

Selling Your Home? Get the Edge with These 8 Tips

by Lisa Turner



In today's housing market, you have to do more than ever before to attract a buyer. The following 8 tips will give you the edge on the competition and help you stand out from the crowd without spending a lot of money.

Selling your home? In today's housing market, it's an uphill battle. Your agent has told you that it is an arduous process and you will have to jump through hoops, lower your expectations, and not anticipate a quick sale. This is all true! Your agent is your best friend at this point, as they have seen nearly everything over their careers, and especially in the last several years. As difficult as the foregoing sounds, there are some things you can do to help your home sell faster, and get the edge on the competition, without laying out a lot of cash.

In my experience as a home inspector, I have seen the issues and problems that home sellers face. Taking a broad perspective on the matter, I assembled 8 tips to help you sell your home faster. These ideas come from experience gleaned from home contractors and renovators, home stagers and decorators, from home systems trades people, home inspectors, and successful sellers. Most of these tips are simple but most sellers do not follow them! Be disciplined and follow every single tip here and your home WILL SELL FASTER and at a HIGHER PRICE. Did your agent give you this article? Good! You can skip Tip #1.



1. **Get the Best Agent.** Just as you would do your research on contractors to fix your home or find a new doctor, spend some time finding a good real estate professional. Have they been selling homes recently? The current economic climate has seen many real estate offices go out of business, so the ones who are selling now are REALLY good. Interview the top 3 selling agents in your area and then go with the one you can communicate best with. Then follow their advice to a T.

2. **The Front Yard.** Some agents call this "curb appeal". It's true: what your home looks like on the outside is a telltale sign of what's on the



inside. The outside tells the prospective buyer how detailed you are, how thoughtful you are, and how well maintained your home is.

Trim overgrown vegetation. Is there vegetation growing around the windows, on the roof, or on the walls of the home? Trim them back. Mow the lawn more often. Power wash the driveway and paint it. Put down new mulch. Now go outside and stand in the street. How does it look? You'll know what still needs attention.

3. **The Entrance.** Power wash and paint. Replace the door hardware. Put down a new welcome mat.

4. **Light.** When your buyers come in, make sure there is plenty of light. You can't have enough light. All agents know this and will turn on every light in the home while you cringe thinking about your electric bill. They know what they are doing. Replace low wattage bulbs with high wattage bulbs throughout your home. This is not the time to be saving energy.

5. **Smells.** There is nothing worse than buyers entering your home and smelling something musty. Equally as bad is the smell of strawberry

spray freshener or whatever else you bought at the store to make your home air smell better. Buyers are distrustful when they smell air freshener. Remember too that if you are living in the home, you are no longer smelling the air freshener, and buyers may find it overpowering. Yes this is simple, but it is true. Bake cookies? Great idea. Or heat cookie dough in the microwave. Or turn on a stove burner for 10 seconds and put a drop of vanilla extract on it. A wonderful fresh baked cookies fragrance will fill your house.



6. **Windows.** Clean your windows inside and out. Some people advise updating your window treatments, but I wouldn't worry about that. Your buyers will have their own ideas. Clean windows make everything sparkle and they send a subtle and subconscious message to buyers - "well maintained".

7. **Pre-Inspect.** As a home inspector, I find that 70% of the time the home seller thinks they know everything that's not right with the home, but 90% of the time they are very surprised when the buyer hires a home



inspector to inspect the home and the inspector has an extensive list of repairs. This surprise drives mixed emotions at exactly the time you need to be logical: close to the closing. Often the buyer asks for concessions, money off the deal, and repairs, leaving you, the seller, in a difficult spot. *The money spent on an inspection before your buyers set foot in your home will pay off at closing.*

8. **Market.** Extraordinary times call for out of the box selling techniques to attract the buyer who will fall in love with your home. Advertising is fine, but everyone else does it. Jump ahead of the crowd with your own internet web site featuring YOUR HOME. Costly? Not at all. A

hosting package with a domain name is \$124 a year from the top web firms. Included in this package is a do-it-yourself web site designer. Not handy on the web? Get your child or your neighborhood geek person to put it up for a few dollars.


Next, do a You Tube video. Be the star yourself, or ask someone in your family to help you; do one together! A 45 second spot with some creativity will generate visitors to your web site and then to your home!



Follow these tips and sell your home faster, and for more money. I have done it myself, and the research from other sellers following these tips shows that it works. Peace of mind and a smooth transaction will follow, and you'll be on your way to your next dream home knowing you did everything right. And on top of that you are now an internet video star!

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About the author: Lisa Turner is the owner of Your Inspection Expert, Inc., in Hayesville, North Carolina, specializing in home inspections and radon testing for home buyers, home sellers, and homeowners wanting to maintain their homes in peak condition. Your Inspection Expert serves western North Carolina and northern Georgia. Lisa can be reached at 800-738-8781.

 <p>Your InspectionExpert Your Home Peace of Mind</p>	<p>Your Inspection Expert, Inc. 559 Broken Arrow Trail, Suite 1 Hayesville, NC 28904 828-557-3306 800-738-8781 www.YourInspectionExpert.com 4/30/2010</p>
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