

Simple Tips for Better Home Showings

1. **Remove clutter and clear off counters.** Throw out stacks of newspapers and magazines and stow away most of your small decorative items. Put excess furniture in storage, and remove out-of-season clothing items that are cramping closet space. Don't forget to clean out the garage, too.
2. **Wash your windows and screens.** This will help get more light into the interior of the home.
3. **Keep everything extra clean.** A clean house will make a strong first impression and send a message to buyers that the home has been well-cared for. Wash fingerprints from light switch plates, mop and wax floors, and clean the stove and refrigerator. Polish your doorknobs and address numbers. It's worth hiring a cleaning service if you can afford it.
4. **Get rid of smells.** Clean carpeting and drapes to eliminate cooking odors, smoke, and pet smells. Open the windows to air out the house. Potpourri or scented candles will help.
5. **Brighten your rooms.** Put higher wattage bulbs in light fixtures to brighten up rooms and basements. Replace any burned-out bulbs in closets. Clean the walls, or better yet, brush on a fresh coat of neutral color paint.
6. **Don't disregard minor repairs.** Small problems such as sticky doors, torn screens, cracked caulking, or a dripping faucet may seem trivial, but they'll give buyers the impression that the house isn't well-maintained.
7. **Tidy your yard.** Cut the grass, rake the leaves, add new mulch, trim the bushes, edge the walkways, and clean the gutters. For added curb appeal, place a pot of bright flowers near the entryway.
8. **Patch holes.** Repair any holes in your driveway and reapply sealant, if applicable.
9. **Add a touch of color in the living room.** A colored afghan or throw on the couch will jazz up a dull room. Buy new accent pillows for the sofa.
10. **Buy a flowering plant and put it near a window you pass by frequently.**
11. **Make centerpieces for your tables.** Use brightly colored fruit or flowers.
12. **Set the scene.** Set the table with fancy dishes and candles, and create other Vignettes throughout the home to help buyers picture living there. For example, in the basement you might display a chess game in progress.
13. **Replace heavy curtains with sheer ones that let in more light.** Show off the view if you have one.
14. **Accentuate the fireplace.** Lay fresh logs in the fireplace or put a basket of flowers there if it's not in use.
15. **Make the bathrooms feel luxurious.** Put away those old towels and toothbrushes. When buyers enter your bathroom, they should feel pampered. Add a new shower curtain, new towels, and fancy guest soaps. Make sure your personal toiletry items are out of sight.
16. **Send your pets to a neighbor or take them outside.** If that's not possible, crate them or confine them to one room (ideally in the basement), and let the real estate practitioner know where they'll be to eliminate surprises.
17. **Lock up valuables, jewelry, and money.** While a real estate salesperson will be on site during the showing or open house, it's impossible to watch everyone all the time.
18. **Leave the home.** It's usually best if the sellers are not at home. It's awkward for prospective buyers to look in your closets and express their opinions of your home with you there.



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