

PREPARE TO SELL YOUR HOME

Must Do	Might Do	Don't Bother Doing
<p>Keep it clean: If nothing else, a clean home is essential. Make sure surfaces sparkle and clutter is at a bare minimum.</p>	<p>Store your belongings: Put personal belongings into clearly labeled boxes, and store them neatly on-site or in an off-site storage facility.</p>	<p>Install shelves or closet organizers: Now isn't the time to invest in systems that will stay with the house unless they will significantly improve its marketability. Consult your agent.</p>
<p>Freshen a room's decor: If a prominent room shows signs of wear or is very outdated, consider a coat of paint or new floor coverings (in that room only).</p>	<p>Refinish wood floors: If you have wood floors under old carpeting, you may want to pull up the rug and refinish the floor in one room, to show buyers the quality of the floors.</p>	<p>Paint and carpet entire house: This is a major project that may not result in a significantly higher price. Avoid it unless it's absolutely necessary.</p>
<p>Make necessary repairs: Make sure outlets work, toilets flush, and windows and doors open and shut smoothly. All heating, air conditioning, and other home systems should work, too.</p>	<p>Do extra maintenance: If your deck needs re-staining or you haven't cleaned your gutters recently, consider doing such projects now to give your property a well-cared-for appearance.</p>	<p>Make major improvements: Now is not the time to put on a deck or build a fence. While these projects can add value, you are not likely to boost your home's value enough to justify the expense at this time.</p>
<p>Increase curb appeal: Tidy up landscaping, plant fresh flowers, and otherwise make your home look as inviting as possible to the drive-by buyer.</p>	<p>Intensify your entryway: Paint your front door and put on new hardware, or replace it altogether if it is old. Buy a new welcome mat.</p>	<p>Put in a new driveway or sidewalk: Unless these items are crumbling and will significantly lower your curb appeal, this is a major investment that probably won't pay off.</p>