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Top 10: Overlooked features when buying

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TOP 10

Overlooked features when selling a home

BY NANCY CAINE
Contributing Writer

You've purged the closets, hidden the kitty litter box and repainted the bathroom. So what else would put your best foot forward when selling your home?

Many Realtors suggest first undertaking a careful, impartial inspection of your entire home. With notebook in hand, check each room. Determine if you have minor repairs that could be made quickly. Perhaps even invite family members or friends to offer creative, low-cost suggestions for inexpensive changes.

Cindy Brouillette of Cindy B! Realtors in Ft. Wright specializes in helping sellers get ready to sell. Many sellers "don't really know they are not ready to sell their home. It could take months to get ready," Brouillette said. "There is a relationship between price and condition. Sellers must understand that. It is all about getting top dollar. But don't expect top dollar without giving a top product," she said.

While it's true that a home that sparkles sells more quickly than its shabby neighbor, you may not be aware of what "turnoffs" head off buyers. Here are a few tips from local real estate professionals who share suggestions that might be overlooked:

10 Remove personal pictures from your home. Besides giving the home a cluttered look, buyers respond better to a more "depersonalized" space, notes Realtor Tish Rademaker of Sibcy Cline's Cold Spring office.



From pleasing smells to houseplants, small changes can add up to a top-dollar sale of your home.

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9 Add something living to your home – plants add warmth and life to rooms.

8 Consider enhancing your home's curb appeal. Many would-be buyers drive by in the evening. How does your home look at night? Is lighting warm and friendly, or harsh or almost nonexistent?

7 Bathrooms may be older, but they should not be grungy. Make your bathrooms sparkle. Purchase inexpensive new curtains, bath towels or mats to freshen up an older bathroom.

6 Paint over interior water stains from leaks that are no longer leaking. Buyers can get nervous if they see ugly water stains. That's an instant turnoff that creates uncertainty.

5 A stark, impersonal look is better than clutter, Brouillette believes. Eliminate unnecessary furniture, take the leaf out of the dining room table and reduce the number of chairs. Create open space and lots of open baseboards, she suggests. "If you can live without it, get it out of there," she tells sellers.

4 Freshen up the entryway to your home. Add new hardware to your front door, or polish up the door's hardware and add a coat of paint. Add

welcoming touches such as flowers and manicure the yard.

3 Create a great-smelling home. Sheila Roderick with the Sibcy Cline Cold Spring office believes the element of smell is very important. "If my seller's house smells like an animal (lives there), I tell them definitely to get that odor out of the house. Smoking in the house turns a lot of buyers off, so sellers should try to air it out or make it smell better."

2 Clean ceiling fans and vents, plus check other dust catchers. Present a spotless home and hire a maid if necessary.

1 Think in two key terms, Brouillette believes: declutter and neutralize. Let all your "home preparation" decisions flow from those main ideas.

Getting a home ready to sell can take a big commitment on the part of the homeowner, Brouillette says. Since "buyers are always looking for a reason to eliminate the home," then completing minor repairs and spending time on important details will help you earn top dollar for your property, she said.

Nancy Caine is a Cincinnati-based free-lance writer.