

450 Ideas ... To Help Your Home Sell **FASTER!**



Compliments Of:

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The Worst Case Scenario

When you put your home up for sale, it is hard to objectively look at your surroundings. Instead of the window that needs caulking, you see the view of the tree where your first swing hung. Instead of a refrigerator plastered with artwork, you see a visual progression of your child's school years. However, it is important to remember that prospective buyers do not share your memories. They will see what is directly in front of them, minus the nostalgia!

To emphasize this point, I have created "The Worst Case Scenario". Come and view the home of the Blank Family. Who think it is absolutely perfect.

#22 Maple Avenue



#22 Maple Avenue has come on the market. The Blank Family, who currently own the home, have decided to move and today they are having their first Real Estate "showing". The Blanks are feeling pretty confident that their house will be sold by the end of the week.

The potential buyers, Mr. & Mrs. Hopeful, arrive on time and maneuver their car into the vacant spot on the driveway. Once out of his vehicle, the first thing Mr. Hopeful notices is a big oil stain on the pavement. He suspects that there could be more underneath the Blank's rusty family sedan parked beside him, as well as on the floor of their garage.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Hopeful has stepped over a bike that is lying exactly where a young Blank hurled it, and she is now carefully making her way along the broken bits of flagstone leading up to the house. Is that dog debris in the grass?

Household Hints

(These are hints only. It is the responsibility of the User to make his/her own assessment regarding the suitability of the information)

Stale Carpet Odor

Put baking soda into a flour sifter and then sprinkle the carpet with the soda. Leave overnight and then vacuum.

Cleaning Mini-Blinds

Place a clean sock on each hand. Dip your one hand into warm, soapy water and then rub each blind slat until the whole surface is clean. Dry the blind slats with the dry sock on the other hand.

Curtains and Curtain Rods

Before putting curtains on a metal curtain rod, place the end of the rod inside a plastic freezer bag. This prevents the curtains from snagging on the metal when you begin slipping them onto the rod.

Refrigerator Odors

Pour a little pure vanilla on a cotton ball and sit it in a small saucer. Place the saucer in the refrigerator to remove odors.



Mr. Hopeful pauses for a moment to get an overall view of the front of the Blank's home. What does he notice? Let's see ... a couple of shingles missing, a rather sagging gutter, chipped paint here and there and Christmas lights (even though it is May).

He joins his wife on the porch and Mrs. Hopeful pushes a doorbell that hasn't worked properly for the past six years. She has plenty of time to notice the flowers in the pots, which look as though they expired the previous summer. Also, the outdoor light fixture is missing a light bulb.

After a moment, they are welcomed into a dark and depressing entry hall. What is that smell? Dogs? Mould? Something rotting in the kitchen?

Mr. Hopeful opens the hall closet. Out tumbles two golf clubs, a basketball, a pile of old newspapers, several dog leashes, a single running shoe and a game of scrabble. Every coat and jacket owned by the Blank Family has been crammed onto hangers, and whatever didn't make it to a hanger has taken up residence on the floor.

Next, they enter the living room. Despite the possibilities, Mr. Hopeful is distracted by the light switch that doesn't turn on the ceiling light and the remnants of a late night snack on the coffee table (plates of crumbs and a couple of empty pop bottles).

Mrs. Hopeful is trying to figure out how to open the curtains to see the view. They seem to be permanently shut. After a struggle, she finally manages to pull them back and discovers dirty windows, and a couple of interesting cobwebs.

There are numerous magazines stacked around the room. There is also a fireplace, but it looks less than appealing with a substantial build-up of ashes and one burnt log half-hanging off the grate. An area rug has a dark and unappealing stain.

Further down the dim hall is a small powder room. It seems quite clean and tidy. Perhaps the Blanks have forgotten that it's there.

Setting The Stage

What Mr. & Mrs. Blank failed to realize is that potential buyers connect (or disconnect) emotionally with a house. The feelings that are generated when they first see your home from the curb, and then when they step across the threshold ... those “first impressions” are extremely powerful.

It is the seller’s goal to create an atmosphere so inviting that buyers are already imagining where to place their furniture, before they have even completed the tour of the property. “The bathroom is so sweet – it doesn’t matter that it is only the size of a closet!” “The kitchen is so warm and inviting – I’m sure we can survive without a dishwasher.” “I know we can squeeze our bedroom furniture under these sloping ceilings – after all, that’s part of the home’s history.”

Remember being captivated by professionally decorated model homes? Each room was intentionally laid out like a stage setting. Nothing seemed out of place. Everything was carefully chosen to pull you in and satisfy your senses. They succeeded to fire your imagination and make you dream about how pleasant it would be to actually live, entertain, and raise a family within those walls.

With this in mind ... let us take another look at #22 Maple Avenue.



#22 Maple Avenue Revisited

After months without a single offer, Mr. & Mrs. Blank decide to take action. They diligently repair, clean and create little “finishing touches” in each room.

Meanwhile, Mr. & Mrs. Hopeful still haven’t found the perfect house. They drive once more past #22 Maple

Hardware Stores

www.acehardware.com
www.adirondackhardware.com
www.aubuchon.com
www.builderdepot.com
www.canadiantire.ca
www.cornerhardware.com
www.craftsman.com
www.designersplumbing.com
www.doitbest.com
www.ebuildingsource.com
www.hardwareonlinestore.com
www.historicalbricks.com
www.homecenter.com
www.homedepot.com
www.homehardware.com
www.lowes.com
www.mcguckin.com
www.paxtonhardware.com
www.restorationhardware.com
www.smarthome.com
www.thehardwarecity.com
www.toolsandmore.us
www.tools-plus.com
www.truevalue.com
www.vandykes.com



Avenue and think they are hallucinating on too many cups of coffee. Immediately they arrange to see the Blank's home again!!

The Hopefuls return and this time do not have any trouble parking in the driveway ... which is empty of all vehicles and looking very spacious. Once out of his car, Mr. Hopeful realizes that the oil blob is gone and there doesn't appear to be any additional drips anywhere.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Hopeful is admiring the new flagstones along the walkway, the trimmed shrubs, and the charming little garden of delicate white flowers under the shade tree. Wood chips have been added around the base of the other trees on the front lawn. The grass has been recently mowed, a garden hose is neatly coiled, the bike is out of sight ... and all dog debris has been collected and removed.

Mr. Hopeful pauses for a moment to get another overall view of the front of the Blank's home. The shingles are replaced, the gutters repaired, and the Christmas lights are down. Bright blue shutters have been added, and there are window boxes brimming with red geraniums and green ivy. He joins his wife on the porch.

The pots of dead flowers have been replaced by a spotless white swing glider filled with yellow and white striped cushions. There is a shiny brass doorknocker, a bulb in the porch light, and the front door has been painted the same bright blue as the shutters. The Hopefuls **feel a sense of excitement** as they hear the doorbell chime.

After a moment, they are welcomed into a bright and cheery entry hall.

The Hopefuls notice several immediate changes. There is a polished mahogany table featuring an arrangement of white, dried hydrangeas – and a colorful little basket to hold the day's mail. The walls have been painted a cream color to give the entry a feeling of light, and the Blanks have hung a tall mirror at the far end to give the illusion of depth to the small space.

Getting To Work

Unfortunately, very few homes are already picture perfect when the owners make the decision to sell. Most require anywhere from minor repairs to major renovations. How little or how much work you wish to put into your house is entirely up to you. However, remember the more attractive your home, the more appealing it will be to prospective buyers. And the more appealing ... the faster the sale (and the higher the offer!!).

To assist you with this important element of house selling, I have made up individual charts for each of the areas normally found in and around a home. If you have additional areas, such as a library or home office, most of the ideas listed will also apply to these locations as well. At the end of each chart are blank charts for you to add in your own special requirements. You will also find a column for checking off work that still needs to be done and another column for noting which work has been completed.

Finally, there is a special “Don’t Panic ... Buyer’s Are Coming” chart. This is a helpful reminder list of things to do just prior to showing your home to prospects.



The Exterior . . .

Preliminary Work

- Clear away any litter between the street curb and your front door
- Remove any oil stains from the driveway
- Repair any cracks or broken bits of driveway paving
- Clear bikes and toys from the driveway. (When showing the house, keep driveway free of cars)
- Repair any broken bits of walkway
- Remove weeds and grass growing in walkway
- Trim back shrubs protruding into the walkway
- Trim the shrubs away from house windows (for security and to make interior rooms brighter)
- Weed the flower beds
- Prune dead branches and pull back anything creeping across the house
- Cut the grass
- (Autumn) Rake the leaves
- (Winter) Shovel snow. Salt or sand icy patches
- Dispose of any pet debris
- Power wash vinyl siding, where necessary
- If house is wood, scrape and paint, where required
- Clean out the gutters
- Repair or replace gutters and downspouts
- Repair any parts of the roof which could be leaking

TO DO **DONE**

The Exterior ...

Preliminary Work (continued)

	TO DO	DONE
• Replace any missing or loose roof shingles & flashing		
• Repair any house foundation cracks		
• Clean all windows, including those in the garage		
• Replace any cracked or broken window glass		
• Repair any wood rot		
• Replace any bent or torn window screens		
• Repair and/or replace caulking and weather-stripping around windows and doors		
• Exterior doors are locking properly		
• Oil any squeaky door hinges		
• Doorbells are working properly		
• Remove any seasonal house lights and ornaments		
• Outside light is working by the front door		
• Tighten any wobbly porch or deck railings		
• Secure any loose porch or deck floor boards		
• Clean the lawn furniture		
• Clean the barbeque		
• Pool equipment is working		
• Clean pool and surrounding area		
• Place gardening tools in the garage or basement		
• Neatly coil any garden hoses		
• Property is free of clutter, particularly of scattered toys		
• Oil gate hinges		
• Any gates open and close easily		
• Repair and/or replace any loose gate or fence posts		

The Exterior ...

The Finishing Touches

	TO DO	DONE
● Shutters		
● Shutters and front door painted in a prominent color which compliments the exterior of the house		
● A shiny brass door knocker		
● A decorative door mat		
● Flowers planted around a lamppost, if applicable		
● Window boxes under windows and/or along railings (Winter: drape pine boughs across the empty boxes)		
● Hanging planters on a front porch		
● Groupings of tubs with flowers on porches and decks (Winter: plant small evergreen trees in tubs)		
● Wood chips around trees and shrubs		
● A brightly colored bird house		
● A porch swing with comfy cushions		
● A hammock under the trees		
● Filled bird feeders		
● White wicker garden furniture		
● An open umbrella above your deck furniture		
● A croquet set		
● Children's pool toys neatly arranged by the pool		
● A tray with a pitcher and glass tumblers on the deck table – all ready to be filled with cold lemonade		
● A bird book lying open on a chaise lounge (with a pair of binoculars on the table next to it)		
● A chart outlining the location and names of all trees, shrubs, vines, perennials and bulbs on the property		

The Exterior ...

Personal List

● TO DO	DONE ●
●	●