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TIPS FOR SELLING YOUR HOME IN THE FALL AND WINTER

You can do a lot to help your home feel welcoming and bright to a potential buyer. What's important to remember when you're looking to sell during the cold weather months? Keep on reading to get a list of tips, including pro recommendations that'll put a new perspective on the buyer experience.

We share how to make your home cozy, welcoming, and salable.

I'm not going to sugarcoat it — buying and selling spikes in spring and summer. However, it isn't impossible to sell your home during fall and winter. You can do a lot to help your home feel welcoming and bright to a potential buyer. What's important to remember when you're looking to sell during the cold weather months? Keep on reading to get a list of tips, including pro recommendations that'll put a new perspective on the buyer experience.

SHOW BUYERS WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE DURING THE SPRING AND SUMMER

Showcase what your home has to offer by giving potential buyers the opportunity to see the home during other months of the year. Michelle Caracci Corsi from Howard Hanna Real Estate Services suggests you "include a photo album or digital slideshow of the exterior in the summer, spring, and fall. Highlight garden beds, and patios or decks with furniture so the buyer can envision the home year-round.

"She also adds, "Consider using a realtor who can provide a digital 3-D tour that shows the home in the daylight. Folks who work during the day usually tour homes in the evening when it's dark. Less natural light makes the home feel smaller, and it's hard to picture the outdoor space."

GET 5-STAR CURB APPEAL TO ENHANCE THE OUTDOOR EXPERIENCE

Leaf- and snow-covered sidewalks can make a perfectly nice home look sloppy and poorly maintained. Use a leaf blower daily to keep leaves, branches, and outdoor dirt off the walkways, and do your best to keep the yard clear of leaves, too.

Add fresh mulch to garden beds so they look their best.

Rinse loose dirt from your home's siding one last time before the temperature drops.

"Another challenge for buyers in the fall and winter is that everything usually looks dull and drab," adds Michelle. The lot lines are not as visible covered with snow and leaves, so it's difficult to get a sense of the outdoor space unless it is clearly defined. Define property boundaries with brightly-colored flags tied to stakes, and place them at the four corners of your property.

If it's snowy, keep the deck shoveled and salted so buyers can walk outside to experience the space. If the climate allows, keep outdoor furniture on your patio so they can get a better feel for the outdoor living space.



LET THERE BE LIGHT

Retract blinds, and widen curtains, so there's minimal window coverage. The windows will look bigger, and it'll encourage daylight to flow into your space.

Experiment with your lightbulbs to find the most flattering hues for your space. A bathroom looks great with daylight bulbs (5,000-6,500K) and living spaces, such as bedrooms and living rooms, look best with soft white bulbs (2,700K). In general, your home's design and color palette will play a part in what looks most appealing. Go for cozy and bright. If you're upgrading bulbs in hard-wired fixtures, consider going all LED. Let the buyers know you're leaving the bulbs for them.

Use hardwoods to your advantage. In my experience, nothing shows off a home better than daylight bouncing off beautiful hardwood floors. Remove unnecessary area rugs to maximize the effect.

Bring in extra floor lamps. Add them to rooms with dark corners to create a warmer setting.

Consider investing in landscape lighting, since visitors touring during the late afternoon or evening will have a much different experience than visitors who tour a home earlier in the day. Outdoor lighting accessories will amplify your home's appeal, so consider solar lights lining a walkway, motion-activated spotlights, and landscape spotlights.

Remove screens from the windows to allow more natural light to flow into your home, and clean the windows. Be sure to let potential buyers know you will replace the screens.

SPEND TIME ON BASIC HOME MAINTENANCE

Check window seals and doors for drafts. A drafty window is most noticeable on a cold day, so take extra efforts to weather seal and insulate around windows and doors.

Have the furnace or boiler maintained prior to putting your house on the market. On a cold day, buyers will make sure the systems are in good shape. Be a step ahead by having your maintenance team leave a sticker or magnet marking the date of the last inspection to add peace of mind for buyers.

Swap out the HVAC filter to help reduce any odors or fall allergens in the home.

Check for spiderwebs – everywhere.



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DEEP CLEAN: A FEW PLACES YOU MIGHT FORGET ABOUT

Clean inside the cabinet beneath your sink. It's likely they'll glance at the plumbing, and they'll notice if the plumbing and inside of the cabinet are dirty. Clean it well, consider adding a new piece of shelf liner on the bottom, and install slide out drawers or extra utility that'll be appealing.

Make shower heads look like new.

Dust ceiling fan blades and the inside of your dishwasher and washing machine. Don't forget all the nooks and crannies in the kitchen.



Paint? Maybe.

Contrary to many pro recommendations, I'm not a huge fan of painting walls neutral colors to make a home more salable. A light-colored interior will reflect more light than a dark one, and that may make all the difference on a gloomy, cool day. If the walls look dingy or dated, refresh the look of a room with a \$25 can of satin or eggshell.

Embrace Hygge

That's to say, make your home as cozy and inviting as possible, so potential buyers can easily envision it as a friendly, welcoming space for family and friends.

Accessorize the main living area with neutral-but-coordinated throws and pillows and unscented candles for ambiance.

Make an impression with your gas or electric fireplace. Leave a note with the remote, prompting the potential buyers to turn it on, so they can enjoy the ambiance. Include a reference sheet that cites the maintenance schedule you followed and the increased utility costs you experience in running the fireplace.

Remove the TV in the living room if you can live without it. Yep, big black screens are an eyesore, especially if they're blocking light or detracting from a beautiful mantel.

Take another look at how the furniture is positioned now that the TV isn't there. Consider rearranging to maximize the functionality of the space. It might not be how your family used the room, but it'll present really well.

BE SENSITIVE TO SEASONAL DECOR

Both in your listing photos and in real life during showings, keep the seasonal decor at bay while you're trying to sell. No one expects a home to completely lack holiday decorations during these months, but simplicity is appealing. Opt for modest, neutral accessories — think white string lights or a Christmas tree that truly flatters the space.

Do you have vaulted ceilings? You're green-lighted to get a big tree, so buyers can appreciate the spectacular height of the ceilings. One snowy weather accessory that wins us over? A classic snowman in the front yard.

Resist the urge to add too many scents to your home – it'll look like you're hiding something. An unlit pine candle in a bathroom will appeal to the senses.

Have holiday music playing low on a radio during December. During an open house, offer freshly-baked cookies, pumpkin muffins, or hot cocoa for visitors.

MAINTAIN CLEANLINESS BETWEEN SHOWINGS

Dry mop to remove dust and dirt that you track in every evening. Vacuum area rugs and entryway mats daily, and keep toys at bay.

Keep a focus on curb appeal. Continue to sweep or snowplow sidewalks, driveways, decks, and patio spaces.

By Emily Fazio

Source:

<https://www.hgtv.com/lifestyle/real-estate/tips-selling-home-during-fall-winter>



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