



Preparing Your House to Sell In Today's Market...

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Managing Broker
**AB, ABR, ASR, CLHMS,
CRS, CNE, GRI, EcoBroker,
e-PRO, TRC**

Business: 360-692-6102
Seattle: 206-282-5340
Cell: 360-620-2690
mollyells@windermere.com
www.mollyells.com



Windermere Real Estate/West Sound, Inc.
9939 Mickelberry Rd NW - Silverdale, WA 98383

*If you are already working with an agent, this
is not meant as a solicitation for that business.*

With the housing market on the uptick in many parts of the country, sellers who were previously holding tight are now considering putting their home on the market.

While there are some parts of the country where the market has really heated up (note: see the recent MSN feature at <http://realestate.msn.com/10-major-housing-markets-with-the-shortest-supply-of-homes#1> for more details) many sellers will need to have their home looking its best to appeal to potential buyers.

What does that look like? Let me provide some suggestions to help you maximize your home's value if you're thinking of selling, which I've divided into three categories: CLEAN, REMOVE, UPDATE.

CLEAN

One of the most important things you can do when preparing your home to sell is to get it sparkling clean. I mean really clean. Because it's so easy to not see the everyday dust and dirt we become accustomed to, I highly recommend you hire a professional cleaner to come in and give the house the once-over. You may also need specialists to come in to tackle certain areas, such as carpet cleaning. If you have drapes in your house, take them down and get them laundered or dry-cleaned – you'll be shocked at the difference it makes. Another odor buster? Having a cleaning company in to clean all your upholstered furniture.

Part of the whole "clean" concept is getting your home as odor free as possible. You want your home to smell

fresh and inviting. Some of the bigger odor issues for homes on the market are those of strong foods, smoking, and pets. And speaking of pets, it's not just the odor that can be a problem. Dried-up pieces of dog or cat kibble, lots of pet hair, and a bevy of pet toys festooned around the home are not going to help it sell. Because your pets are likely an important part of the family, have a plan for where they will be housed during showings.

REMOVE

Want your house to be instantly more attractive? Remove the old "popcorn" ceilings, the dark wood paneling (you know – the stuff from the 70's), old, dated wallpaper, clunky ceiling fans, and "original" hardware (unless you live in a period house and it really does add value). Removing these eyesores will create a more pleasing canvas for potential buyers.

You've heard it before, but it's true – it really is important to remove clutter. This is the perfect time to eliminate "stuff" from your life. And of course, "de-personalizing" your home by removing personal photos and mementos is a must.

UPDATE

Curb appeal. It's one of the least utilized strategies to help your house sell. Invest a little money in your front yard, and create a wonderful first impression – one that will hopefully last as buyers continue through their tour of the home. Simple tasks such as edging, power-washing the home and driveway, touching up trim paint, and planting a few fresh pots of flowers can work wonders.

For more information on today's real estate market give me a call at 360-620-2690 or send me an email at mollyells@windermere.com. I'd love to share more information with you!

