

## 30 TIPS TO PREPARING YOUR HOME FOR SALE

### TIP 1: BOXES, DUCT TAPE & SHARPIE!

So, you are starting to think about putting your home on the market after speaking with your trusted Professional in Real Estate... Let's start at the beginning... get yourself a ready supply of boxes, duct tape and that irreplaceable sharpie! Little by little, start the cleaning and de-cluttering process. Even if it's opening a draw you use everyday and sifting through it. Systematically you will get rid of things you will not want to pack when you are ready to move.

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### TIP 2: KEEP, TRASH OR DONATE

You now have your boxes, tape and handy sharpie at the ready and, as you sift through things you own, really ask yourself "Do I need this?" and "Have I used this in the last year?" If these answers are no then most likely a good opportunity to either THROW AWAY OR GIVE AWAY. It's a pain (and expensive) to store all the stuff you don't really need, so make the call. This purge is the perfect time to get rid of the three extra lamp shades in your attic! Woo.

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### TIP 3: THE ENTRANCE

Possibly one of the most important spaces in your home and first impressions definitely count. Set a tone reflective of your home - always welcoming, spotlessly clean and definitely decluttered.

We will come back to your front door later but for right now, pour a cup of coffee and get creative. Take a few moments to think and plan how you can use this space. Then, roll up your sleeves, pump up the music and get started. This should be a space that makes YOU feel happy and comfortable as soon as you walk through the door. If you feel happy, so will potential buyers. Here's a few tidbits to help you on your way:

- ① Everything should have a place! Not only will this help you manage your day-to-day but it quickly highlights what should (or should not) be in this space.
- ② Hallway closets... do you really need to keep winter Sorel boots and down-padded jackets in your closet in the middle of summer? Pack them away. Keep the closet stocked with only what you use. A tidy closet is a happy mom. Seriously.
- ③ Do you need seating? Personally I use the bottom of the stairs to put on my shoes but if you are looking for something with a little more style and function then there are some very cute benches available (that could double as storage too!).
- ④ Look up! Lighting - so very important! Are you happy with yours?
- ⑤ Mirror mirror on the wall... not only functional but mirrors reflect light thus making your space feel bigger and brighter. Got to love that!

#### **TIP 4: THE KITCHEN - THE OF YOUR HOME**

Okay quick, what space do you gravitate to almost instantly when you come home or go to when visiting other homes...you're right, the kitchen! The kitchen is the first room that potential buyers will crowd to, so you need to make it inviting and pretty. De-clutter and clean your kitchen so you almost don't want to move because of how great it looks. If you're looking to skip a room, this should NOT be it.

CLEAN CLEAN CLEAN... inside ALL the cupboards (and yes, I mean remove everything and wipe them out). Don't cram all your dishes and food back in. The more organized your cupboards/space the more your kitchen conveys how much storage is available... and who doesn't like having lots of storage? Get down and dirty inside the fridge and microwave and make those surfaces sparkle. Turn on the option (that we almost all have but rarely use) for the self-cleaning oven. Don't forget to remove reminders, photos and magnets from your fridge door and buff to a shine.

DE-CLUTTER...remove your blender/George Foreman Grill/Kitchen Aid mixer/toaster/bread machine from the counters - all those daily essentials that you cannot live without (!). You want your counters to be as clear as possible. Consider investing in some fresh flowers and a beautiful bowl to hold a healthy smorgasbord of fruits.

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#### **TIP 5: THE DINING ROOM**

Can you actually see your dining table? Go on, remove the piles of clutter ... kids' homework, work files, bills to pay and any other stuff that somehow found a home on your dining room table. Clean up the hutch and make it pretty . If your dining chairs have seen better days, think about reupholstering, replacing or doing something simple with a couple of throws. Buff your table surface or invest in a new (neutral) tablecloth to hide an old table. No need to set the table...that just looks silly!

Now, stand back and admire your handy work... you have a place that you might actually want to eat in. Imagine that.

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#### **TIP 6: THE LIVING ROOM**

Ready to tackle the living room? Move the furniture and clean underneath and behind. Clean the sofa and chairs ... and yes vacuum underneath the cushions if you dare to see why lies beneath. De-clutter the magazines that have accumulated on your coffee table and hide those wires from your TV/stereo/speakers.

Feel like giving this room a boost? Say goodbye to the cool tones that have ruled for so many years. Shades of chocolate brown, wine, olive green, and yellow ochre are all taking over in homes. Try substituting these warm, natural colours for a neutral on your sofa or walls. Effortlessly update the mood of your room by investing in some new throw pillows and blankets. Consider getting an area rug to bring the room together. Boom. A beautiful space to relax and unwind. If you think so, so will potential buyers.

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#### **TIP 7: THE BATHROOM**

Roll up your sleeves, arm yourself with a toothbrush, scrubber and all manner of cleaning products and make your bathroom glimmer and sparkle. Toss out the almost empty bottles and any old product that withered and died long ago. Reorganize your drawers and storage. Shop smart and think about investing in some new fluffy towels, a bath mat plus a few accessories... think soap dispenser, toothbrush holder, shower curtain. This is the one room room in your home where cleanliness should not be compromised. Buyers love that spa like oasis and that's just what you are going to give them.

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#### **TIP 8: THE BEDROOM**

We all love a beautiful bedroom. A haven of peace and tranquility with soft muted colours and gentle, forgiving, light. It's our quiet sanctuary to escape the craziness of life. It's easy to sink deep into the comfy, oversized pillows and loose ourselves to the moment.

OK, now back to the real world. If you are like many of us, you probably have a bit of work to recreate that oasis of calm. So clean, declutter, hide personal grooming products, remove personal photos, take out oversized furniture (that probably shouldn't have been there in the first place), tidy bookshelves and bedside tables. Perhaps a bit of shopping is needed?? A new duvet cover, throws, pillow shams, loose pillows, bedside lamps will go a long way to capturing your mood.

## **TIP 9: THE CLOSET**

There is something immensely satisfying about throwing open the doors of an organized closet. So what are you waiting for? Pack away seasonal clothes, give away clothes you no longer wear (or that no longer fit). Pick up a bunch of hangers that match and get organizing. Colour coding items works well. Be creative with containers and jars to store smaller items and accessories. Don't forget to tackle your shoes and boots - invest in cute shoe boxes to store and protect some. Think about displaying the more sassy ones.

Buyers will make a silent judgement when they view a messy closet. Don't let them. If you love your closet, buyers will too.

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## **TIP 10: THE BASEMENT**

A finished basement can have HUGE appeal for potential buyers adding invaluable square footage to your home. Unfinished basements offer potential.

What is yours used for? Your basement might already wear too many hats... laundry, storage, home office, gym, TV room, games room, wine cellar, bar, recreation room. It's also likely gravitated towards the catchall for any "extras" that don't have a place in the rest of your home... decorations, kids toys, out-of-season clothes, old furniture, extra food, crates of wine/beer.

Whether finished or unfinished give your basement an identity. Take an honest look at this space and decide how you want to use it. Then start. DECLUTTER (keep, trash, donate), REORGANIZE and CLEAN. Don't forget lighting ... nobody wants to go down into a dark, dingy space and it's definitely worth updating.

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## **TIP 11: PAINT AND TOUCH-UPS**

Want to know a cheap way to update and renew your home? A fresh coat of paint!!! Time to take out the paint in the garage for touch-ups or make an inspired trip to Benjamin Moore. Bold colours are bound to be a turn-off to some Buyers so appeal to the most people possible. Take the time to re-paint that red bedroom and blue bathroom... possibly switching it up to a neutral colour!. Before you paint, remember to fill and smooth the little nicks and old nail holes in your wall. A bit fiddly but ultimately rewarding.

Sticking to light colours such as whites, off whites, light greys etc. will match almost everyone's furniture. You want potential Buyers to visualize their furniture in the space. Light colours also help small rooms look bigger - always love that. Finally, don't forget about baseboards and ceilings... the proverbial cherry on the cake!

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## **TIP 12: REPAIRS YOU'VE BEEN AVOIDING**

Don't let potential buyers get distracted with small stuff that could so easily have been fixed.. a leaky faucet, broken shelf, wobbly hinges, nicks or nail holes in the walls. You know exactly what I am talking about... that list of small repairs and fixes around our home that we never quite get around to. Time to get those jobs done.

Seriously think about hiring a handy man (DM me, we know some good ones who can help) or for the brave - and I assume capable - roll up your sleeves and get fixing. Whilst you are wielding that screwdriver, another easy update is to change door handles and cupboard pulls. Instant impact. Got to love that.

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## **TIP 13: LIGHTING**

Simple fixes. Stop neglecting those burnt out bulbs and start replacing! Lighting has a huge impact on potential buyers when viewing your home. Small windows, dark hallways and poor lighting can often have a negative impact and we definitely do not want that! A mixture of warm-light and daylight bulbs might fight with each other in a room so if possible try and keep the bulb colour temperature the same.

You can't beat natural light so if you have it, show it... throw back curtains, open blinds and let the sun shine through. Need a little extra? It's easy to use ambient (natural and artificial light) combined with task and accent lighting to enhance the mood too.

Feeling the need to update a few out-dated light fixtures or lamps? A quick trip to IKEA, HomeSense or Home Depot are a low-budget easy fix that can have immediate impact.

## **TIP 14: CLEAN CARPETS & RUGS**

If your carpets are brand new... ignore! Otherwise plan to get your carpets and rugs cleaned. Do it yourself or hire a professional. Why? Cleaning will remove all manner of disgusting things that apparently gather on carpets... think organic waste and odour from perspiration, skin cells, pet droppings, urine, stains... what are you waiting for!

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## **TIP 15 SCRUB THOSE FLOORS**

- ① ON YOUR MARK... fill bucket with hot water and product...
- ② GET SET... get on your gloves...
- ③ GO...

Don't forget to get into all the corners and cracks and make this floors shine! If your floors are scratched or hardwood, there are some great products out there to make them look almost-brand-new!

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## **TIP 16 WALLS & DOORS**

Love that little old Magic Eraser... a brilliant gizmo for removing marks and stains from walls and doors! Get rid of the cobwebs that lurk in the corners then arm yourself with a bucket of hot soapy water, a [clean] dishcloth and that handy dandy Magic Eraser and start wiping down doors and walls and watch those mucky handprints, scuff marks and dog splatters fade away.

Does your lovely clean wall need a little pick-me-up? A refreshing coat of paint is a cheap and easy fix or get creative and add a great piece of artwork.

## **TIP 17 CLEANING WINDOWS**

How's the ol' power washer working these days? While the weather is getting better, it's the best time to clean those windows. I know, you probably didn't even think about cleaning your windows, but rain, snow and construction can really make your windows dirty. Don't forget to clean inside and out! Contact me for some, affordable, reliable Window Cleaners, if you need a recommendation.

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## **TIP 18 FRONT DOOR & FRONT YARD**

OK, hand on heart, if you stand on the street looking at your house what do you see? Could it do with a little TLC? It's the first thing a potential buyer sees and you want that impression to be a good one. Mow the lawn, clean the pathway, weed the flower beds and invest in a few seasonal plants. Spruce up your porch. Make sure the lights are working. Perhaps think about updating your mailbox, address numbers and/or welcome mat. Get to work on your front door... clean off scuff marks, touch-up the paintwork (or repaint)... even consider thinking about purchasing a new front door.

Curb appeal  curb appeal  curb appeal 

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## **TIP 19 BACKYARD**

Depending on what time of year you sell, will determine what you can accomplish in your backyard. If you are selling in the Spring/ Summer: clean up the gardens, trim the trees, cut the grass, stain the deck and clean the patio furniture and BBQ. If it's Winter: do your best on all the above noted tasks.

Don't forget to tidy up the garage! Perhaps clean the oil spill from the old Chevy you've been working on and put the soccer/ football away; this will help show how large your garage is (and for all one knows, remind you of this as well).

Try fixing any peeling paint and the sagging roof.

**TIP 20**  
**EXTERIOR SPA DAY**

From the top down ... plan a total spa day for the exterior your home. You might need to hire professionals for some or all of this (but it's worth it!). Contact me if you need a referral. Start with a soft wash applied to your roof to remove algae/moss, clean gutters and downspouts, soft wash all exterior walls and finish by cleaning all exterior windows and doors. Gleaming and beautiful.

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**TIP 21**  
**DRIVEWAYS, PATHS & DECKS**

It's time to add the finishing touch and power-wash the dirt and grime from your paths and driveway. Consider a concrete sealant which will not only improve the aesthetics but protect too.

Don't forget your deck. Inspect, repair, clean and power-wash. If it needs more TLC consider sanding, staining and resealing. It's worth the effort.

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**TIP 22**  
**GET YOUR PAPERWORK TOGETHER**

Now your home is in pristine condition it's time to start pulling together appropriate paperwork. Perhaps start a file folder including things like surveys, property tax receipts, renovation details, permits etc. Basically, anything you may need to make available (or have answers to) when listing your home for sale. Some homeowners might also decide to do a home inspection so there are no hidden surprises... perhaps something to consider after you have talked to your Realtor.

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**TIP 23**  
**TIME TO CONTACT YOUR REALTOR**

Time to contact your Realtor to both evaluate your home and guide you through the next stages. We hope you reach out to us. We would love to represent you ❤️

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**TIP 24**  
**FIGURE OUT YOUR KEYS**

Your Realtor will need a set of keys to gain access to your home - initially for the photographs, video and floor plans and later to show prospective buyers.

Like many of us you likely have a menagerie of keys but only a handful that actually fit the locks in your home. It's a perfect time to start sorting. Go through your keys, figure out what locks they open and how many of each key you have. Perhaps even label them. An exercise that is practical and weirdly satisfying.

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**TIP 25**  
**TIME TO HIDE AWAY YOUR PERSONAL POSSESSIONS**

Ouch, I know it hurts to read that. You want your house or condo to appeal to as many Buyers as possible, and that will only happen if potential Buyers and visualize their furniture in the space. Time to hide the family photos, the collections and the souvenirs from your trip to Mexico. Walk through every room in your house and pretend you are a Buyer. If what you see helps people get to know you as you, remove it.

**TIP 26**  
**MAKE A PLAN... KIDS AND PETS**

Make a plan for kids! It's not so much getting the kids out of the house (although please do for showings!) but quickly cleaning up the chaos that can often be left in their wake... that endless, unforgiving trail of toys, screwed up socks, dirty diapers, snacks. Figure out ahead of time what a quick clean-up is going to look like when you have showings scheduled.

Make a plan for pets! With all the love in the world it's probably best not to have your pets in the house when showing to prospective buyers... or at least not the four legged variety! Figure out ahead of time your options ... doggie daycare, a visit to the grandparents, extra walks or an impromptu car ride.

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**TIP 27**  
**THE FINAL CLEAN ✨**

While you can do this final step yourself it's worth bringing in a team of professional cleaners who will make sure to clean all the spots easily forgotten about... the baseboards, inside the lights, the fridge, etc. This is a very important step!

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**TIP 28**  
**MAKE YOUR HOME SMELL GOOD**

Take a deep breath through your nose. What does your house smell like? Make sure pillows have been laundered, beds and soft furnishings cleaned (especially if you have a dog!). Make sure litter boxes are cleaned twice a day and can be discreetly hidden away for showings. Tuck away sports bags...nobody needs to share the odour of a two-day old stale hockey bag.

The smell of a clean house, free of strong odours, can be attractive but a few drops of your favourite aromatic oil in a diffuser can be lovely too. Don't go over the top!!!!

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**TIP 29**  
**STAGING DAY**

What a fun daYAY! This is usually the day, if you are working with a professional stager that they will come and stage your house. Expect a lot of re-arrangement, the addition and elimination of furniture and use of accessories and colours. Pro-staging has been proven to help homes sell faster and most of the time for more money. Remember, you are dealing with a professional that will change your space, making it feel and look larger and be more functional. Your space can be transformed so efficiently that you may not even want to move anymore.

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**TIP 30**  
**SCHEDULE PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHS & VIDEO**

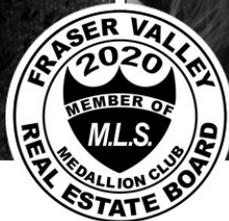
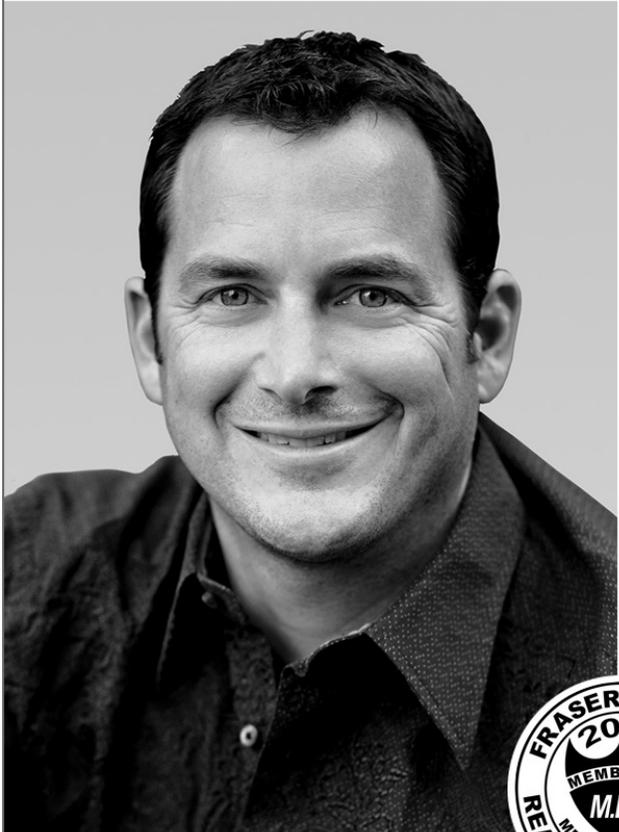
Your home is decluttered, repaired, cleaned and looking so good. Now is the time to give your Realtor the go ahead to schedule a photo shoot. We work with professional photographers to ensure premium quality, high resolution photographs and video of your property. Photographs may include daytime, twilight and aerial drone photography. Weather, time of day and even tidal forecasts can figure into booking exactly the right time to capture the essence of your home. A picture speaks a thousand words. Let yours shine!

*AND DONE!!! You've worked hard, and now it's time to step back and admire your work. How does it look? When you have potential Buyers walking through your home during private showings and open houses do you see anything that might distract or turn off a Buyer?*

*We strongly recommend that anything that is of value is put in a safe spot. This means putting away the IPAD in the living room, and the pair of earrings you took off on your side table. Take one final walk through almost daily if you can scanning all the rooms and adjust as necessary.*

*Now...Don't Touch Anything. Back away slowly... et voila! Let's get to selling!*

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