

Ten things to remove in your home before listing...

Everyone has heard rumors of de-cluttering when it's time to sell your home. But, what does that really mean? Before going hog wild and moving out... here's a few of the most important things to consider removing before you list your home for sale.

10. **Personal photos.** I don't always recommend removing photos of the 'family' but if you have hallways filled with photos or photos on every end table it is probably necessary. Buyers really DO get distracted by them. They will take them all in as they walk down the hall. Not only do they take away from the home, but it's really disturbing when a buyer is excited to 'know' the sellers. And, the buyers do look at them.

9. **Bills and personal papers.** I understand that you cannot remove these document from the home all together, but please take the time to organize them, box them up and put them out of sight. If you have bills laying on the counter or kitchen table it's like an invitation for the buyers to 'peek' at them. Believe me - I discourage it - but it still happens. And as a seller you just don't want to leave the temptation behind.

8. **Money.** I would love to say that every buyer (and Realtor) going through every home is honest, but I really don't want to test those waters. If you have cash, cash boxes or coin jars sitting out in the open... put them away. It's just better for everyone if it's out of sight. As Realtors we do what we can to protect your home, but your help makes a difference!

7. **Valuables.** Jewelry, watches, valuable antiques.... anything that might be worth a bit of money that you wouldn't want to lose. Out of sight, out of mind. If buyers don't know they are there they won't think about it. I can't tell you how many homes I've been in where the jewelry is left on the dresser.... somehow it's uncomfortable. At least put it away.

6. **Guns and ammo.** I don't care if they are in a case or out laying around or under a bed. It's better if you just plain old remove them from the home prior to listing. For some reason they make buyers (in my experience) feel really insecure.

5. **Shoes!** If you have a pile of shoes at the door... ask yourself why. A pile of shoes gives a buyer two impressions. The first? That there isn't enough storage in your home. The second? That there are too many people living in the home. So, in order to avoid wondering on the part of the buyer... just put them away.

4. **Medicine.** Take it out. Don't store it on the counter. Don't store it in the cabinet. Don't store it in the bathroom. Remove it. There have been many complaints over the years of potential buyers 'stealing' the medicine out of the cabinets. I have never had it happen on my time clock, but to avoid any trouble it's best to simply remove it.

3. All things on your kitchen counter. Everything? Really? Yup. The cleaner you can leave the counter, the more buyers dream of being in there. Have you ever been in a cluttered kitchen? Does it feel inviting? How about a cleaned-up kitchen? Does it make you want to spend time there? Also, if you store things on the counter it gives the appearance that you do not have enough storage space.

2. No more junk drawers. Seriously. Clean them out. There is nothing more tacky than a potential buyer opening the cupboards and drawers and having things sticking out everywhere. Box up all the notes, pens, tacks, and odds and ends and put them away. Chances are you don't dig in the drawer often anyways.

1. Nothing but magnets.... and maybe not even that. Take a photo of your fridge, take everything off, wash the front (and side), and take another photo. It is really refreshing to walk into a home that has a clean fridge. The kids' pictures are beautiful, but buyers can't imagine their own children's drawing on there if it is covered with yours. And, then there's the magnets... if they aren't decorative (and even then) they are generally more of a distraction to the room than a help. Consider it.

There are many more ways to de-clutter a home for sale... but these are some of the most important things to consider.

