

Free Guide, Packed With Ideas So You Can Get the Best Price for Your Home

We've Done the Research, You Make the Money

Your home is your biggest financial asset and yet many people throw money away by not planning for the sale of their homes. **That can add up to £1000's of pounds.**

Take any street and you'll find huge differences in the sale prices of seemingly identical houses. What's the secret? Preparation, Preparation, Preparation.

**The golden rule is to help people buy into a lifestyle, to imagine themselves moving effortlessly into your house and creating their own home.
Creating a sense of space is the key to your success.**

Thinking Ahead

People are moving home more often than ever before and are planning for a lifetime of regular relocation. If you are likely to move quite frequently it's worth keeping this in mind when you make your house your home. Try and strike a balance between creating the perfect home for you and the most appealing house for future buyers. This is not always easy, but by using our tips, you won't go far wrong.



Anticipating Your Sale

So many sellers appear to have rushed into the sale of their house. They have not planned for their sale, nor taken the simple steps to get the best price for their house. Everything seems to come at once and panic can quickly set in - no wonder it's one of the most stressful events in our lives.

- Keep your house well maintained – you'll get more pleasure while you live there and it'll be in its best condition when you come to sell
- Give yourself the time to complete the actions in this report. They could add £1000's to the value of your house
- Take some fabulous photos of your home, on a sunny day when your gardens are at their best and set against a clear blue sky
- Spring and Autumn tend to be the best times to sell

Your Bills

Far too many people show far too much loyalty to their mortgage and utility providers and are penalised in the amount they pay. Moving house gives you a great opportunity to shop around for the best deal for you. It's so easy now to check out the best deals with price comparison search engines.

You could save a fortune!

Our customers have recommended the links below.

www.energyhelpline.com

www.uswitch.com



Presenting Your Home

Kerb Appeal

First impressions count, so the approach to your front door should be clear and welcoming.

- Your front garden should be neat and tidy. Cut your lawn, trim any hedges, turn the soil and weed your flower beds
- Give your front door a fresh lick of paint and polish/replace your door furniture
- Some pots with flowers add a splash of colour and brighten up the welcome to your home
- Check your windows, do they need re-painting? Are they sparkling clean?
- Hide your dustbins
- Keep toys and tools out of sight

The First 30 Seconds

It's true, houses sell in the first 30 seconds of viewing. A buyer will make a judgement immediately and if it's negative, they're unlikely to change their view.

Clutter will always put buyers off.

It's worth repeating - clutter will always put buyers off.

A buyer only has a short time to get excited about your house and imagine themselves living there. Clutter makes this much harder - most people cannot see beyond your clutter. It's what they remember about a house. Try it yourselves when you visit a house for the first time – what attracts your attention, what do you remember? Buyers want to see your house, not your stuff.

Hallway

Your buyer has entered your house having been won over by the outside appearance. Make sure their first impression is one of space.

- Remove all your coats, hats, shoes, wellies, prams, toys
- Clean your doormat
- Are your walls and doors clean? If not give them a wash or a fresh coat of paint
- Open all the doors from your hallway – it'll give an impression of space and light
- Mirrors can be good in halls to increase this feeling of light and space
- Check your light bulbs are working and consider a higher wattage if your hall is dark
- Are there any house odours? It's one of the first things a buyer will notice. A fresh clean smelling home sells; avoid overuse of air fresheners. Open your windows every day to let fresh air into your house
- Smoking is another no-no, as its smell lingers in furnishings and fabrics. Smokers should redecorate and not smoke in the house while they're trying to sell. This may be difficult, but it can make all the difference in ensuring a quick sale

Living Room

So many living rooms are a magnet for clutter, this starts with too many chairs, sofas and tables. If you can barely move, your buyer will feel it's a small cramped room. Remove excess furniture, particularly from near the door, creating a sense of space and ease of movement.

- Make sure the buyer can get to the window - for some reason most will make a bee-line to your window
- Open the curtains fully, letting in as much light as possible
- Remove net curtains

Ruthlessly remove clutter

- Family photos - you may love them, but they're a distraction to a buyer. It's much better to see clean, clear surfaces
- Books, CDs and papers scattered around don't work for buyers
- Ornaments: people expect to see a few, too many are a put-off
- Don't hide stuff behind doors, open them fully

Dining Room

This room tends not to be used so much and becomes a dumping ground for piles of stuff. You know what to do - remove it and show a spacious room.

Kitchen

The crucial room, many buyers will conduct a forensic examination! Help their imagination, an olive oil bottle, fruit bowl and plant on the windowsill help people buy into a lifestyle. Look at how kitchen manufacturers advertise in magazines, try and recreate that look and feel in your kitchen.

- De-clutter your kitchen completely. Buyers should see plenty of gleaming surfaces
- Make sure your walls, doors, cupboards, floor and all surfaces are spotless, re-paint if necessary
- Banish all dirty dishes
- It may be a bit of a cliché but coffee, fresh bread and cake smells, all work with buyers. Be subtle
- Don't have a pungent curry the night before, the cooking smells will still linger

Spending a little money on the kitchen will usually always pay itself back

- If the walls are dark, consider painting them white or an off-white colour
- Old, bashed cupboard fronts should be painted or replaced
- If the units are in fairly good condition and only look dated, just replace the doorknobs, handles and taps. Another economical trick is to fit good solid worktops on to existing units
- Dark flooring can be transformed with a light-coloured vinyl or laminate flooring.
- Similarly dark or patterned tiled splash-backs can be painted or tiled over with cheap white tiles

You'll be surprised with the results; you might not want to move!

Bathrooms/Toilets

You might not notice your limescale encrusted taps any more but your buyer will. All they're thinking is, would I want to bath, shower or sit on that? Ever been into a hotel bathroom that's not sparkling – feels grubby, doesn't it?

- Rejuvenate your taps, they must be gleaming
- Replace washers on dripping taps
- Baths, sinks, shower trays, shower screens and any tiling must sparkle
- Buy a new shower curtain
- Towels folded and not dumped on the floor (it happens). Fluffy new ones look good
- Remove any kids' toys – they're clutter to a buyer
- Make sure the room is dry and well aired
- Remove your excess shampoos, shower gels, body scrubs, razor blades etc.
- Toilet seats down please
- Green leafy plants work wonders and are a cheap quick fix

Spending a little money can transform a bathroom. A light airy gleaming room is what we're after

- White bathroom suites are what everyone looks for. If yours is coloured, oops, but I'm not suggesting you change it. Do try and lighten the room though
- Freshen up the walls if necessary, white is good
- Dark tiles can be covered with cheap white ones. If they're already white re-grout any cracks or where the grouts gone brown
- Re-seal around the bath
- Carpets can quickly deteriorate in bathrooms, is yours fresh or should it be replaced, preferably with a light coloured vinyl?
- Use bright light bulbs
- Get a huge, frameless mirror to give the impression of more space

Bedrooms

How many bedrooms has your house got?

How many are actually bedrooms? You aren't alone if at least one is full of boxes, your old exercise bike, suitcases etc etc. It's all got to go. Make it easy for people to see spacious rooms and to imagine themselves living there.

- Clear the clutter, make each room feel as spacious as possible
- What are your duvets and bedding like? Not everyone likes patterned and frilly, keep them simple.
- Ditto curtains
- Beds made and no clothes on the floor please
- Buyers may want to see inside your wardrobes, so a clothes clearout will make them look more spacious
- Kids' bedrooms – do the best you can!

Storage Cupboards

As you know by now we all accumulate so much stuff and your buyers are no different. They want to feel they can fit all their things into your house. Crammed full cupboards make this really difficult to imagine. Empty or barely used cupboards give the sense that a house has a huge amount of storage space, a massive attraction to any buyer.

Light

We've all been in dark houses – there's something depressing about them, they just don't feel welcoming.

Houses bathed in light immediately feel more spacious, warmer, more welcoming and lift our spirits. They lift a buyer's spirits too!

- Make the most of any natural light - ensure your windows are sparkling. Open your curtains fully, use tie backs and even consider removing them if that gives you more light
- Get rid of those net curtains and blinds
- Move any large furniture or lamps that block natural light
- Make sure all your lights and light bulbs work
- Put higher wattage bulbs in your light fittings
- Use uplighters and lamps to lighten any dark corners
- Spotlights in the kitchen and bathroom always work
- Do use dimmer switches to get the lighting just right
- Leave lights on during a viewing, to help brighten any darker rooms.
- Dark walls, curtains and carpets all absorb precious light – consider changing them. It will help to really brighten your home
- Buyers prefer natural colours to bright, bold shades. Magnolia is still the best selling paint and can transform a dark room quickly and cheaply
- A large mirror on the wall opposite the window will lighten a dark room
- A cheap light coloured rug can hide a dark carpet

Back Garden

Think of this as another room, a haven, and present it accordingly.

A neglected garden is an enormous turn-off - it will seem like a massive undertaking to a buyer to put right. Similarly if you have a garden strewn with toys, with worn out grass and evidence of your pets, you mustn't leave it that way. A little investment and effort can literally add £1000's to the value of your house

- Re-turf/re-seed the lawn
- Feed your lawn a couple of weeks before viewings start, the grass will look fantastic
- Weed the borders, add some shrubs, have a few pots
- Clear any evidence of the kids and pets
- In the summer have the doors open, so it feels like an integral part of your home
- Patio furniture helps buyers think of al fresco eating, or sipping a cold beer or cool glass of wine on a balmy summers evening

Pets

We're a nation of animal lovers, but buyers may not warm to your pets. You may be immune to their presence, but is there any pet smell in your home? Ask a friend for an honest opinion. A fresh clean smelling home sells; a whiff of pets won't or will drag the price down.

- Say goodbye to the cat litter tray when a buyer is viewing
- Remove the pet food bowls
- Keep Tiddles and Rex outside
- Make sure you've removed pet hairs from every surface

Kids

You've got them; your buyer may have some too. Just don't let them dominate the house with their stuff while you're selling. They're little clutter bombs
Get a friend to look after them when your buyer is viewing or all of you get out of the way and leave it to your agent to show buyers around

Guarantees

- Keep these ready for inspection. Long-term warranties covering timber, damp-proofing and your roof. Shorter-term guarantees covering on-going repairs and any servicing invoices, for your boiler for example

Why Bother?

You choose - would you rather have lots of buyers competing and bidding for your house or no real interest and the occasional low, derisory offer?

How many weeks or months would you have to work to earn £1,000, £2000, £3,000, £5,000 or £10,000+ Tax Free? You could earn that with a few days spent preparing your house for sale.

Remember the golden rule is to help people buy into a lifestyle, to imagine themselves moving effortlessly into your house and creating their own home. Creating a sense of space is the key to your success. Good luck with your sale

