

How to Prepare for an Open House

Selling your home can be an emotional process and very stressful. Here are some general tips to help you prepare for the big day:

- Attend to any potential hazards — electrical wires crossing open areas, sharp table or counter top corners, slippery stairs and walkways, fragile items that can be easily damaged.
- Lock away or remove valuables such as jewellery, cameras, compact discs, coins and currency.
- Avoid cooking food with strong odours such as fish. The smell of fresh-brewed coffee, home-made bread and cookies can be very welcoming.
- In poor weather, provide a place for overshoes, boots, umbrellas and coats.
- A warm fire on a cold day will make your home feel inviting and cozy. But be sure your real estate agent is prepared to look after the fireplace while you're not home.

A tiny handprint on a wall or the slightest door squeak can be quite distracting to some potential buyers. Use this handy checklist to assess what needs to be cleaned, repaired or changed before opening your home to potential buyers: Please note, most of the times, it is better hiring a professional cleaning company such as Clean and Shiny to do the job for you.

Kitchen and bathrooms

- Clean all surfaces, including floors.
- Organize countertops.
- Ensure all sinks and faucets work properly.

Doors

- Fix squeaks and any other problems.
- Ensure the handles secure and work properly.
- Clean any stains.

Walls, ceilings, baseboards

- Clean any fingerprints or stains.
- Repair any holes, cracks, chipped paint, ripped wallpaper, water damage.
- If necessary, repaint in neutral or complimentary colours.

Lighting

- Check to see there is sufficient light.
- Attend to any broken switches, exposed wiring.

Other rooms

- Vacuum and dust all areas thoroughly.
- Collect and remove all clutter, including excess furniture.
- Neatly store books, toys and clothes in closets and on shelves.
- Clean all mirrors.
- Open pull up blinds on windows.

Floor coverings (Includes carpeting, tile, linoleum, hardwood, etc.)

- Remove all dirt and stains.
- Repair any damaged areas.
- If there is hardwood under old carpeting, remove the carpeting and restore the hardwood--a much desired feature in homes today.

Windows

- Clean and repair any cracks.
- Ensure they open easily.

Pet areas

- These should be clean, organized and odour free.

Outside the home

- Ensure all gates open easily.
- Clean all exterior surfaces, including decks, pools, walkways and driveways and make them tidy.
- Depending on the time of year, lawns should be mowed, walkways and driveway cleared of snow, leaves removed, trees pruned, gardens weeded, hedges trimmed.

