

Bit of effort will net big resale rewards

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SPECIAL TO THE STAR

A few dollars spent on supplies, and a little sweat equity can bring you big rewards when it comes to selling a home.

Your real estate agent will tell you that the purchase of a new home is an emotional investment.

One of the hardest adjustments is to start looking at your home as someone else's. You need to remove yourself emotionally from the equation and realize the stress that selling your home will place on you and your family.

First of all, remember these truths: A home for sale can never be clean enough and be sure to complete any outstanding do-it-yourself projects before putting your house on the market.

Next, create some curb appeal. Repair broken shutters and peeling paint, hang a fresh floral wreath on the door and flank the entrance with a pair of colourful potted plants. Studies have proven that colour sells, so paint the front door of the house a rich, positive hue like red, blue or green. A front door should never be white — it should make a colourful statement.

If your front door is painted the same colour as your home's exterior, repaint it an upbeat, vibrant colour. For example, if your siding is a linen or ivory colour and your shingles are brown, consider a smoky blue or crimson shade for the door.

Ensure that your foyer is well lit with an abundance of natural and artificial

light. A fresh coat of paint in a sunny hue like yellow creates the perception of a more light-filled room. Check the light bulbs in all your fixtures. If a room or light appears too dark replace the bulb with one with more wattage.

Next, clean out coat closets. Pack away some of the clothes hanging there to make closets appear more spacious. Eventually you'll have to pack anyhow, so you may as well get started. Potential buyers will see that they will have ample closet space. Ditto for bedroom closets and other storage space.

Start packing and lose at least 20 per cent of your stuff. If you have too much furniture for the size of the room, remove at piece or two.

Arrange furniture to focus on the fireplace and not the television set. The fireplace is a wonderful architectural feature that will stay with the home and is a positive selling feature.

When rearranging the furniture, create walkways that make it easy for folks to walk through a room.

Lighten the load on the horizontal surfaces. Too much tabletop clutter will also distract viewers from noticing the room.

When designing to sell, we should be decorating to create excitement for the buyer.

Plan to show off the home's best features — not your collection of teacups. One should aim to depersonalize a home — so photos and mementoes should be packed away.