

Three Things You Really Should Do Before You List



What's that old proverb? A journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step. Cliché though it might sound, there's a reason people repeat this phrase over and over again: it's true.

It's definitely true when it comes to selling a home. So while the goal is to land the perfect offer, the journey starts right here, before you've even put up a listing.

Before you consider getting your on the market, make sure you've covered these three core considerations:

1. FINANCIAL PREPARATION

Budget for upgrades and maintenance that can significantly increase ROI. This could include cosmetic updates as well as cleaning, landscaping, and storage.

Fact: there are costs associated with the selling process. The good news is that they're absolutely well worth it, because they pay dividends in the long run.

A skilled realtor can give you tips on what updates and maintenance you need to focus on to maximize your return when you sell. Expect to invest in cleaning, landscaping, and storage, in addition to some potential home updates. For bigger ticket items, your realtor may be able to refer you to the right contractor.

2. LISTING PREPARATION

Make time for any sweat equity projects, cleaning, or professional work

It's human nature: we tend to underestimate the amount of time and work we'll need to put into something, especially when it comes to home projects. Giving yourself time to make your home look its best is critical.

When you begin prepping your home for sale, deep cleaning and a fresh coat of paint are essential starting points. Many sellers will choose to do these items themselves — but whether you DIY it or hire a professional, make sure you budget time to make it happen. Keep in mind that professional contractors often need flexibility with their timelines, so give yourself wiggle room to accommodate shifting dates.

Pare down your possessions. This will make both staging your home and moving easier. Donate, hire a clean-out service, or consider selling items on Facebook Marketplace or OfferUp.

It is amazing how much clutter builds up over the years. More than you're probably thinking at this moment. Clutter can make your home look older, less clean, and smaller than it really is. To showcase its true potential and set staging professionals up to do a great job, try to get rid of anything you don't need.

You probably won't want your personal treasures out when buyers are browsing your home — and they may not appeal to a potential buyer anyway. They can be stored until they find their next home.

3. LOGISTICAL PREPARATION

Preparing for life in your new home and zip code area requires scouting and planning.

Your budget may shift when you move, for a range of reasons you may not have considered yet. Assessing them now should influence your selling strategy, and set you up for a great next chapter.

Review home prices in your new neighborhood or zip code

Take a look at monthly costs: are the service providers the same where you're moving? Will you need to shop around for new service plans and competitive pricing?

Consider variables like a changed commute, new schools

There's no need to be blindsided by these changes, so start getting a sense of any lifestyle changes in your new area.

Make plans in case your home sells quickly or extenuating circumstances affect the sale in some way.

What if your home sells within a week? While this sounds like a great problem to have, it can be stressful if you haven't done your research for your next chapter.

Have a back-up plan lined up, or find a realtor that can manage your contingencies in a way that works for everyone involved.

You can consider short-term renting, though keep in mind that inventory may be limited or not as desirable as you might hope. You can also consider building in a rent-back, though not all buyers are agreeable to that solution. Talk with your realtor about your timeline and work with them to build a contingency plan.

Approaching the selling process proactively will put you in a strong selling position and help you avoid unnecessary hassles and headaches.

A knowledgeable real estate partner can help you from the earliest stages, so don't hesitate to reach out, even if you're not quite ready to sell. At Moran + Murray, we're always here to offer expert advice when you need it.