to be neutral enough that you aren't walking into an alarming color like purple or turquoise," she said.

A lot of people miss this tip, Sirois said. Make sure all of your spaces have one purpose. *-Note*

A bedroom with a treadmill and a desk makes buyers question if the house is too small. It indicates there is no room for a gym and no room for an office," she said. You don't want to remind them of anything negative in the home."

Hiring a realtor that stages will help with many of these items. A third-party person coming in and looking at the space will think of things you have not. One of the things a stager may notice is better ways to move your furniture to highlight the home's best features. *Note*

"A couch may be up against a fireplace," Sirois said. "That fireplace is a good feature. You'll want to move that."

You also want to consider lighting and how your home looks at night.

"Many showings are in the evenings," she said. "You want to make sure there is enough light to showcase the home."

Think you have to update your kitchen or bathroom before putting the home on the market? Think again.

"If you're going to update for yourself and for your quality of life, go ahead and do it," Sirois said. "Small adjustments can make a big impact. For instance, changing out the laminate countertops instead of doing a full kitchen overhaul or updating the backsplash. It won't look dated and doesn't create a huge financial impact."

Overall you'll want to help buyers envision themselves in your home and doing a little bit of prep work before going on the market will help sell your home.

~~TOKYO • Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi took a short — and happy — break on Friday as she hosted legendary British rock band Deep Purple in Tokyo as a longtime admirer.~~

~~“Welcome to Japan ... Uh-oh, I can't believe Deep Purple are here,” Takaichi said as she walked into a guest room at the Prime Minister's Office with open arms and all smiles to welcome the band members. “I have always admired Deep Purple.”~~

~~“You're my god,” Takaichi told drummer Ian Paice, presenting him with a set of Japanese-made TAMA drumsticks she had signed. “You're a drummer, we are friends,” Paice told her.~~

~~Takaichi is a hard rock and heavy metal music fan and was an avid drummer in her college days.~~

~~The prime minister explained her history as a Deep Purple superfan for more than half a century. At elementary school, she was already listening to “Machine Head,” the band's 1972 album featuring top hits like “Highway Star” and “Smoke on the Water.”~~

~~In junior high school, she played the keyboard in a Deep Purple cover band, then as a university student she switched to drums, she said.~~

~~“Nowadays, when I have a fight with my husband, I play drums on ‘Burn’ and put a curse on him,” Takaichi joked. She has previously noted “Burn” as one of her favorite songs, saying it “clears my mind.”~~

~~“I express my deepest respect for you for making rock history and continuing to take on new challenges and producing even more compelling music today,” Takaichi said, wishing them a successful tour beginning Saturday in Tokyo.~~

