Thinking About Selling? Start Here.

9 Things You Can Start Doing Now - Before the For Sale Sign Goes Up

Before you start changing your house, take a little time to really look at it. These nine steps can help you get organized, see your home with fresh eyes and start making a plan - without assuming you need to tackle every project at once.

1. Remember why you bought your home.

Before you start thinking about everything you want to change, think back to when you first saw your home. **What made you want to buy it? What did you love about it then, and what do you still love about it today?**

Write those things down.

Maybe it was the **backyard, the natural light, or the kitchen.**

Don't overthink it. You're starting to identify the features that made your home special to you - and that may also help us recognize what could make it stand out to its next buyer.

2. Gather your house paperwork.

Start locating the important information about your home: surveys, permits, warranties, well and septic records, HOA documents if applicable, and receipts or paperwork for major repairs and improvements.

Don't worry about making it perfect. The goal is simply to start getting the history of your home together in one place.

3. Take pictures of your house - then really look at them.

Take photos of **every room**, plus the front, back and exterior areas of your property. Don't clean everything up first. Take the pictures as the house looks right now.

Then look at the photos rather than the actual rooms. It's surprising how differently we see our homes in a photograph.

For each space, write down:
What stands out in a good way?
What stands out in a negative way?
What are you unsure about?

Maybe you suddenly notice how great the windows look - or that your eye goes straight to a worn rug or crowded bookshelf. **Don't fix anything yet. Just make notes.**

4. Make a repair/project list - but don't start spending yet.

Add the things you already know need attention, **like maintenance items**, along with anything you noticed during your photo exercise.

Some things may be worth addressing before selling. Others may not make enough difference to justify the time or expense.

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5. Start with the spaces you don't use every day.

The garage, basement, attic, storage rooms and overstuffed closets are good places to begin.

Sort things into **keep, sell, donate and discard**. These spaces can take much longer to deal with than people expect.

6. Start dealing with the things you aren't taking with you.

Furniture, lawn equipment, tools, sporting equipment and other larger belongings can take time to sell, donate or give away.

You don't have to get rid of everything immediately, but start making decisions.

7. Pack what you can - but don't strip the house bare.

Seasonal decorations, collections, extra dishes and things you rarely use can be packed and clearly labeled.

But there's a difference between editing a home and emptying it. You still want the house to have some warmth and life while you're living there and eventually preparing it for buyers.

8. Start thinking about your timeline and your next move.

Are you thinking about selling in three months, six months or next year? Do you know where you're going? Will you need to buy another home? Do you need the proceeds from this house to make that move?

You don't need all the answers yet. Write down what you **do** know - and what you still need to figure out.

9. Before you make the expensive decisions, let's look at the house together.

Before repainting the entire house, replacing flooring, remodeling a kitchen or tackling another major project because you think you *have* to do it before selling, get another set of eyes on the property.

One house may benefit from painting. Another may need something completely different.

The goal isn't to make your house perfect. It's to figure out **what will actually matter when it's time to sell.**

Not sure what your house needs before you sell?

That's exactly where I can help. I'll walk through your home with you and help identify what I would address, what I would leave alone, and where I wouldn't spend the money - so you can start with a plan instead of a long list of projects.

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