

# PREPARING YOUR HOME FOR SALE

## Preparation #1 – Knowledge



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The first step in selling your home is knowing the difference between **value, worth, and price**.

**Value Appraised:** A professional appraiser should be a qualified, disinterested specialist in real estate appraisals, with expertise in your region. His or her job is to determine an estimated value by inspecting the property, reviewing the initial purchase price, and weighing it against recent sales with the same purchase price.

**Worth Comparative Market Analysis:** This type of home valuation is free from real estate professionals and more helpful than automated online offerings. Usually the agent will conduct a tour of the property before providing a complete analysis to you. It will include detailed information on each house sold in your area over the last six months or more, along with the final sale price. It also includes the specifics of all the houses for sale in your area, including the asking price. These homes are your competition! The real estate professional will also answer any questions and help you price your home realistically.

**Price:** Prior discussion showed that there is no calculable certainty in setting the value of a home. There can be wide differences between the seller's assessed price, the asking or listing price (market value), and the price at which the home sells (sale price).

The seller's time, effort, and investment are the most important parts of the process. The seller's willingness to adequately prepare the home for presentation — and willingness to live in that pristine state for the time it takes to sell the property — will greatly affect both the sale period as well as the price at which the home sells.



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## Preparation #2 -Declutter, Depersonalize, and Clean



**2** The more spacious your home appears, the more appealing it will be. Minimize as much as possible. You want the potential buyer to see what your home has to offer, not guess about the potential or possibilities.

### WORK FROM A PLAN

- List each room of the house, noting the clutter in each room, including closets.
- Declutter rooms one at a time, attacking from the smallest project to the greatest.
- Clear out each room, keeping only essential items.
- Donate or discard clothes, decor, toys, and other items no longer used.
- Box up possessions that you want to keep, and put them in storage.
- Keep surfaces clean and free of collected items.

### FOCUS ON HIGH-IMPACT AREAS

The most important rooms in your home are the kitchen and bathrooms. A kitchen can sell a house because it is the heart of a home — the place family and friends gather to enjoy one another's company. Buyers will be turned off by dirt and grime, cooking smells, and trash. Clean all cabinet surfaces as well as under the sink.

Bathrooms are so important to Americans that most homes have at least two or three. As you work toward selling your home, it is imperative that the bathrooms are kept clean and odor-free.

Potential buyers might forgive a less-than-stellar child's room, but a questionable bathroom or kitchen could cost you a sale.

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## Preparation #3 –Create Curb Appeal

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The outside appearance of a property needs to be an invitation to come inside. Potential homebuyers are drawn to welcoming entries and uncluttered yards. They are unlikely to be attracted to a home with dead shrubbery and a weather-worn exterior. It is no stretch to think a buyer will believe the home is neglected on the inside as well.

“We buy ugly houses” is a sign often seen nailed to electric poles. Rehabbers look for ugly houses so that they can pay the least amount possible; homebuyers looking for a deal — not a “basement bargain.” **An unattractive home equals an unattractive price!**

**LOOK AROUND YOUR YARD, AND MAKE A WRITTEN LIST OF EVERYTHING THAT COULD BE IMPROVED:**

- Shrubs trimmed, flower gardens tended, walkways tidy, and beds weeded
- No trash, toys, grill, lawn clippings, branches, or general mess in the yard
- All outside fixtures and components (door and yard lights, garage door, porch rails); functioning properly and looking their best
- Outdoor features, such as patio furniture or the deck, updated with staining or painting

### CREATING A GRAND ENTRANCE

Do more than putting out a welcome mat and potted plants. The doorknob is the first point-of-touch on a home. Security is important to homebuyers. **Replace a worn or loose entry handset. Consider replacing the door handle with a heavy-duty deadbolt and knob combination.** This investment of less than \$100 will make your home more visibly and practically secure, and everyone wants to be secure in their home.

The front door is a focal point; make it impressive. **Freshen it up and add a dash of color. Choose a paint that complements the color of your home.**

