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THE BOCA BEACH REPORT

Ten Low-cost Ideas to Make Your Home More Saleable

It's the little things as well as the big things that count when you are selling your home. You never know what will capture a buyer's fancy and what will turn them off. Most buyers predictably respond to the same things - clean, clutter-free homes in good repair. Your agent may have already suggested that you paint the house, or that you do some major repairs. Those are big-ticket items, but what can you do on a small scale to get your home ready to compete on the market?

There are a few time-honored tricks you can use to make sure your buyer sees what you want them to see, and overlook what you want them to over-

look. Keeping your home in tip-top shape for showings will insure that your buyer will offer a higher amount than for a home that isn't show time-ready.

Always look at a home from the buyer's perspective. Be objective and honest with yourself. If something bothers you about your home, chances are good it will bother the buyer, too. Do what you can to get rid of the problem. You want to ➡



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*Privileged
information about
your real estate*

This publication is not a solicitation but is an information service from this real estate office.

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Please Clip and Mail or Call Me for More Information

As your real estate professional, I am available to assist you in your planning. Simply complete and return the following request for information or contact me today for immediate assistance.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Purchasing a home or second home | <input type="checkbox"/> Long distance Relocation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Selling a home or second home | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Purchasing or selling Investment Property | <input type="checkbox"/> Please contact me between these hours _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Checking on current value of my property | |

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City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

E-mail: _____

If your property is now listed with a broker, please disregard this offer. We will cooperate with other brokers.

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keep objections about your home to a minimum. Preparing a home for market means you'll be putting some elbow grease into it, so get ready.

1. Have a garage sale before the home is listed. Get rid of clutter so that the buyer can really see your home. Clean out what you think you won't need in your next home. Pack away all that you can. Home-buyers will expect you to be preparing to move, so a few packing boxes here and there can be used to your advantage.

They could be a good visual stimulant to someone who is "on the fence;" they show that you are moving and are serious about finding a buyer. Be sure, though, to find the fine line between clutter and emptiness.

2. Welcome the buyer at the entry. Put out a new doormat, but avoid mats with cutesy sayings. Clean and polish the brass door-knocker. Put potted flowers on the porch. Make sure the front entry floor is always sparkling clean and the porch and steps are always swept. First impressions count.

3. Stimulate the buyer's imagination by setting the stage. Set the dinner table with your best china. Use the coziness and

romance of the fireplace to advantage. Put a pair of wine glasses and a vase of flowers on the coffee table in front of the fire.

4. Be ruthless about odors. If there is a smell, your house won't sell. Use cleansers of all kinds to make the home smell fresh, from carpet freshener to potpourri. Deodorize cat litter and scoop litter daily. Put cedar chips inside the closets. Be careful with room sprays, they could stimulate allergies. Use the sense of smell to your advantage by having fresh-baked cookies on the kitchen table.

5. Create a spacious feeling. Make sure that all doors, cabinets and drawers open all the way without bumping into anything or sticking. Clean out the entry closet and put only a few hangers so that the buyer can visualize winter coats. Move oversized furniture to a storage facility. Make sure entrances to all rooms have an open flow.

6. Make the most of views. Disguise unsightly views. Put a screen or a basket of flowers in front of a fireplace if not in use. Let the breezes move your sheer curtains at the window. Make sure the interior is visible from the street. All windows must be crystal clean and clear. ➡

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7. Create counter space. Store away extra appliances. Put away dish racks, soap dishes and other clutter. Decrease kitchen clutter further by removing magnets from refrigerator.

8. Avoid eccentric decor. De-personalize your teenager's room, the game room or other areas by removing wild posters or any decorative item that could be construed as offensive. Remove hanging beads in doorways, your children's jars with spiders or bugs, and anything, which won't appeal to the masses.

9. Increase the wattage in light bulbs in the laundry room, kitchen and bathrooms. For showings, turn on lights in every room.

10. Put photos of the family enjoying your home in at least three different places.

Now step back. Stand outside the front door, as much as 30 feet away and evaluate the feeling you get. Is the house warm and inviting? Does it feel like home?

Then perhaps it will to your buyer, too. ♣

Pricing A Home To Sell

Professional real estate agents know that if a house is priced right, it is half sold. If the price is too high, no one comes to look at it. If it is too low, the owner has a quick sale — but is short-changed.

If a modest house is offered for sale \$200,000 too high, it would never sell. Possibly it would remain on the market for many years until inflation caught up with that price.

If a home were priced \$100,000 under the market, the owner would have a sale before the ad ever hit the papers. Someone from the newspaper's classified ad department would be at the door five minutes after the ad was called in.

So, to get the quickest sale, for the most money, the price must be set somewhere between \$0 and many millions. A price must attract buyers and still bring the seller the most money possible.

If you are selling, here are several factors that should never influence your asking price:

- **Your cost.** What if you had received the place as a gift or inheritance? Must you then give it away?
- **Your investment in improvements.** You put in that in-ground pool because you enjoyed it, but you may not find anyone who feels your house is worth \$30,000

more because of it. They may instead be calculating the cost of tearing it out.

- **Assessed value.** This figure is set by the taxing authorities and seldom has any relation to market value. It is almost never a dependable guide to what buyers will pay.

- **Your needs.** You may require \$50,000 or \$75,000 at the closing to use for the down payment on your next home, or some other purpose, but that's not the buyer's concern.

- **Emotion.** Be careful that you don't ask too much for the property because you have raised your children here and have many fond memories. On the other hand, don't let the bad memory of a divorce, or the need to settle an estate as soon as possible, lead you to under price the home.

So what does count?

Only one thing.

Simple. What matters is how the home compares to the others currently offered for sale and recently sold in your neighborhood. Buyers and brokers will be comparing sales prices.

Value and selling prices are a function of supply and demand in the open market. We can show you what buyers are paying for a similar property — and that is the only thing that counts.

Call us when you need assistance in real estate. ♣