

Preparing Your Home For Sale, Doing It Right the First Time- With Some Insider Designer Secrets

1. PAINT THE WALLS A fresh coat of paint is a cost-effective way to make a place feel new again. But stick with neutral tones like grays and whites, which let the best features of your home stand out, rather than going with bold colors that might not suit everyone's taste. Absolutely no wall murals. You need to appeal to everyone, not just a select few who have the same tastes as you. The faint whiff of paint can be as alluring to home buyers as new-car smell is to auto shoppers.

2. SHINE THE FLOORS Unless your floors are severely damaged, it doesn't make sense to have them refinished

3. CLEAN UP THE BATHROOM Replacing missing tiles and re-caulking moldy areas are must-dos. Small upgrades, like swapping out an old faucet, can brighten up the space. If your tub is looking dingy, a professional refinisher can repair dents, rub out rust spots and recoat it with a new finish in a day or so, for about \$500 for a standard-size bathtub, according to Homeadvisor.com, a home-improvement website. This technique, called reglazing, can be applied to those dated pink wall tiles as well, so long as they are in good shape. And if your bathroom is already in decent condition, a new bath mat, shower curtain and fresh towels may be all the sprucing up you need.

4. UPGRADE THE KITCHEN While remodeling an old kitchen is a sure way to help your home sell faster and at a higher price, it is possible to transform a dated space without a complete overhaul. A fresh coat of paint and new hardware will help refresh old cabinets. Peel-and-stick wall tiles, which can be found at home improvement stores for as little as \$8 a square foot, make adding a backsplash easy on the budget. And if you're feeling a little more ambitious, an epoxy coating, sold at most home improvement stores for about \$20, can give laminate countertops a new look and feel

6. DO A DEEP CLEANING Wash the windows inside and out and vacuum all the dust that's accumulated in those exhaust fans. Clean in cabinets and above them too!

7. LIGHT IT UP Every room should have at least three points of light. That means a table lamp, a floor lamp and a task light, for example, or an overhead fixture and a couple of table lamps.

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