

Real Estate Newsletter

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8 Quick Fixes to Increase Value

With buyers scarcer, sellers must up the ante to convince them that their property offers what many want most — top value for dollar expended. Here are eight fast fixes:

- 1. Buff up curb appeal.** You've heard it before, but it's critical to get buyers to want to look on the inside. Be objective. View listings from the street. Check the condition of the landscaping, paint, roof, shutters, front door, knocker, windows, house number, and even how window treatments look from the outside. Add something special such as big flower pots or an antique bench to help viewers remember house A from B.
- 2. Enrich with color.** Paint's cheap, but forget the adage that it must be white or neutral. Just don't let sellers get too avant-garde with jarring pinks, oranges, and purples. Recommend soft colors that say "welcome," lead the eye from room to room, and flatter skin tones. Think soft yellows and pale greens. Tint ceilings a lighter shade.
- 3. Upgrade the kitchen and bathroom.** These make-or-break rooms can spur a sale. But besides making each squeaky clean and clutter-free, update the pulls, sinks, and faucets. In a kitchen, add one cool appliance, such as an espresso maker. In the bathroom, hang a flat-screen TV to mimic a hotel. Room service, anyone?
- 4. Add old-world patina.** Make Andrea Palladio proud. Install crown molding at least six to nine inches in depth, proportional to the room's size, and architecturally compatible. For ceilings nine feet high or higher, add dentil detailing, small tooth-shaped blocks used as a repeating ornament. It's all in the details, after all.
- 5. Screen hardwood floors.** Buyers favor wood over carpet, but refinishing is costly and time-consuming. Screening cuts dust, time, and expense. What it entails: a light sanding, not a full stripping of color or polyurethane, then a coat of finish.
- 6. Clean out, organize closets.** Get sorting, organize your piles into "don't need," "haven't worn," and "keep." Closets must be only half-full so buyers can visualize fitting their stuff in.
- 7. Update window treatments.** Buyers want light and views, not dated, fancy-schmancy drapes that darken. To diffuse light and add privacy, consider energy-efficient shades and blinds.
- 8. Hire a home inspector.** Do a preemptive strike, since busy home owners seek maintenance-free living. Fix problems before you list the home and then display receipts and wait for buyers to offer kudos to sellers for being so responsible.

Sources: Ernie Roth, Roth Interiors, Los Angeles; Angel Petragallo, **abr**, Group One, Boise, Idaho; Melissa Galt, Galt Interiors, Atlanta; Steve Kleiman, CEO, Oakington Realty, Houston; Sid Davis, Sid Davis & Associates, Farmington, Utah, and author of *First-Time Homeowners' Survival Guide* (Amacom, 2007); Steve Hochman, Friendly Note Buyers, Roxbury, N.Y.; Margi Kyle, designer and spokesperson for Hunter Douglas.

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My Dad's Hands

Bedtime came, we were settling down,
I was holding one of my lads.
As I grasped him so tight, I saw a strange sight:
My hands. . . they looked like my dad's!
I remember them well, those old gnarled
hooks, there was always a cracked nail or two.
And thanks to a hammer that strayed from its
mark, his thumb was a beautiful blue!
They were rough, I remember, incredibly
tough, as strong as a carpenter's vice.
But holding a scared little boy at night,
they seemed to me awfully nice!
The sight of those hands - how impressive it
was in the eyes of his little boy.
Other dads' hands were cleaner, it seemed
(the effects of their office employ).
I gave little thought in my formative years
of the reason for Dad's raspy mitts:
The love in the toil, the dirt and the oil,
rusty plumbing that gave those hands fits!
Thinking back, misty-eyed, and thinking ahead,
when one day my time is done.
The torch of love in my own wrinkled hands
will pass on to the hands of my son.
I don't mind the bruises, the scars here and
there or the hammer that just seemed to slip.
I want most of all when my son takes my hand,
to feel that love lies in the grip.

~ David Kettler

***Happy Father's Day
From the Buffhams!***



Buffham[↑]
Bulletin

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Tim & Pat Buffham



~ Monthly Featured Homes ~

6502 108th Trail N, Brooklyn Park



Beautiful Novak Fleck model, just waiting for you to call it home! Hardwood floors, large kitchen with center island, granite countertops and pantry. Four season porch with vaulted ceilings! Large master bedroom with his/her closets. Upper level laundry! Upgrades galore!

16400 38th Ave. N, Plymouth



Move right into this spectacular and well maintained 2 story home. Wayzata schools, hardwood floors. Large kitchen with granite counters tops and new kitchen hardware. Exceptional lower level finishes including, wet bar, amusement room and game area. Completely redecorated including new carpet, fresh paint in warm pottery barn colors, new window treatments, upgraded lighting. Fabulous landscaping.

If you or anybody you know might be interested in one of these featured homes, please give us a call at 952-945-3109.