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## **Tips For Giving Your House A Decorator's Touch When Selling**

Today's average homebuyers are demanding more than ever in the houses they are buying. Common requests are kids' own rooms, playrooms, hobby rooms, home offices, larger laundry rooms, kitchens with all the bells and whistles, and luxurious master bedrooms. And then there's the obsession with improving and decorating, fueled by a string of TV shows like Trading Spaces and the swelling number of decorating and design magazines.

With perfectly decorated rooms sealed with designers' touches increasingly in the back of our minds, would-be buyers could be more impressed when the houses they are viewing look like -- or close to -- the houses they see in magazines and home decorating shows.

Realtors tell you all about curb appeal and staging the house. But sometimes it can help to go a step farther and invest a few extra dollars in really making your house stand out. But first one word of caution: Because everyone's tastes are so different, don't do anything extreme. Try to stay mainstream and conservative.

### **Curb Appeal**

As with any style house, curb appeal -- the first impression -- is crucial. Even if your house is on the small side, if it's kept up well, boasting fresh paint, a manicured lawn and professional-looking landscaping, you'll be off to a great start. Keep cars out of the driveway, make sure all toys and yard tools are out of view, clean the windows and spruce up the front door if you need to by painting, adding a new handle and bringing a homey feel by adding a seasonal wreath. If you live in a snowy climate, make sure the walkways are clear.

### **The Entryway**

The entryway gives your visitors a feel for what the rest of the house is like. Make it warm and welcome by providing a smattering of accessories -- but don't overdo it. A small console table is a good idea if you have space. Place a lamp on the table and hang a picture over the table. An area rug adds warmth and texture. Add a good-sized plant in an attractive planter and you're set.

### **The Kitchen**

The kitchen is often where deals are made or lost. Today's kitchen is the heart of the home, where families cook, entertain, pay bills, do homework, and just hang out. That's why it's imperative that your kitchen looks its best.

For starters, clear all the clutter from the countertops. A few small appliances is okay, but hide those stacks of bills, the to-be-recycled newspapers and the extra items you have taking up the counter space.

Take stock of the condition of the walls. If they look grungy to you, they'll definitely look questionable to a would-be homebuyer. A fresh coat of paint is inexpensive and can brighten up the room.

Other ways to spruce up the kitchen without going through any major remodeling include:

- Replacing your faucet. There are plenty of styles and finishes on the market, from sleek and contemporary to warm and rustic.
- Changing out your hardware. Replacing the hardware on your cabinetry is fairly inexpensive and can totally change the look of the kitchen.
- Lighting it up. Strategically placed light always makes a room more inviting. In the kitchen, recessed downlights assure even illumination. Install them over the stove and sink areas to create adequate task lighting for cooking and cleaning. And a beautiful pendant over the kitchen table is functional and appealing to the eye.
- Adding some artwork to liven up the walls.
- Treating your windows. Window treatments create instant character.

### **Living and Family Rooms**

One of the most important things you can do to make your living and family rooms look great is have your furniture placed as a decorator would. That means making sure furniture is sized for the room. If you have a small room, then you'll need smaller-sized furniture. And don't try to put too much furniture in a room.

Choose your focal point, whether it's a fireplace, TV, or piece of art. Arrange your furniture around the centerpiece. Try to stay away from putting sofas against walls. And try to place your furniture pieces close enough together so that you have a warm, intimate feeling as you and your family or guests are seated. Add pillows and throw blankets to accessorize.

If your room allows, have two separate seating areas. Try to incorporate console tables, art, sconces, plants, lamps, and rugs into the room.

And if you have a small room, strategically placed mirrors can help make a room appear larger. You should also focus on accessories that are long and narrow. Long, thin lamps and plants can help you achieve a sense of height versus accessories that take up a lot of horizontal space.

This Article Courtesy of Realty Times Inc.

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Warmest Regards,

*Sue and Michele, Realtors*

*Troop Real Estate*

E-mail: [WellsEdelstein@WellsEdelstein.com](mailto:WellsEdelstein@WellsEdelstein.com)

Website: WellsEdelstein.com

Sue: 805 390-7179      DRE# 01445374

Michele: 805 796-6618      DRE# 01441796

