



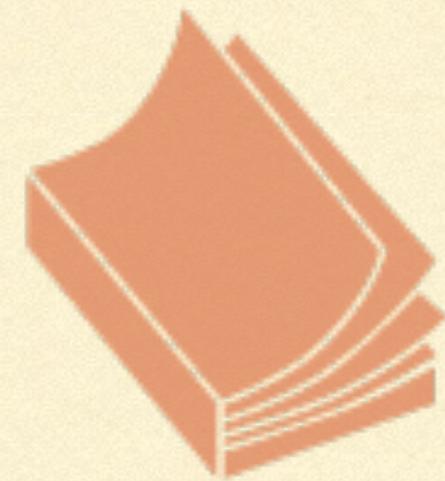
Homeowner's Guide to

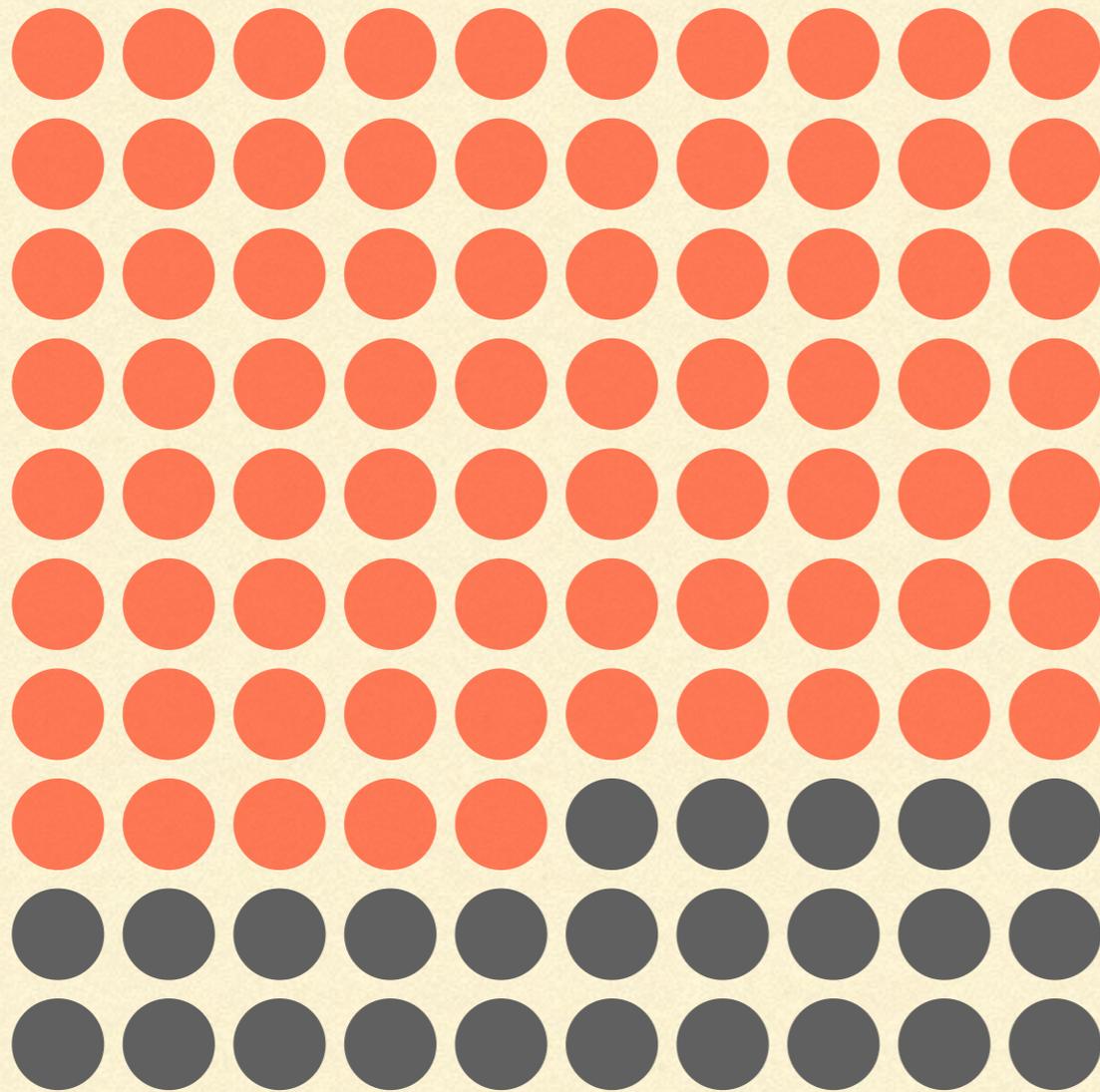
SELLING YOUR HOME IN 2014

Everything You Need to Know to Get
The Best Value for Your House

2014 SELLERS GUIDE

Preparing Your Home to Get The Best Value From The Market





75%

Of homebuyers
choose location &
neighborhood as the
two most important

FACTORS YOU CAN CONTROL



4 QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE SELLING YOUR HOME

Selling your home is a big financial and emotional task, which requires lots of planning. So before you decide to put your home on the market, here are four questions to consider.



1

WHAT'S MY HOME WORTH?

Several factors go into determining your home's market value. These include the condition of the property, square footage, location, amenities, as well as recent comparable property sales. For a snapshot of your home's current value, you can enter your address into a free online value

estimator tool. Alternatively, you can look at a recent property tax bill to get your home's tax assessed value, which is a percentage of your home's fair market value. If you know your state's assessment rate (which is usually between 80 and 90 percent), you can estimate fair market value

2

HOW CAN I SELL IT FOR THE HIGHEST PRICE?

There are several simple, low-cost things you can do to boost the value of your home. These include eliminating clutter, washing windows and walls, and installing higher wattage bulbs to create a brighter environment. Larger projects, like adding bedrooms and renovating kitchens and

bathrooms, typically yield more substantial increases in sales price. Staging your home, which helps paint a picture for how buyers will use their new space, can also add value.

3

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE FOR MY HOUSE TO SELL?

The time your home spends on the market depends on several factors, including location, how competitively your home is priced, and how aggressively your home is marketed. Statistics show that if a home is properly priced, an offer should come in within the first 12 showings. If you want to

speed up the sales process, don't underestimate the value of staging. Research shows that well-staged homes can sell up to 32 percent faster than homes that aren't staged.

4

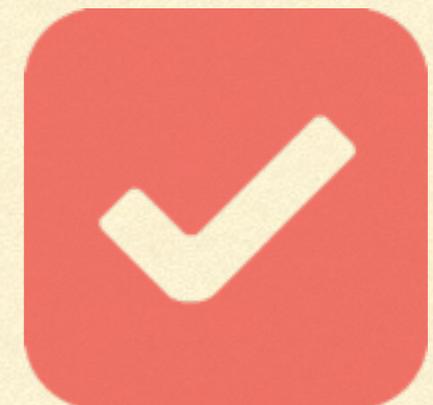
WILL AN AGENT HELP ME ACCOMPLISH MY GOALS?

A real estate agent can help with all aspects of the selling process, from pricing to marketing to handling the intricacies of closing. Hiring a professional who is experienced in your area and can help you position your property to get the highest and best price is your ticket to a successful

sale. In a sellers market, getting the property under contract is only half the battle, getting it closed is what makes a difference.

A SELLERS GUIDE TO IMPROVEMENTS

As a seller in today's competitive housing market, you need to make sure you're putting your home's best foot forward for prospective buyers. While they may seem costly in the short term, a few repairs and renovations will lead to a quicker sale at or above your sticker price. The question is, what should you fix, and how? Here's a quick guide to pre-sale home improvements.



REPLACE

Some home features are better replaced completely than fixed or refurbished. For starters, you should replace carpets, especially in stairways and high-traffic areas. This is essential if you have pets, as even stain-free carpets can hold onto bad odors. (Depending on cost, consider replacing carpets with hardwood or laminate: they're easier to keep clean and fetch a higher price.) Stick with neutral colors, and don't install anything too expensive--after all, there's a good chance your buyer will replace these themselves.

Next, updating old light fixtures and window treatments can go far in making an old home shine like new. Again, go for neutral styling that will appeal to a wide spectrum of tastes and decor. Replace old bathroom and kitchen countertops, along with built-in appliances: dishwashers, cooktops, etc. While you don't have to spring for gourmet granite or a top-of-the-line stove, you should still go for stainless steel and name-brand quality.

REPAIR

A worn-out roof is a bad omen that will scare buyers away. Have a roofer replace any worn or missing shingles or roofing tiles. Have any moss or other plant growth removed. You should also ensure proper drainage by checking that your gutters are clear, clean, and freshly caulked.

Inside, take care of any plumbing issues. Check and replace the seals on all of your toilets. Tighten leaky faucets and refurbish with new o-rings, gaskets, and other parts. Check the lines leading to your dishwasher and washing machine. Be sure to address any faulty wiring as well, fixing any problem sockets or switches to avoid potential embarrassment during a showing.

REFRESH

A fresh coat of paint can work wonders on even the shabbiest rooms. Strip off any old wallpaper and fill holes from nails and picture hangers, then give your interior a fresh coat. Replace bright colors with safer shade of white or beige. Pay special attention to scuffed and dented baseboards, spackling and repainting as necessary.

It's often a good idea to repaint your front door as well--after all, it's the first detail potential buyers will notice. As for the rest of the exterior, a thorough powerwashing and window cleaning should suffice. When it comes to landscaping, pull weeds and seed any dead patches of grass.

STAGING YOUR HOME FOR HIGHER OFFERS

When preparing to sell your home, it's often a good idea to stage your property, highlighting its best features with presentation and decor. But how exactly does an effectively staged home entice buyers? Let's break down the science of staging and look at some tips for appealing to the senses.



LIGHTING & VIEW

There have been dozens of scientific studies on the human response to sunlight, and the conclusion is simple: we need it. Because of this, when staging your home for prospective buyers, you should take steps to let in as much natural light as possible. Remove thick, heavy curtains and blinds, and avoid blocking windows with furniture. Use lamps with high-wattage bulbs to illuminate spaces that don't receive much outdoor light.

Another way to appeal to buyers' sense of sight: show them more of the room by removing all excess furniture and clutter. This will make your spaces feel bigger. When it comes to paint and decor, stick with colors and designs that are muted and gender neutral. This will leave more to the imagination, allowing visitors to create their own vision of the room, instead of limiting them to yours.

CLEAN & COMFORTABLE

Physical discomfort can negatively affect mood and perspective, so take care to ensure that your home provides a cozy, clean environment. Adjust the thermostat to ensure the temperature is perfect before buyers arrive. Make sure all of the surfaces in your home are spotless: there's nothing worse than putting your hand on a table, only to come away with grime or dust. The same goes for floors: even through shoes, buyers can feel the difference between a clean kitchen floor and a dirty one.

MAKE IT SOUND GOOD

Depending on where you live, ambient noise from outside your home can be a blessing or a liability. If you're in a city, for instance, you'll want to minimize street noise by keeping your windows closed. Conversely, if your yard plays host to songbirds, you might consider leaving your windows open.

Speaking of songs, you can also use sound actively in your staging. Studies have shown that listening to soothing music can reduce stress, while songs with slower tempos inspire consumers to take their time. By playing soft, slow, classical music, you can provide buyers with a comfortable atmosphere to contemplate your space. Be sure to keep it simple, quiet, and consistent--after all, you don't want to distract buyers from their big decision.

SMELLS MATTER

Few characteristics will put off homebuyers more quickly than a bad odor. If you have lots of carpets or rugs, make sure they've been steam cleaned thoroughly before you start showing your home. Get the dog or cat out of the house, or, if they must stay, make sure they've been bathed recently. Open the windows to let fresh air in at least ten minutes before buyers arrive.

You may have heard stories about baking cookies or lighting scented candles to entice buyers. While pleasant odors can have a positive impact, it's important to keep your efforts subtle and simple. An overpowering smell, no matter how sweet, will reduce buyers' focus and undermine your staging efforts.

A SENSE OF HOME

Unless you're hosting an open house, buyers' sense of taste isn't likely to enter the equation very much. As with smells, it's important to keep buyers focused on your home, rather than your award-winning bean dip. That said, some strategically placed candies or homemade chocolate chip cookies probably couldn't hurt.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

My job is to help you get the most value for your home and I have dedicated my career and livelihood to this goal. While it often seems easy from the outside, I operate as a mini marketing agency, advisor and chief bottle washer to get the job done. Contact me for a free home and market evaluation. I look forward to meeting you.