

## What are some tips to prepare a home to put on the market?

With the spring market rapidly approaching, now is the time to start thinking about preparing your home for sale. If it is your intention to place your home on the market in order to capitalize on the busiest real estate marketing time of the year, it would be best to act now. Attention to detail in preparing your home pays off in the long run.

Some of the steps that should be taken to prepare your home are:

▶ Decluttering, especially closets and cabinets. Get rid of any



unnecessary items.

- ▶ Remove some unnecessary pieces of furniture to make a room appear larger and "show off" the open floor plan.
- ▶ Freshen paint. This is an in-

expensive way to give any room a lift.

- ▶ Refresh hardwood floors or have the carpeting cleaned.
- ▶ Update kitchen and bathroom hardware.
- ▶ Clean windows and let the natural sunlight in.
- ▶ Eliminate unpleasant odors.

Don't forget about the garage; it is still a part of the home. Declutter and organize the space as much as possible.

On the exterior, and when the weather permits, freshen mulch and landscaping. You want the buyers to feel welcomed as they

come down the driveway. Sweep the front walk and porch. Be sure that the front door and the area surrounding it are clean and welcoming. Add a seasonal wreath.

Try to see your home through the eyes of the prospective buyers. Is there anything that would give them the perception that there would be a significant amount of work that they would have to undertake? If so, take care of that now. The goal is to make the buyers feel comfortable and at home.

When showing your home, be

sure to leave all of the lights on and all of the interior doors open. It is also nice to leave a small bowl of candy with a sign inviting the prospective buyers to enjoy a piece or two.

Real estate activity typically picks up in mid-January and returns to "normal" volume sometime in May. As you can see, small changes that take very little time and effort can make a world of difference.

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