



**"DRESS" YOUR HOUSE FOR SALE**



Agents of Change<sup>SM</sup>

# It is all in the details...



The CENTURY 21® System objective is to sell your home at the best price possible in the shortest amount of time. Highlighting the features of your home is very important if you want to sell close to your asking price and as quickly as possible.

Home staging is the process of preparing your home for sale. This guide will help you highlight your home's best features in ways that appeal to your prospective home buyers' senses and emotions. It includes great interior-design ideas and home-improvement tips. Staged homes are perceived as comfortable, attractive and well cared for, and have been proven to sell faster and for more money.



## FIRST IMPRESSIONS ARE HARD TO BREAK

Most home buyers form an opinion about your home within seconds of seeing it for the first time. They will probably spend less than 15 minutes touring your house, and they are going to see many other houses with similar features and amenities. Remember, you have one chance for a first impression so make your home the one the buyers remember by giving them a great first impression.



### QUICK TIP! > get detached

It's difficult to look at our own house in the same way that potential home buyers do. When we become accustomed to the way something looks and functions, we cannot see its faults. Decide right now to stop thinking of the property as a home. **It's an asset you want to sell for the highest dollar possible.**



## The outdoors

### **"CURB" APPEAL**

The way your home looks from the street can make or break the sale. A large percentage of home buyers decide whether or not to look inside a house based on its curb appeal. The good news is that you can help the situation by spending some time freshening up its exterior appearance for a great first impression.

The best way to get started is by viewing your property from the home buyer's perspective. Ask yourself what is your first impression of the home front, what are the best and worst features and how can you enhance, improve or minimize them?

### **ATTENTION TO THE HARD SURFACES**

Make sure the sidewalk and front walkway are free of debris. If necessary, give it a clean sweep and remove weeds that may be growing between cracks. Remove grease or oil spots and fill cracks in your driveway.

### **LANDSCAPE PARADISE! OR NOT?**

There are times that adding elements to your landscaping can help curb appeal, but there are also times when removing something is more effective. Keep the grass mowed and the weeds pulled. Trim trees and bushes. Plant flowers to add a touch of color.

**Most buyers cannot visualize changes, and often won't take a second look at a house if the first isn't appealing to them. Those who can visualize changes, and are prepared to make them, expect YOU to reduce the price of the house to compensate for the work.**



## A HOUSE FACE-LIFT

Does your house look dull and dingy? Give it a face-lift with a good old-fashioned paint job or power wash. And speaking of paint, if your home was built before 1978, new federal law gives a buyer the right to request a lead inspection. If you think you might have some problems, do the inspection yourself beforehand and make any fixes you can. Repair loose roof shingles and clean the windows (both inside and out). Add shutters and install window boxes with bright flowers to the front of the house. Replace a weather-beaten mailbox, and add visual interest by positioning rocks and potted plants around it.



### QUICK TIP!

#### > **get your friends involved**

You may be able to assemble your own team of friends to help you clear out your crowded rooms, paint, do carpentry and spiff up your gardens.



## AT THE FRONT DOOR

Continue the allure with a friendly front door. Restore its luster with a few coats of varnish or spiff it up with a rich, new accent color. Make sure your doorbell works. Repair torn screens. Clean outdoor light fixtures.

### **DON'T FORGET THE REAR VIEW**

Buyers doing a drive by will try their best to see your backyard. If it's visible from another street or from someone's driveway, it should be a part of your curb appeal efforts. So make sure to apply the same effort by keeping the grass mowed, the weeds pulled and the trees and bushes trimmed. Treat your backyard like a living space in your house. Minimize furniture to the essentials and hide all the kids' toys.



## The indoors

### MAKE AN ENTRANCE

You can start out by setting your home's fragrance, since it is the first sense they will encounter upon entering your home. This is your opportunity to make a big statement in small area. Make your foyer welcoming by featuring a natural flower arrangement and continue with smaller arrangements throughout the house. What you need to avoid is strong pet, cooking and tobacco odors. Having pleasant music playing in the background will also help set your stage.

### LIVING ROOM AND DINING ROOM

Clean and spruce up all rooms, furnishings, floors, walls and ceilings. Remove knickknacks from tables, countertops and bookshelves. Remove all unnecessary furniture to make your rooms seem more spacious. Brighten rooms with a fresh coat of paint. Choose neutral shades of white, off-white, beige or light pastels that will coordinate with most decors. Give your home an open, airy feel by opening the curtains and pulling up the blinds. Turn on as many lights as possible.



#### QUICK TIP! > a sense of smell

Run a lemon through the garbage disposal for a fresh smell. Make sure the house smells good: bake an apple pie or cookies for a homey scent. Hide the kitty litter.



### KITCHEN AND BATHROOMS

Kitchens should be absolutely spotless. Remove excess kitchen appliances. Make sure all major appliances are working. Clean the oven and refrigerator inside and out. Remove magnets from the refrigerator door.

Bathrooms are just as important. Remove stains from bathroom fixtures, repair dripping faucets and polish mirrors. Add sanitizers to toilet bowls and keep lids down. Wash and fluff bathroom rugs, hang fresh towels. Potpourri and scented soaps add a nice fragrance to the air.



## BEDROOMS AND CLOSETS

Same principle applies to the bedrooms. Remove all unnecessary furniture and give it a fresh coat of paint. Keep all closets organized and uncluttered. Pack away out of season clothing and holiday stuff to make your closets seem more spacious.



### QUICK TIP! > get de-cluttered

Now that you are in sell mode and detached from your home, set your mind in moving mode. You are moving shortly so get a head start by packing items you can live without for the moment. This will give you a chance to de-clutter. **The idea is to leave a blank canvas for buyers to fill in with their own ideas.**

## BASEMENT AND GARAGE

These spaces are important because it shows potential additional storage space in the house. To keep the entire house uncluttered, most of the packed boxes will end up in one of these two spaces (basement or garage). With this in mind, it is important to keep these spaces clean and organized. Make sure that all stored items are neatly organized and out of the potential buyer's way giving them ample space to move around the room. If it's possible, try to keep the car space in the garage free of items to give the potential buyers the opportunity to picture their own car in the space.

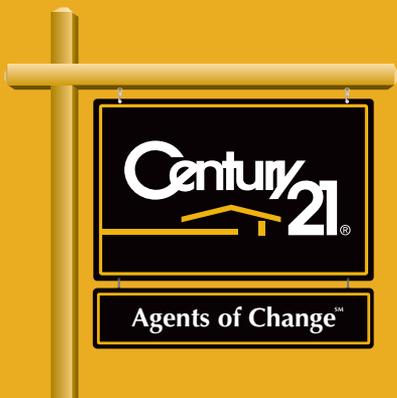
Ask your sales associate for additional tips on getting your home ready to sell. Also, let your sales associate show the house. He or she knows the business and will present your property to its best advantage. Plus, potential buyers usually feel more comfortable when the seller is not present.

## **MORE HELP FROM THE CENTURY 21® SYSTEM WITH THE 'HOME PLANNER' TOOL**

Century21.com has a great tool that helps you lay out each room of your house. Home Planner helps you change the layout of any room to make the Living and Dining room seem more spacious and functional and your bedroom less cluttered and simplified . . . It's simple! To help expedite your open house day, just use our Home Planner tool to size and place furniture and accessories, as well as determine the amount of paint, wallpaper or floor covering to buy.

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