



10 Things Every Homeowner Should Do Before Selling Their Home



With Kasia McDaniel

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A Note From the Author, Kasia McDaniel

Home staging has been around for a few years but has grown exponentially with designer TV shows. Now buyers are expecting to see a move-in ready home with all the bells and whistles. But how do you get there from here? In this guide, I will discuss the Top 10 things you should do as a homeowner to get that move-in ready look.

Most items cost very little while other tasks may take longer to complete. Doing all of these steps will help you sell your home faster. If possible, work out a schedule of when items can be completed before listing your home on the market. Some homeowners end up doing these items **after** they realize they are not getting any offers and by then the home has been on the market for awhile.

So pull up your sleeves and dive in. Remember, this is all to get your home sold faster so you can move on with your life into the next chapter.

A handwritten signature in dark grey ink that reads "Kasia".

Kasia McDaniel
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Selling Your Home

As a homeowner, you could go down a rabbit hole of all the things you **could** do to make your home appeal to a buyer. But you need to stay focused on a few things first to make it stand out among the competition. That is why I am sharing the top 10 things you should focus on as a homeowner to present your home in the best possible light.

1. Curb appeal

This is the first thing buyers will see and the most important asset of your home. If the lawn is not cut, weeds overgrown or flower beds are out of control, buyers will think, “If they can’t maintain the outside, what didn’t they maintain inside?”

You don’t want a buyer to speculate and second guess your home. Buyers make their **first impression within 7-10 seconds**. If they like what they see on the outside, then they will want to see what is on the inside.

Think about it when *you* go looking for your new home. You will notice a nicely manicured, green lawn which makes you daydream about watching your kids play in the front yard. This is what we are after. Letting the home buyers imagine themselves living in their dream home.

So don’t leave dead plants in your flower pots. Pay attention to the door (does it need paint?) and make the front yard look more inviting with well-maintained front yard.

2. Fix broken things

Just because you lived with a broken door, cabinet or step, doesn’t mean the next homeowners will want to. You probably don’t even notice it anymore, but you need to fix it now. Don’t let buyers start a “to-do list” because that means their offer price will be less than you want. Replace burnt out light bulbs because again you want the home to look bright. A dark room only makes the room feel smaller and not inviting.

3. Clean inside and out



I was taught at a very young age that whenever you had guests come over, there was a whirlwind of activity to **make the home spotless**. The dishes were put away, the stove was scrubbed, the floors were swept and nothing extra was out on the countertops.

While you may have done this already, when selling a home, you need your home to be **cleaner than clean**. Move the furniture and vacuum underneath it. Wash the windows. Hire a cleaning crew if you have to. Power wash the sidewalk, deck and siding if needed. A little elbow grease can go a long way. If buyers notice how clean everything is, they won't have much to pick on.

4. Declutter and depersonalize

If you lived in a home for any length of time you have accumulated clutter somewhere. Whether it's the kids' artwork on the fridge, or the papers in the dining room, it is clutter. Throw it out or put it away.

This brings me to depersonalizing. What I mean is that collection of trophies needs to be removed. Why? Because we are trying to make the home appeal to everyone. This also means removing all diplomas, certificates, personal photos and religious artifacts.

Take a look around your home. It all shows how **you** live. We need to make the home **appeal to everyone** and not everyone is Christian, a baseball fan, a lawyer and has 2 kids. You want it to be neutral enough so that the new owners can imagine themselves sitting by the fireplace or entertaining friends and not be reminded this is someone else's home.

5. Pack away the big toys

I am mainly talking about the big dollhouses, the riding toys or the built-up Lego kits



sitting on the shelf. Let the kids **pick out a few small toys they absolutely cannot live without** and store them in a basket.

This way when you have last minute showings you can quickly hide the toys in the basket and not racing around the house putting everything away. Plus, once you get to your new home, think of the reunion the kids will have with their old toys. It will be like Christmas all over again!

6. Minimize traces of pets

This can be one of the hardest things to do in a home. There are going to be food and water bowls but try to **put them in a discreet place** like the laundry room and not in the living room. If possible, please try and not lock your pets in a room. A homebuyer will want to see each room and if a pet is locked up in a bathroom, it makes it hard to see everything.

7. Use the room for what it was intended

If you live in a 4 bedroom home, but use one bedroom as an office and another as storage or as a personal gym, turn them back into bedrooms. Buyers will be looking for four bedrooms and will only see two. They will be distracted with the items in the bedrooms because only 10% people can imagine anything else in the room. Make it easy on the buyer and stage them with beds, a nightstand and a lamp.

In the bottom left picture, this was an eat-in kitchen but you could not tell. If buyers are looking for an eat-in kitchen, they would be disappointed and not visit the home at all! The only clue they might get is the chandelier hanging down. Buyers would wonder why a light fixture was hanging down in a home gym and get confused. By placing a small dinette with some wall art and a vase, you easily change the outlook of the room and know exactly what it is supposed to be.



8. Use new towels in your bathroom

Nothing updates a bathroom faster than fluffy, new towels. I've seen raggedy old towels hanging and while I know they will not convey with the house, buyers are going to be distracted. **A bathroom is meant to be an oasis.** Make it look like one. Remove all the clutter on the countertops too.

If you need to update the shower curtain and perhaps tone down the wall color, do that too. You want buyers to notice the beautiful granite counters not the worn out towels or the dirty shower curtain.

9. Neutralize walls colors

Again since you lived in the home, you decorated it to your tastes. Not everyone will love the bright pink bedroom or neon green bathroom. You don't need to change it to boring beige. Gray is considered a neutral color too and can be used in a variety of rooms. If you need pops of color, use it in throw pillows, vases or other accessories in the room.

10. Make the bedroom feel like a hotel room

The bedroom is considered a sanctuary and it should look like one. The bedsheets should be clean and the bed made. Use lots of pillows to help give that hotel feeling. If you don't know many pillows to use, stop by a bedding store and check out their displays. You will notice they use an odd number of pillows, such as 5 or 7. A bedroom should also not be cluttered with books, papers and more. Remove everything from the nightstand and leave a lamp and alarm clock.



Your home will take on a new look when you complete all these steps. Some homeowners wonder why they never did this earlier because it looks like a whole new home! I wish you all the best in selling your home quickly.