

PREPARING YOUR HOME FOR AN OPEN HOUSE



Whitney Wilcher

RE/MAX®



FRONT OF THE HOME: CREATING CURB APPEAL

- Cars**

It's important to clear all vehicles from the driveway and street out front. This allows for an open, fresh look and leaves plenty of parking space for potential buyers. Consider asking your neighbors to park a few houses down for the day.
- Grass**

The front yard should be freshly mowed, edged, and cleared, preferably 2-3 days before the open house. Freshly mowed grass shows a well-maintained home. Make sure to store or remove garden hoses, gardening utensils, supplies, etc.
- Signage**

It is essential to depersonalize your home as much as possible, starting with the yard. Remove all signs, including school signs, alarm signs, political signs, etc.
- Porch Appeal**

Clean, sweep, and organize the front porch; power wash if possible. Check furniture to ensure everything is clean and in working order. Power wash the driveway and sidewalks as well.
- Trees, Bushes, and Foliage**

Trim trees and bushes at least 5-6 days before the open house. This allows the leaves and branches to heal a little before the big day. De-weed flower beds and consider adding fresh mulch to a new, fresh look.
- Windows and Doors**

The doors and windows are important features that welcome guests. Give your windows and doors a quick cleaning, you'd be surprised by the difference it makes.



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BACKYARDS & CARPORTS: ESTABLISHING OUTDOOR COMFORTS

Grass

The backyard should be freshly mowed, edged, and cleared, preferably 2-3 days before the open house. Make sure to store or remove garden hoses, gardening utensils, supplies, etc.

Patio

Clean, sweep, and organize the patio; power wash if possible. Check furniture to ensure everything is clean and in working order. Power wash the sidewalks as well. Tidy up any toys, equipment, and miscellaneous items. Check all furniture to make sure everything is clean and undamaged.

Trees, Bushes, & Foliage

Trim trees and bushes at least 5-6 days before the open house. This allows the leaves and branches to heal a little before the big day. De-weed flower beds and consider adding fresh mulch to a new, fresh look.

Pet Habitats & Landmines

Make your pet's home as clean as your own! Tidy up dog houses, cat shelters, bird feeders, and dog runs; you could even paint them to match your house. Go over the yard carefully to remove all landmines. The last thing you need is someone tracking something back inside.

Pools & Hot Tubs

Make sure to clean the pool and hot tub right before the open house; remove all debris and store equipment. Check all features to make sure everything is in working order.



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INSIDE INTERIORS: PRINCIPLES TO USE THROUGHOUT THE HOUSE

Children & Schools

It's essential to remove as much identifying information as possible. Remove all references of your children's names (even initials), school information, awards, trophies, clothing, pictures, and more. There should be nothing that gives guests any information about you or your children.

Pets

There should be no pets at the home during the open house. Be sure to store food bowls, food, toys, litter boxes, beds, crates, etc. There should be no evidence of a pet, except maybe a pet door.

Medication

Gather all prescription medications and prepare to bring them or keep them boxed up and put away.

Mats, Rugs, and Runners

Consider storing all mats, rugs, small carpets, and runners. Floor coverings tend to make rooms look smaller, shrinking the overall look of your floorplan

Electronics & Lights

Make sure to remove all expensive handheld electronics and try to store the others (game consoles, DVD players, etc.). Make sure to turn off all TV screens and computer monitors. Right before the open house, turn on lights in each room.

Windows

Before the open house, make sure to open all curtains and blinds. Open windows provide pleasant, natural light and makes rooms look larger.

Trashcans

Before the open house, make sure to empty trashcans throughout the house.



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LIVING AREAS: PRESENTING SOCIAL AREAS

Dining Room

Try to make your dining areas as simple as possible. Remove any decorative place settings and try to minimize the size of your centerpiece as well. Fruit bowls make great substitutes. Make sure to remove any high chairs or baby seats from the table.

Study/Office

Remember to turn off any computers and remove or store any laptops and/or tablets. Remove any paperwork, work-related material, bills, and papers with personal information (books and magazines are fine).

Kitchen

As a general rule of thumb, your kitchen should be as open, clean, and clear as possible. This includes appliances, decorations, sponges, fridge magnets, calendars, etc. Clean every surface in the kitchen, especially the appliances, cabinet doors, and countertops. Before the open house, make sure all cabinets, pantry doors, and drawers are closed.

Living Room

Before the open house, tidy furniture by fluffing pillows. Remove any non-essential items, such as toys, blankets, or pet beds. If you have a fireplace, remove ashes from the fire box. Make sure to turn off all TVs and remove any pictures.



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BEDROOMS: MAKING EACH ROOM WELCOMING

Master Bedroom

Each bedroom should look clean, open, and comfortable. Put fresh sheets and linens on the bed. Remove any items from the bedside tables, dressers, etc. Make sure to take or store all jewelry, watches, and other valuables.

Closets

Try to tidy the closet, arranging shoes and straightening hangers; declutter if possible. Large closets are a big selling point for potential buyers so try to make as much space as possible.

Children's Rooms

Children's rooms should be tidy and organized, including the floors, shelves, and tables. Add fresh linens to the bed and remove anything from underneath the bed. Organize toys while storing as many as possible; this includes closet space. Make sure to remove anything with your child's name or school! This includes photos, trophies, notebooks, school materials, activities, classes, sports, etc. Shut down any computers and remove games from view. This is especially important for games that are played online.

BATHROOMS: MAKING A BATHROOM LOOK LIKE A SPA

Showers & Bathtubs

The bathroom is often a major selling point for buyers as well. Start by storing all soaps, shampoos, and other hygiene products. Make sure to clean glass shower doors. Consider using a tile cleaner to make the surfaces shine.

Countertops

Remove all items from the counter and use a minimal approach to decorations. Store all toothbrushes as well. Make sure medications have been removed/stored and all cabinets are closed before the open house.

Floors

Consider updating any older bathmats and remember to store any scales.



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