

The Lorne Goldman checklist

YOUR HOME MUST SELL ITSELF

An attractive home, well maintained and sparkling clean is most appealing to your potential buyers. The following checklist covers those items that influence a buyer most. I offer it for your consideration as you place your house on the market.

FIRST IMPRESSION OUTSIDE

A pleasing exterior appearance is essential for that critical first impression. These simple suggestions will help "show off" your property to its best advantage.

- Trim the lawn and keep it green. Shape up the shrubs and weed the flower beds.
- Clear the entry by keeping the walks free of toys, bicycles, garden tools, leaves and other hazards.
- Brighten the structure with a coat of paint or just a good cleaning. Replace screens if they are rusted or torn. Remove mildew or moss from walls or sidewalks with bleach or commercial cleaner.
- Add charm with flowers along the entry walk, in a pot by the door or in cheerful window boxes.
- Rid the driveway of grease stains with kitty litter or chemical solvent.
- Pick up all pet droppings and debris.
- Tidy up the garage and show off its size. Get rid of everything you don't want to move.
- Fix all exterior lights and debris.

INVITATION INSIDE

Think of prospective buyers as your guests and prepare the inside of your house accordingly. Here are some points to keep in mind:

- Perk up rooms with fresh paint. A modest investment in time and money can possibly add dollars to your final selling price. Sometimes just a touch up will do. Choose light, neutral colours for greatest appeal.
- Clean up clutter for appearance and safety's sake. Pay special attention to stairways, halls and children's rooms.
- Go on a kitchen campaign and keep it especially clean. The sink should always be clean and free of dirty dishes. Countertops appear more spacious when clean and uncluttered. Freshly mopped floors and baseboards can help "show off" your kitchen area.
- Make bathrooms sparkle by cleaning tile and porcelain. Commercial cleaners or vinegar will remove unsightly hard water stains. Replace

- any loose caulking or grouting and, while you're at it, fix any dripping faucets.
- Wash all windows and keep curtains and drapes crisp and clean. Vacuum blinds and wash window sills.
 - Clear out closets to make them appear roomier. Add extra space by pre-packing out of season clothing.
 - Clean the fireplace and make a cozy, crackling fire. Or, dress it up with green plants or dried flowers.
 - Roll out the welcome mat with a rough textured doormat. It will help keep your floors and carpets cleaner during showings. And it says you care about your home.
 - Eliminate odours by preventing them in the first place. Try to avoid cooking with cabbage, onions and garlic. Many people associate strong spicy odours with uncleanliness. Freshen the entire kitchen by sending a lemon through the garbage disposal. Sweeten the refrigerator with a box of baking soda.
 - Add special accents that make your house appear comfortable and inviting. An open cookbook on the counter, cut flowers in a vase, cookies or bread baking in the oven. Don't overdo it but think about things you have seen in attractive model homes that might subconsciously influence potential buyers.

EXTRA EFFORTS

- Empty out the attic to display the full value of this much appreciated but often neglected storage space.
- Clean and brighten the basement with light paint and large wattage bulbs. Drain sediment from your water heater to eliminate any rust water flowing from hot water taps.
- Breeze through the patio and remove unnecessary lawn furniture, sprinklers and garden tools to make the yard look more expansive. If you have a pool or Jacuzzi, give it a thorough scrubbing and place a few pots of blooming plants nearby.
- Hide debris in neatly covered trash cans.
- Treat pets to a stroll while your house is being shown. Many people are afraid of or allergic to animals. By removing them, buyers won't feel hurried or nervous.
- Turn off the television or radio. Potential buyers can look at your house quietly and without distraction.
- Please remove and replace any fixtures you want to keep.