

GET READY! BEFORE WE MARKET

1. **Surfaces: Pre-pack 90% of collectibles, books, and décor items. Clear all surfaces of non-everyday use items leaving only 1-3 items on any one surface or visible shelf.**

*Buyers need room and space to mentally start decorating with their own belongings. Clear surfaces open space and allow room for them to imagine moving in. It also allows the photographs to show the beauty and structure of your home to its best advantage. **NOTE:** remove extra furniture wherever possible but do not pack lamps. We want as much light and as many lamps as possible.*

2. **Cabinets: Pre-pack a couple of cabinets in the kitchen and one in the master bath.**

This provides a convenient space in which to easily store away everyday use items for showings.

3. **Clean, clean, clean: Clean every nook and cranny, including (especially) the oven.**

Buyers want to feel that a home is "move-in ready" even if they may want to do some updating later. If a home is spotless, the buyer will assume there isn't a lot to do in order to move in, and further, that you have taken good care of systems they can't see like heating, plumbing, etc. Websites advise buyers to open the oven because it is a place often overlooked when "spiffing" a house for sale. If the oven is crusty, they advise, then perhaps there are other things that are not taken care of.

4. **Closets: Only tend to a closet if it is a particular disaster. If it is, simply neaten it up by straightening piles and pushing as much as you can against the walls in straight lines.**

Buyers understand that this is storage and unlike counters and shelves, are less concerned if a closet is full. Their storage looks pretty much like your storage so they don't have to imagine something different.

SHOOT! JUST BEFORE PROFESSIONAL PHOTOS

1. **Yards: Manicure front and back yards for as clean and pristine a look as possible.**

You never get a second chance to make a first impression. A manicured yard says to a buyer you are meticulous and they will assume you have done the same with the rest of the house.

2. **Rugs & Pillows: Remove "anything soft"**

Throw rugs, pillows, draped blankets, etc. tend to clutter up a picture even though they look good in real life.

3. **Lights: Replace any and all energy saver bulbs (the twisty ones) and replace as many bulbs in the house as you can with LED bulbs. Costco now carries a variety of sizes of LED bulbs.**

Light is the most important feature of your home. Energy savers are slow to come to full brightness and make a house look dim and dingy. LED lights provide the clearest and brightest light available AND they are energy saving. 😊



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LIVE! WHILE WE ARE ACTIVE ON MLS**1. Packing: Select a week's worth of clothing and pack the rest.**

You only have another 45 days or so and you can get by with 7 outfits, especially if they mix and match. Pretend you are traveling for a month and can only take two suitcases.

2. Closets/Cabinets: Once you are on the market, you can start packing these. As you pack the closets, put boxes out in the garage (in straight lines and neat stacks of course).

This has minimal impact on showings. You can be in the middle of packing a closet, get a phone call and simply take the box you are packing out to the garage (or basement) and close the closet door.

3. Repairs: Continue to scout for items an inspector might call out and get them repaired.

You might consider having a professional inspection. Having a professional inspection yourself is a really good way to avoid surprises later and stay one step ahead of buyers.

ACCEPTED! WHILE WE ARE IN ESCROW**1. For Inspection: Clear spaces where there is attic or crawl space access**

The inspector will need to be able to easily access all areas of the home for the inspection.

2. For the Appraisal: Make sure all smoke alarms are up to date and functional and there is a CO detector within 15 feet of bedrooms (one upstairs and one down) and that there are 2 earthquake straps securing the water heater to the wall.

There is a \$150 charge if these are not in place and the appraiser has to come out to re-inspect to make sure it's done.

3. Maintain: Keep everything in the same condition and functioning order as when the buyer saw it.**4. Pack, Pack, Pack!: Get boxes and start going to town.****SOLD! LAST COUPLE OF DAYS BEFORE WE CLOSE****1. Final Walk-through: The buyers may request a final walk through to make sure everything is as it was.****2. Find all the keys and garage door openers, put in a prominent kitchen drawer (like the one by the sink).****3. Make helpful notes for the buyers to make their transition easier.****Robin Simpson, Broker**

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