



Setting the Stage

Preparing Your Home for Sale in Summit County, Colorado

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Summit Homes Real Estate

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Best Practices for Achieving Your Home's Actual Value

Getting Started

My grandfather used to say, "Take care of the edges, and the middle takes care of itself."

This saying can cover many things in life, including creating the proper curb appeal for your property.

A potential buyer often creates an opinion of a property within moments of first viewing it. We want your potential buyers to feel positive and interested in your home instantly.

Below is a summary of the items which will "Take care of the edges" and ensure your home is appealing to its next owner.

Carpeting and Flooring

Typically, the home's carpeting is professionally cleaned before it's listed, even if it looks "OK". The cleaned carpet makes a difference, and if in doubt, have it cleaned.

Uncarpeted flooring areas, such as tile or hardwood, show best when they're as clean and glossy as possible.

Paint

Having the paint in good condition and uniform throughout the home is important, with neutral colors being a good choice.

If there are dark or off-color walls, if at all possible, paint them a lighter tone, preferably white.

Bright walls, plants, and good lighting can turn a dark room into a warm, hospitable feel.

The Kitchen

Kitchens that are clean, decluttered, and organized show best.

Below is a checklist to prepare the kitchen for the home's sale:

- Oven – cleaned.
- Stovetop – cleaned as well as possible. If needed on older stovetops, replace inserts or coils to help make the stovetop look new again.
- Microwave – cleaned.
- Refrigerator - clean, inside and out. Remove most of the pictures, notes, and stray items that have become placed on the fridge doors – these are a distraction to the potential buyers.
- Garbage Disposal – if it's making any unusual sounds, try to fix it, or replace it. It will show up in the inspection report anyhow, and it's best to have it in good working order.
- Countertops – decluttered as much as possible and cleaned and organized.
- Cabinets - organized and clean. If there are liners on the cabinet shelves and they've become dirty and worn, replace them.
- Garbage Disposal – if it's making any unusual sounds, try to fix it or have it replaced. A noisy garbage disposal will typically show up in the inspection report anyhow, and it's best to have it in good working order.

Any leaks, drips, or slow-moving drains in the kitchen should be repaired. Similar to the garbage disposal, these will also show up in the home's inspection report.

Bathrooms

Bathrooms are essential areas for presenting the property well.

Thoroughly clean the cabinets and drawers and keep only a minimum of items in them to help create a clean and organized feel.

Fixtures and mirrors are bright and shiny to the best of their appearance.

The shower, bathtub, and toilet are also cleaned as best as possible.

Coordinating the bathroom with towels, soaps, and accessories helps to make a nice feel.

Any leaks, drips, or slow-moving drains are repaired, and the toilet is in good working order.

If there are multiple bulbs in the vanity lights, they should all have identical bulbs.

Bedrooms

The bedrooms should be as organized and clutter-free as possible.

Spacious closets are important to buyers. The easiest way to achieve a spacious feel is to eliminate items that have been slowly accumulating and organize the closets.

The best paint color for a bedroom is a light, neutral color, preferably white.

New bedding will make the room fresh, and a minimum of items on the dressers and nightstands will contribute to an airier feeling.

Utility Rooms

A disorganized or dirty utility room creates concern for potential buyers.

In many homes, the utility room is the heart of the home, containing the furnace, water heater, and well equipment. If this utility room isn't organized and sparkling, it makes the home feel like it wasn't maintained, even if it was.

Garage

The more open, organized, and clean the garage is, the better response you'll have.

The cleaning and organizing also include the garage's closets and cabinets, which have accumulated items and junk over the years.

Many potential buyers looking at the garage are examining the garage for more than just the parking area for their vehicle(s). They're also reviewing it to determine the space and storage needed for their toys, equipment, and whatever else they may need it for.

Eliminate, organize, and make the garage and storage closets fresh and orderly so others can imagine their items in your spaces.

The garage tends to get a little beat up with normal wear and tear. An orderly, freshly cleaned, or painted garage will help establish the entire property's overall feel and solidity.

Wintertime is rough on garages in Summit and Park County. The accumulated ice and snow from our vehicles will make a garage appear unkempt in short order. Try your best to keep the garage free of the accumulated water, snow, and dirt that our vehicles bring in.

One last garage element – sometimes, when ATVs, dirtbikes, or snow machines are stored in the garage, one of them may reek of gas. The smell permeates the garage and can be off-putting to potential buyers.

Doors

It's a good practice to have the doors and doorknobs as clean as possible and in good working condition. The knobs and handles are tight and work smoothly, and the doors crisply close.

Having the doors and their hardware in good shape is especially important for the entrance the Realtors and Agents will be using to enter the home. A dirty door and worn doorknobs set a poor tone for the home before it's even entered.

Windows, Casings, and Sills

No one notices clean windows, but we do notice dirty ones.

The sills and casings of the windows and doors are essential too. A good cleaning and an application of orange oil if they're wood can often help restore their luster. Tired, dull casings and sills can make the home feel like it wasn't well maintained – even it was.

Light Fixtures

Light fixtures gradually attract dirt and grime, which we may not notice in the day to day of living in the home. Be sure they're clean and dust-free.

Replace any burnt-out bulbs, and if the fixture has multiple bulbs, the bulbs are all identical.

Furniture

If the house feels even potentially overstuffed with furniture and décor items, eliminate some of these to create a more open and spacious feel to the home. Also, if possible, remove any overly worn furniture.

Closets

Closets and storage spaces are a premium, and decluttered and organized closets help present the home's feel and functionality.

Personal Items

Does the home contain personal pictures? It's recommended to remove most or all of them. The prospective buyer wants to feel and think about the space in relation to their world, and the personal pictures can be a distraction.

It's also a good idea to remove any controversial items such as religious or political items. While the home is being sold, maintain a neutral space.

Keep it Light

Dark homes don't show well, and be sure to have the curtains and shades open for any showings of the home.

Exterior

If possible, the exterior paint or stain is in good shape.

Wintertime in Summit and Park Counties can make it difficult, if not impossible, to rectify the paint or stain until probably May or June. If the home is listed for sale between October and April, it will often have to be sold in the exterior condition.

Yards are a premium, and be sure they're organized and clear of clutter and miscellaneous items.

Wintertime – having the driveway plowed and the sidewalks and decks free of snow are important. It's no fun wading through a snow-covered driveway and slippery sidewalks for either the Realtors or the potential buyers, and decks can be hard to access. Also, the home can feel neglected with the snow piled up, even if it isn't.

Typical Inspection Objection Items

The items below frequently appear in home inspection reports because they're "Health and Safety" items.

The sales transaction and inspection process are smoother if these are taken care of before the home is inspected:

Install GFCIs devices in the kitchen and bathrooms by a licensed electrician.

Carbon Monoxide Alarms – must be placed within 15 feet of every bedroom entrance or any other room or area used for sleeping.

Smoke Detector – Typically, they're in every bedroom, home level, and the laundry room and kitchen.

Not sure where to start with your property?

Please contact me for a complimentary consultation to ensure your home is staged and prepared for a successful sale.

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