

JUAN LUIS MACEDO | MRG REALTY

PREPARE YOUR HOME FOR SALE GUIDE

Sell Your Home For More



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A QUICK NOTE

YOU ONLY GET ONE SHOT TO MAKE A GREAT FIRST IMPRESSION



When you prepare to place your home on the market for sale, it becomes a product. Just like any product on the shelves at your local store, it has features & benefits, pluses & minuses, and there are other products to compare yours to. To gain an edge in your marketplace you must be priced right and look better than the competition. Sometimes it is difficult to think of your home as a mere product, but it helps to think that way so that you can get top dollar for your property and sell in a reasonable amount of time.

When you sell your home, you are going to have to move. When you move, you are going to have to pack. Most of the principles of staging just mean that you are going to pack up some of your things early. It is a little bit of work, but you are going to have to do it anyway- so let's do it now so that you can get top dollar for your property.

-Juan Luis Macedo

IN 15 SECONDS... YOUR HOME WILL MAKE A FIRST IMPRESSION

People make snap decisions in new situations. This is especially true during a showing of a home they are considering. In preparing your home for the market, we need to put this trait of human nature to work for us. Your home needs to make an impression such that the snap judgments of potential buyers are favorable. During the showing, the buyer will make judgments about your home as they view it through the “lens” formed in that first 15 seconds.

Remember, people judge what they cannot see by what they can see. There is so much that a home offers that isn't immediately visible. Therefore, we need to ensure that everything visible is presented perfectly.

THE 3 PILLARS TO SELLING YOUR HOME FOR MORE MONEY

There are three pillars to selling your home for top dollar. Without all three, your home simply will not sell. These three pillars are price, promotion, and presentation.

- 1. Price:** Pricing your home correctly using current market data.
- 2. Promotion:** Hiring a competent Realtor who uses the latest technology to maximize exposure.
- 3. Presentation:** You only get one chance to make a great first impression. Preparing your home to look its absolute best will determine how much money you make.



PRICE AND CONDITION

IT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO HAVE PRICE AND CONDITION PERFECTED WHEN YOUR PROPERTY FIRST GOES ON THE MARKET.

Implement the suggestions in this booklet as soon as possible. We only get one chance to make a great first impression on the current buyers in the market, and we cannot miss it.

After the initial surge of interest, only new buyers entering the market will see your home. Making a strong initial impression with your property is critical.

Use the Checklist

The blanks in the checklist are for marking items complete.

Fix What Needs Fixing

If you have a list of things that need attention at your home, take care of them upfront. Don't let the buyer wonder if you've maintained your home properly. Address any issues now to avoid headaches later.

We Will Help You

With our decades of experience in marketing and selling homes, we can guide you in making low-cost, high-value enhancements to your property's presentation.

Let's Get Started...

PRESENCE AND STATURE

THE IMPRESSION YOUR HOME MAKES AS BUYERS APPROACH IT IS CRUCIAL. THE WAY YOUR HOME PRESENTS ITSELF FROM THE DRIVEWAY CAN SIGNIFICANTLY INFLUENCE A BUYER'S DECISION TO MAKE AN OFFER. A STRONG, POSITIVE FIRST IMPRESSION CAN BE THE KEY TO SECURING A SALE.



Any agent will tell you that one of the worst things that happens to them in the course of showing property to qualified buyers is to drive up to a home and have them say: "I don't want to look at this house" - before you have even put the car in park. This impression is nearly impossible to overcome.

In preparing your home for sale, we'll start with what the potential buyer will see first. The exterior.

GENERAL EXTERIOR - FRONT YARD

Start by standing in front of your home with this checklist and pen. Jot down anything that leaps out at you. Then, walk around the outside of your home with this checklist in hand.

Front Yard

- 1: Shrubs and landscaping should enhance, not hide, the home. Shrubs should be lowered to, at most, the height of the home.
- 2: As a rule of thumb, all tree limbs should be far enough from the ground so you can walk under them.
- 3: Flowers add color and beauty to the home. Flowerbeds should be clean and look good in all seasons. Ensure all beds have a sharp edge and are free of leaves and debris.
- 4: Keep the lawn mowed and neatly edged. A perfectly mowed lawn does wonders for presence. You may have to mow twice per week during the growing season.
- 5: Determine if you need to aerate the lawn, fertilize, or seed any bare or thin areas. Consider using sod if necessary.
- 6: Arrange for a lawn fertilization company to set up an accelerated program to keep your lawn a deep green color and weed-free.
- 7: Mulch will do wonders to boost the presence and stature of your home at any time of the year. Always make sure all beds are freshly mulched. During the winter, at the very least, front yard beds should be mulched.
- 8: Check your flower beds, lawn areas, and driveway for weeds. It is better to pull them than to use chemicals. Chemicals take a long time to work, and the dead and dying weeds look awful as they turn from yellow to brown. Only use herbicides to maintain these areas once the main weeding has been completed.

GENERAL EXTERIOR - FRONT & OTHER YARD

Front Yard Continued...

9: In the fall, be sure to rake leaves from your lawn and planting beds. This may need to be done every few days.

10: Inspect your property and remove all trash cans, discarded wood scraps, and debris. Re-stack wood piles if necessary and remove all storage containers, children's toys, and other unnecessary items.

11: Ensure windows are spotless, including the frames, sills, and shutters.

12: Consider painting or cleaning any ornamental fences, light posts, and railings.

13: Vacuum and clean the glass on all exterior light fixtures.

14: If you have a covered entryway, add a bench or an attractive set of chairs to help people envision themselves relaxing there. If these items are already in place, ensure they are clean, inviting, and positioned where someone can comfortably sit.

OTHER YARD AREAS

1: Mow, clear, and open up any pathways around your property, including trimming low-hanging branches. It's important to keep all paths clear.

2: Clean up, rake, and check any shoreline or pool areas.

3: Keep the driveway swept. If it's not paved, rake it and add more gravel if needed.

4: Clean gutters and wash or paint the trim if needed.

5: Consider a low-pressure exterior washing.

GENERAL EXTERIOR - FRONT DOOR



- 1: Consider a fresh coat of paint or varnish on the front door. At the very least, clean the door and hardware.
- 2: Ensure your doorbell functions properly and is not cracked or broken.
- 3: Keep your porch swept.
- 4: Have an attractive welcome mat for people to wipe their feet. A second mat inside is important during bad weather.
- 5: Make sure the mailbox is clean; consider using rust-proof paint.
- 6: Verify that house numbers are large and visible. We want to ensure buyers and agents can easily find your home.

INSIDE APPEAL

You see your home with your heart. To get the highest price, you need to appeal to potential buyers who will view your home with a critical eye. If buyers have a choice between two comparable properties at a similar price, they will choose the one in the best condition.

The following checklist will help you give the inside of your house the greatest presence:

1: **Air out the home:** As the homeowner, you might not notice any peculiar odors that visitors may detect. If you do notice any bad odors, find and eliminate the source.

2: **Clean the windows:** Wash all the windows inside and out, including the window sills and the bottoms of the window jambs. Clean the blinds and vacuum the drapes.

3: **Clean the carpets:** If your carpets look dirty or haven't been cleaned in over a year, have them cleaned. Buyers only know what they see, not what it could be. Unless your home is a "fixer-upper," replace badly worn or outdated carpets before putting it on the market. Offering a credit or discount for new carpet is less effective and often costs more in the long run. Choose a light-colored short plush or Berber carpet; Realtor beige is a safe choice.

4: **Polish the floors:** Clean or polish all floors.

5: **Organize storage spaces:** Clean all closets, cabinets, and drawers. Dispose of items you haven't used in the past five years and pack away items you haven't used in the past year. This will also give you a head start on moving.

6: **Depersonalize the space:** Remove family photos and other personal items that might signal to potential buyers that you still live there. Fill any holes and touch up the paint after removing these items.

7: Ensure the closets appear spacious enough to accommodate additional items. Ensure doors do not jam and that nothing falls out when opened. Keep the floor clear (unless items are neatly arranged) and avoid stacking shelves to the ceiling. If necessary, pack away off-season clothing—this will also give you a head start on moving. All coats should be oriented in the same direction.

8: Avoid cluttering rooms with excessive furniture. Opt for displaying only the most aesthetically pleasing pieces and store the rest in the garage or a storage unit.

9: Ensure that fireplace mantels are not overcrowded with decorations. A few strategically placed items, such as a vase or a small floral arrangement, are sufficient.

10: Turn the fireplace into the room's centerpiece. Arrange seating to face the fireplace and, if applicable, remove a prominently placed television, especially in a formal living room.

11: Remove ashes from any fireplace that is not in use.

12: Install light bulbs with the maximum safe wattage and optimal daylight output in all fixtures.

13: Clean all light switches and replace any broken covers.

14: Ensure that any pull-down staircases are sturdy enough for safe use.

15: Consider whether the posters in your children's rooms might offend potential buyers. If so, temporarily remove them.

16: Eliminate all ashtrays. If there is a smoker in the home, ensure all smoking is done outside, not in the garage, while the property is listed.

17: Invest in new, luxurious bedding (comforter, sheets, and accent pillows). These can be taken with you when you move and will enhance the appearance of the bedrooms while the house is on the market.

18: If your home appears slightly outdated, consider replacing elements that may enhance its appeal, such as old wallpaper, light fixtures, and door or cabinetry hardware ect...

INSIDE APPEAL - KITCHEN

The kitchen is arguably the most important section of the home. Clean this area meticulously, as your sale could very well depend on it.



- 1: Clean the oven and keep it pristine; this may mean opting for eating out or ordering takeout more frequently.
- 2: After cleaning the stove, place new drip pans under the burners or cover the old ones with foil. Be sure to remove the foil or clean the stove before showings.
- 3: Clean around the seal of the dishwasher door.
- 4: Examine the kitchen as if you were a health inspector. Pay special attention to the garbage area, cracks, and corners.
- 5: Ensure that all junk, broken, or cracked dishes are discarded. Additionally, clear out disorganized items from kitchen drawers and cabinets.
- 6: Keep all items that can be stored away, especially on countertops.
- 7: Check the cabinet doors and handles for fingerprints and stains.

INSIDE APPEAL - LAUNDRY ROOM



- 1: Store soaps and supplies in cabinets or containers.
- 2: Keep counters and the sink clean and clear.
- 3: Ensure all laundry bins are empty or out of sight.
- 4: Mop or vacuum the floors. If possible, clean the dust and debris from behind the washer and dryer.
- 5: Pay special attention to lighting in this room. Many laundry rooms are excessively dark. Increase the wattage in light fixtures if it is safe to do so.

BONUS:

- 1: Ensure that any pull-down staircases, such as those leading to an attic, are functional. Also, make sure there is a working light in the attic if it is equipped.

INSIDE APPEAL - BATHROOMS



- 1: Repair all leaky faucets.
- 2: Caulk bathtubs, showers, and sinks.
- 3: Choose towels in one or two coordinating colors. Fold clean towels in thirds and place them on racks daily. Purchase new towels if necessary.
- 4: Keep only necessities in shower stalls and tubs; remove all other items.
- 5: Clean or replace shower curtains.
- 6: If necessary, remove the shower door for thorough cleaning.
- 7: Fresh flower arrangements can significantly enhance the look and smell of a bathroom. Avoid using plug-in air fresheners or scented candles.
- 8: If you have pets, ensure their feeding areas are clean and litter boxes are emptied frequently.

INSIDE APPEAL - GARAGE



- 1: Clean and sweep the garage. Consider painting the walls flat white and the floors light gray.
- 2: Store any dangerous tools and neatly arrange the rest. Use containers and toolboxes as necessary.
- 3: Ensure the garage door open and close smoothly with minimum noise.
- 4: Inspect the garage windows and screens. Ensure the windows are clean and free from cracks and holes, and that the screens are without rips or tears. Replace as needed.
- 5: Remove all clutter from the attic, basement, closets, garage, and tool shed. Large, uncluttered storage areas are appealing to buyers. Rent a storage unit and clear out as much as possible to make your house feel spacious and open.

PREPARING FOR YOUR PHOTOGRAPHY APPOINTMENT

To create the optimal listing brochure and virtual tour, we recommend preparing your home before we arrive to take photographs. Both the interior and exterior will be captured from various angles. Every room, including bathrooms, the laundry room, and the garage, will be photographed.



EXTERIOR

- 1: Ensure that the front and rear yards are free of lawn equipment, toys, and debris.
- 2: If possible, arrange for the lawn to be mowed the day before.
- 3: Keep garage doors closed.
- 4: If possible, park cars in the garage or on the street away from the front of the house.

PREPARING FOR YOUR PHOTOGRAPHY APPOINTMENT

EXTERIOR CONTINUED

- 5: Clear the lawn and gardens of leaves and fallen branches.
- 6: Close the lid on the grill and open any deck or patio umbrellas, regardless of the season. Ensure built-in grills are spotless.
- 7: Tidy up any piled-up hoses and lawn decorations ect...
- 8: If you have a pet, please clean up any messes in the yard and remove the pet from the home during the photography session.

INTERIOR

- 9: Turn on all lights to make the home as bright as possible.
- 10: Open all window cover-ups and shades to 45 degrees up.
- 11: Remove all unnecessary items from countertops, coffee tables, dressers, and bathrooms.
- 12: Clear out personal items that might distract buyers, such as family photos, collectibles, stacks of magazines/books, coats, and boots.
- 13: Ensure beds are made and remove unnecessary items from floors and doorways.
- 14: If you have any materials that are not suitable for all age groups, such as photos, reading materials, or videos, please store them away.
- 15: Place pet food dishes and litter boxes out of the camera's view.

SHOWTIME

Your property looks fantastic, and you have a showing scheduled. Here are some quick tips to prepare for it.



1: Open all window curtains and blinds.

2: Open all doors between rooms to create a welcoming feel.

3: Turn on all lights, including lamps.

4: Turn off the television.

5: Look around and clear away clutter, including newspapers and magazines.

6: Ensure kitchen countertops are free of unnecessary items and that any dirty dishes are put away.

7: Make sure beds are made and clothes are picked up.

8: Remember to take out the trash. If you have pets, make sure to set them aside and tend to their food and/or litter area.

9: Check that the bathroom is tidy: toilet lids down, countertops clear, and towels neatly hung, etc.

10: If it's the fireplace season or you have a gas log, light it when the buyers arrive.

SHOWTIME

11: Do not use air fresheners or scented candles. They can cause allergies and give the impression that you are hiding or masking issues.

12: Keep your home well-lit. Buyers may visit at unexpected times, and you want your house to stand out. Keep enough lights on, both inside and outside, until at least 9:00 p.m. every day.

Whenever you leave your house in the morning or during the day, please ensure it is prepared as if it will definitely be shown.

Yes, it can be challenging at times, and might require you to wake up a bit earlier to manage these crucial tasks, but you never know when the right buyers will come to view your home. This way, you will always be ready for them!

Please try to accommodate all showings. Buyers often visit multiple properties during each trip and might find another option before you can reschedule.

If your electric bill doesn't increase while your house is on the market, you might be missing a key selling strategy! Keep the lights on and maintain a comfortable temperature for potential showings.

Keep pets out of sight during showings, preferably outside the house. Many people are uncomfortable or even allergic to animals.

During showings, leave the premises. Take a short break while your home is being shown. Buyers feel pressured when sellers are present, causing them to rush their visit. Allow the buyers to feel at ease, and let the agents do their work.

Agents should leave the home exactly as they found it. They may not know if you have another showing scheduled after their visit. If you prefer certain lights turned off or blinds closed, please leave a note in your home.

If you need the name of a painter, house cleaner, handyman, roofer, electrician, etc., just give us a call. We would be happy to refer you to vendors with whom we have had excellent experiences.

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