

how to attract a **BUYER**

Are you having trouble selling your house? Failing to turn viewers into purchasers before you reduce your price? Try these ideas from the experts at Staffordshire's The Interior Design Practice

When selling your home it's important to maximise the charm your property offers. It is easy to increase your home's attractiveness by making some subtle changes; a few minor improvements, which need not cost a fortune, could make all the difference to sell your home.

First impressions count – kerb appeal

Buyers will have already formed an impression before they step into your property, so make the front of your house as attractive and inviting as possible. First impressions really do count – viewers who are impressed on the outside won't mind small problems inside the house. So tidy up the garden, make it presentable, get rid of any weeds, prune bushes, and cut the grass. To create splashes of colour use pots containing colourful flowers, this saves you planting whole flowerbeds and you can take the pots on to your next house.

Define your rooms

A house will be more appealing if rooms have a specific purpose and this allows buyers to see the full potential of the property. If you have a three bedroom property make sure it is just that – a bedroom adds more value than a study or a storeroom. Dress the dining area well for viewings, add a splash of colour with a table runner and napkins, get out your best wine glasses and table ware and most importantly, don't squash the dining table into a corner – make sure you can sit people comfortably around it. As a general rule for all rooms in the house, the more floor the viewer can see the more this will give the illusion of space.

Update the most valuable rooms

The hallway is one of the most important areas of the house as it gives the viewer the first impression



of your home. Make sure it is clean, light and clutter free. Adding a large mirror can make a dark hall seem lighter and bigger. An oversized vase with fresh flowers creates the perfect welcome. If your carpet looks dirty, hire a professional cleaner, it will pay off in the long run and is less expensive than a new carpet.

You don't need an unlimited budget to give your kitchen and bathroom a lift, a bit of creativity and an open mind will do wonders. Simple fixes make a big difference, including repainting cabinets and replacing handles with contemporary ones. Improve your window dressing by removing fussy curtains or grubby nets and replace with blinds to give a neater smarter look. If your tiles look old and dingy, change them to refresh or just re-grout



Above: De-cluttering shelves and tables will make your house look clean and organised. Left: Your bedroom should be clean and especially tidy, create a fresh, inviting look.





them to give a new cleaner look. Remove the clutter from the work surfaces, this means you need to find an alternative home for your teapot, blender, pens and mobile charger. If your floor is looking grubby then changing it will do wonders for your kitchen, you can buy vinyl at affordable prices but avoid decorative patterns, stick to plain textured styles.

Natural colours

Make sure your décor is updated and attractive. Most buyers prefer natural colours to bold tones, neutral shades are the key to making a room feel brighter and creating a sense of space. Using the right accessories, from cushions on the sofa to vases on the mantle piece and fresh flowers, can enhance and add a touch of colour to your room. Make sure that you have the right lighting as this can improve the mood of a room.

Deferred jobs

Fix things that you have been putting off for years, finish off the painting, mend the dripping taps, hang the curtains properly – go and buy

those extra hooks, oil those squeaky hinges. All these small jobs make a big difference to a buyer.

De-clutter and most importantly clean, clean clean...!

Clutter makes your home seem small and disorganised, de-cluttering will help to de-personalise your home helping buyers to visualise living in your house. Cleaning is the cheapest quick fix of all! Before people come to view, make sure everything is spotless, clean the windows, sinks, toilets, carpet, and curtains, re-grout the shower cubicle, open your windows to let fresh air in, put out clean towels and bedding and clear away any dirty washing.

A final word

Remember, when you are preparing to sell your house, you want to make the right first impression. At the front door, you want to capture the buyer's attention and gain a 'wow' reaction. This requires you to change, your house is no longer your home, it is something you want to sell and you need to present it as such. ■

Emma Lesniak and Emma Brindley are partners in North Staffordshire-based The Interior Design Practice which specialises in both domestic and commercial projects.
Tel: 01782 417177.
Email: info@theinteriordesignpractice.com
www.theinteriordesignpractice.com

