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PREPARING YOUR HOME FOR SALE

When your home is for sale, it's often more than just the purchase price and location that will make or break a deal. Making your home look its very best and presenting it as a desirable place to live are also very important.

Work with your REALTOR

Your REALTOR can give you an objective opinion of what you need to do. REALTORS have the experience and knowledge that can help identify problem areas or suggest improvements. In most cases, REALTORS will not suggest major renovations. A few minor repairs here and there and a thorough cleaning are usually all that are required.

Cleaning up the homestead

Virtually all buyers are on the lookout for one thing — a clean home. Many will simply walk away if a home looks uncared for and, at the very least, an untidy home will fetch a lower selling price. Ensure your home is spotless and free of clutter.

The two most important rooms in a buyer's mind are the kitchen and the bathroom. Pay particular attention to these areas — they should sparkle and shine.

Making repairs

There are certain items that must be repaired if there are problems. A leaky roof, for example, must be fixed. Any electrical problems will have to be addressed. Furnaces, water heaters and plumbing also fall into this category.

Other areas may not need major repairs but will need attention. These can include leaky faucets, holes in window screens and any broken glass, etc. If some of your walls are too dirty to come clean, you may wish to consider a paint job. Carpets and rugs should also be clean and in good repair.

Outside and in

Take a close look at the state of your yard. If you are showing your home in the summer, trees and shrubs should be pruned and your lawn kept neat. In the fall, rake leaves regularly and in the winter ensure the walks and driveway are kept clear of any snow or ice.

To renovate or not to renovate

Usually, most renovations do not translate into an increase in selling price of more than the cost of the renovations themselves. Painting, wallpapering and modest landscape improvements usually recover their costs, but major projects such as new patios, decks or additions rarely do.

Moving up or down

If you are selling your home because you need more space with a growing family, or if you plan on downsizing now that the kids have left home or you want less work, your REALTOR can help. With access to the Multiple Listing Service® (MLS®) your REALTOR can provide you with list of homes for sale that meet your needs and your budget. If you have access to the Internet you can view all of the properties listed for sale on the Board's MLS® system by logging on to www.mls.ca.

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