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Make that fixer-upper shine: 11 staging tips

Sway potential homebuyers by completing these tasks before the open house

BY MIKE PULLEY
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[Open houses](#) are daunting for any seller, but perhaps a little more so for those selling a fixer-upper. Helping your sellers whip their [fixer-upper](#) into its most marketable shape before the open house can help buyers envision themselves living in the home.

Here's how you can help your sellers stage their fixer-upper right before an open house:

1. Fix the [curb appeal](#)

The first thing that potential homebuyers will see is the [front yard](#). This includes the lawn, front door and porch. Buyers tend to love porches, which can be inviting and relaxing.

Homeowners should take care of these focal points. Tell them to ensure that the lawn is regularly mowed, to give a shabby front door a fresh coat of paint and to fix up any damaged areas that may exist on the front porch.

2. Bring the living area to life



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If your seller's fixer-upper has a living room that is separated from the dining room by a door, the space may feel cramped and disconnected.

Suggest removing the door so that the living area feels larger. Tell them to go an extra step further by applying new coats of neutral paint to the walls and sprucing up the decor with a few fresh pieces. These steps will help make the space cozy and inviting to potential homebuyers!

3. Break out the paint brushes

[Speaking of paint](#), there are few things as off-putting to a homebuyer as cracked paint or rooms painted in bold and bright hues.

Fresh coats of paint, especially in neutral or pastel colors, can help breathe new life into a home, especially a [fixer-upper](#). These colors can also help potential homebuyers envision themselves living in the home more easily.

4. Refinish hardwood floors

If your seller's home has been blessed with hardwood floors, this can be a big plus.

Unfortunately, if the hardwood floors have seen better days and are scratched and nicked, the seller may want to have the floors refinished.

The process may be a little pricy and time-consuming, but the outcome will be more than worth it.

If the floors are already in great condition, make sure that the seller isn't hiding the flooring with any rugs (especially if the rugs are dated or tattered!). Hardwood floors can help the space feel larger and cleaner, which makes them a major selling point for most buyers.

5. Highlight the positives

Every house has its own great perks, and [fixer-uppers](#) are no exception! Whether the home has great woodwork, cozy rooms or simply has an interesting history, help your sellers boost the appeal of their home by fixating on the positives.

6. Do some major cleaning

This is a very crucial step in [home staging](#). We're not just talking about a simple dusting and vacuuming here. Think of it as a full spring cleaning — that means your seller will need to do some [deep cleaning](#), including spaces in the home that haven't been cleaned for a very long time (or ever).

Your sellers should clean all the overlooked parts in their home such as baseboards, light switch covers, doorknobs, interior and exterior doors, vent covers, ceiling fans, the fireplace and inside light fixtures.

Also, if the home has carpets, suggest that your sellers break out the carpet cleaner after everything else has been cleaned.

7. Give each room a purpose

Potential homebuyers need to be able to envision what they can do with each room, so tell your sellers to give each room in their home a purpose.

Spare rooms can make fantastic guest bedrooms, home offices or libraries. Just make sure that your seller doesn't combine all three in one room!

Each room should also be [decluttered](#), and every closet should be organized and cleaned out.

8. Bring in the light

Curtains are beautiful in their own right, but they can darken and date any room. Tell your seller to take down the drapes and replace them with sheers to give the room a light, airy feel.

Pull the blinds all the way up to let the natural light pour in too. And of course, the windows should be squeaky clean to let in as much light as possible.

9. Update kitchen fixtures

Sellers don't have to worry about replacing their countertops — even minor changes can make the kitchen a more modern and welcoming room.

Tell your seller to consider replacing old light fixtures with modern ones or to swap outdated drawer pulls and cabinet knobs with new, stylish ones. Polished brass and brushed nickel finishes are always a hit.

10. Keep the bathroom bright and white

Do you know why hotels and spas always have white bathrooms? It's because white in this typically small space makes things appear fresher, cleaner, newer and more spacious.

At the very least, suggest that your seller purchase fresh white towels and add a white shower curtain and bathmat to give off an air of cleanliness and relaxation.

11. Flip all the switches on

[Lighting](#) is absolutely essential, especially during open houses. Turning on every overhead light, fan and other lights shows that there is nothing to hide (and makes the house look vibrant and cheerful, too!).

Even lights placed strategically in dark corners can make all the difference! Make sure that all the lights have been turned on before the open house begins.

Reminding your sellers to perform these tasks before the open house comes around can really put their fixer-upper in the best light possible and can sway a potential homebuyer's decision!

Mike Pulley is a renovation aficionado at [Home Buy Design](#). You can follow him on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#).