

13 Things You Need to Do Now Before You Put Your House on the Market in Orange County, California

By Ellen Whomsley, Anaheim Real Estate

I'm Ellen Whomsley and I help people navigate the twists and turns of buying or selling a home, and I keep it FUN. I have found homes for buyers even after they had been with another agent and wanted to give up. I have sold homes faster than the seller ever thought was possible! Consequently, with me as your Realtor, you will never, never, never give up.

When you are planning to put your house on the market, there are a number of steps you will want to take that some folks forget or overlook until it's too late. Here is a simple list of things to consider, and questions to answer before you open your house for sale.

1. Write down as many things that you can think of that you like about your home. Remember, your ideal buyer will like the same things you like about the house.

2. Take a walk through your home, looking at the details as a buyer would. If you were the buyer, what would you want changed? Make a list of changes to make based on this exercise.

3. How is your “Curb Appeal?” How does your house look from the street? Is it clean and uncluttered, well cared for, and manicured? Are the outdoor spaces inviting? Or are there areas with weeds, gardens gone dry, or junk in the corner in the back? Make a list of needed changes, if any, based on this exercise.

4. Does your house have any structural issues? Does your roof leak? Do any of your faucets leak? Appliances you are including in the sale such as water heater, stove and oven, refrigerator, garbage disposal, dishwasher... etc. are they in perfect working order? If not make a list of items to be fixed or replaced.

5. Have you or any previous owner added a room or a building to the property? If so, are there permits? Is it up to code? To make sure you have all the proper permits for your house, check with the city or county office.

6. Is your kitchen welcoming, warm, and spotless? The kitchen is the heart of a home, and your buyer will want to picture themselves happily cooking and preparing food and gathering with their family here. If it's not welcoming, warm and spotless, a deep cleaning and possibly an upgrade is in order and can vastly improve the saleability of your house.

7. Is your bathroom clean? Spot free? Odor free? Or is there mold, or hard water spots, or has it been over 20 years since it had a paint job? Women especially are sensitive about bathrooms, so keep them spotless, and make a list of changes that need to be made before putting the house on sale.

8. Is the master bedroom restful and romantic? Does it inspire love and togetherness? Or does it need an upgrade? Make a list of needed changes.

9. Are your closets open and airy, or are they stuffed to the gills with junk? Your jam packed closets will make the buyers worry that there isn't enough storage space. Time to clear the clutter, and get rid of items you don't want to move with you.

10. Locate your utility bills and figure out what the monthly due amount is for each utility. Buyers always ask.

11. While it's not required by the state, if it's not a hardship for you, I recommend that you get your home inspected by a termite company, and that if there are termites that you exterminate them before putting your house on sale. This can help you stand out among other sellers and give your buyers peace of mind. While you're at it, if at all possible, you might have an inspector check for other pests, mold, lead paint in older houses, asbestos, radon, and the water quality.

12. Does your front door lock open easily? If not, fix it, or change it. It's a frequent problem that happens all the time. It is embarrassing for realtors to have to fumble with the lock in front of buyers, and that can start the showing of your house off on the wrong foot.

13. If you have a freezer full of food, I recommend you start eating it so you don't have to move it or throw it out.

Add anything here that you believe will improve the saleability of your house.

Remember, buyers won't just be looking at the physical structure of your home, they are looking for charm, comfort, convenience, location, and how it makes them feel. You want people to walk in and imagine themselves living there. Give them the best "show" for the money.

If you want help selling your house or property in Orange County, California, give me a call. I love to connect with people in my area and it's a pleasure to assist you to sell house quickly, easily and while we have fun!

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