



PAUL RUSHFORTH'S TOP TIPS TO INCREASING THE VALUE OF YOUR HOME AND SELLING

Paint

Dollar for dollar, a fresh coat of paint gives you more bang for your buck than anything else. Even if your current palette is relatively new, any scuffs or wear marks will channel an unkempt vibe. Make sure colors are warm, neutral and inviting.

Improve the lighting

Replace any dated light fixtures ASAP. How can you tell if it has to go? If it's over 15 years old and looks it – yet isn't a vintage (50-75 years old) or antique piece (older) – it should probably go.

De-clutter

Take the collectibles off the **mantel**, put the mismatched armchair into storage (or better yet, donate it) and pare your closets down to what you're actually wearing this season, packing away the rest. The more stuff you keep stored in the house, the more cluttered and small your home appears.

Give dated bathrooms a facelift

A nice bath helps sell a house. Bring an out-of-date bath up to speed with fresh warm paint, new ceramic tile and new lighting.

Curb appeal

Refresh your front yard according to the season. In spring, summer and fall, trim back dead plants and foliage and plant attractive annuals or perennials in flowerbeds. In winter, keep the walkway shovelled and cut back any tree or shrub branches damaged by heavy snowfall. A pair of planters flanking the front door and filled with seasonal arrangements instantly conveys pride of ownership.

Tend to the backyard

Simple fixes will make the most of your existing yard layout. Replace any damaged boards on your deck or fence, and apply a fresh coat of paint, or stain and sealant if the finish needs it. Weed and groom your garden and add some perennials for colour when in-season. If kids' toys are taking over the space, put some in storage. Think "tidy," "update" and "refresh".

Give dated Kitchens a facelift

A nice Kitchen helps sell a house. Bring an out-of-date Kitchen up to speed with tasteful paint colors, new ceramic tiles and new lighting. A modern backsplash and sleek countertop will always spruce up a kitchen.

Update Window Coverings

Dated window treatments need to come down, (if it's over 10 years old, get rid of it). If privacy isn't an issue, just leave the windows bare to maximize natural light and make the room's dimensions seem more generous. Otherwise, buy basic-issue cotton or linen **drapes**. Always tie drapes back during viewings and open houses.

Replace dated floors

Dated floors will always give the home an old feel and will repel a buyer from your home. Refinish scratched hardwood, replace soiled carpets, replace linoleum with ceramic tiles and try to stay away from Laminate floors. Carpet in the basement is always the best option!

Make the Home smell Nice

Make sure your home has a nice aroma, that appeals to the masses, but nothing too overpowering. Bake cookies before showings, use cinnamon sticks and fresh flowers. Make sure the home doesn't smell of pets or smoke. Smoke is a silent killer and will be a deal breaker even for buyers that smoke.