

Decorating tricks for selling your home

Before having your Realtor post that "For Sale" sign in front of your home, be sure to take a careful look at the inside and outside of the house. How your home looks to prospective buyers can determine not only how long it stays on the market, but what it sells for.

Begin by asking your Realtor for some tips on sprucing up inside and outside appearances. A good real estate professional will be well aware of what features will catch a prospective buyer's eye - and what minor eyesores can actually work against a potential sale.

Both the inside and outside of your home must leave prospective buyers with a positive

feeling. If you feel you need another opinion about your home's appearance, ask a relative or friend to look at the house with a critical eye and give you an honest assessment.

Major decorating before selling may be both unnecessary and undesirable since buyers often prefer to select their own paints and colors. But if paint, both inside and out, is dull, old and dirty, you may want to paint the key areas. Washable, latex paints are the best choice. Inside, a light, bright natural color such as white or beige is the best choice.

Light colors will make a room look larger and brighter. Natural shades make a room more flexible for any type of furniture.

Fresh paint, minor repairs, potted plants, floral arrangements and an appealing scent, can all improve the marketability of your home and create a good first impression.

Here are more easy and economical tips:

- Make badly marked walls and closets more attractive simply by giving them a good scrub.
- Repair any broken screens, door hinges, windows and other items that detract from the home's appearance; replace old light fixtures, door knobs, light switch plates to create a fresher appearance.
- Re-arrange, remove, or add furniture to an area to make it appear bigger or smaller.
- Simple, inexpensive window treatments can work wonders. Adding a valance or fabric swag that complements a room's decor, can be very appealing.
- Use a strip of wallpaper, or a bright wallpaper border, to make a room come alive.
- Hardwood floors are a popular item on many buyer's list. To check if your home has hardwood under broadloom, lift a corner and check. Removing old broadloom and having the hardwood floors sanded and polished, may be the feature that makes a buyer pick your home over another.
- If your home has worn broadloom only, consider replacing it in a neutral shade. You

may not recover the cost, but you could sell your home faster.

- Remove all unnecessary possessions or clutter that detract from the sale. Consider holding a garage sale prior to selling or donating items to charity.

- Enhance the key selling points of your homes - a workshop, a solarium, a beautiful garden, or a fireplace - by drawing attention to them. An attractive hanging, mirror or framed print above a fireplace will draw attention to it. An open view from a window will draw attention to the garden outside, and so on.

- Keep front and back entrances of your home clean, clear and inviting by adding a welcome mat, an attractive door hanging or placing potted plants nearby.

- Always keep everything clean - windows and mirrors should be sparkling.

- Try to have a natural flow from room to room, rather than rooms that are not uniform or complimentary.

- To make a room look more spacious, remove toys, excess furniture, wall-to-wall trophies and books.

- Make sure the house is at a comfortable temperature and that the right number of lights are on. A crackling fire creates a homey feeling, day or night, during the fall and winter.

Remember, the most important rooms to many buyers are the kitchen and the bathroom. To create the impression that your home is easy to maintain, pay special attention to these rooms and keep them tidy and clean at all times.

Apply many of these tips to your home. If you want to sell quickly and at the price you are asking, it is very important to set the right mood and environment both inside and out.

The best advice is be objective. Look at your property through the eyes of a prospective buyer.

This article is provided by local Realtors and the Ontario Real Estate Association (OREA) for the benefit of consumers in the real estate market.


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Century home, lovingly restored and renovated. Features large open concept family room/kit. with F.P. & walkout, master with ensuite, beautiful wood floors +++ on a spectacular 4.25 acre property on the edge of the Escarpment. \$369,000.

This end unit offers privacy & more yard space. Multi-level space with bright eat in kitchen & spacious bedrooms. Walkout to patio from rec room, plus fireplace. One of the lowest priced townhomes around.

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RURAL ESTATE SUBDIVISION, only minutes to Hwy. 401 & Campbellville. Lots: starting at \$99,000. Homes to be built: Pine Grove model (shown above) \$299,900 or select a plan to suit your family.



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COUNTRY RETREAT



Country property just minutes from Milton. Features an open concept design with large country kit., w/o to patio & i/g pool. Many upgrades & renovations in last 10 yrs. Surrounded by mature trees includes large detached barn or workshop & attached 2-car garage. \$349,000.

\$189,900.



This character home is located on one of "OLD" Milton's finest streets and features wide woodwork, glass sunporch, walkout to deck, separate dining room, main floor laundry. Call now for more information.

DESIRABLE COMPLEX



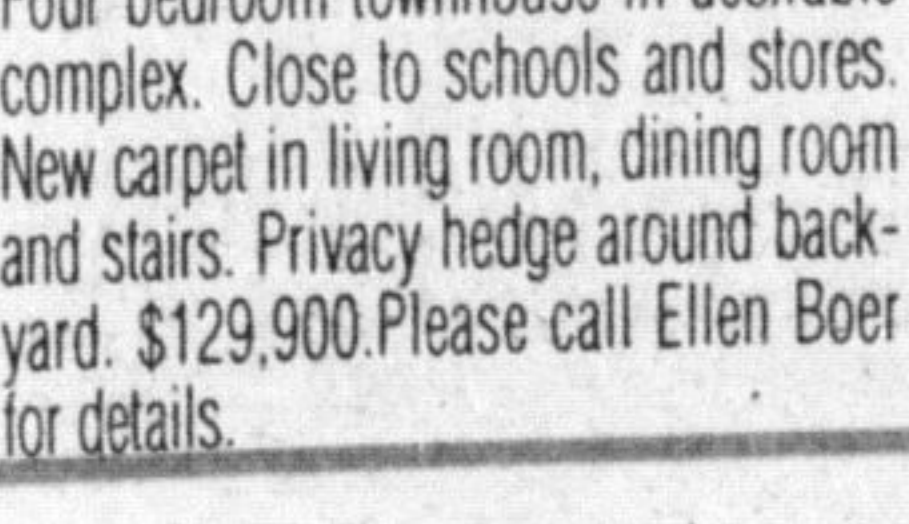
Four bedroom townhouse in desirable complex. Close to schools and stores. New carpet in living room, dining room and stairs. Privacy hedge around backyard. \$129,900. Please call Ellen Boer for details.

HISTORICAL HOME



Historical home facing Victoria Park Square. Lovingly and tastefully renovated with recycled pine board floor. Large country kitchen with walkout to deck and manicured lawns, a pleasure to view. Call Ellen Boer for more details. \$229,000.

IMMEDIATE OCCUPANCY



Backing onto open space. This 3 bedroom unit has been freshly painted & features almost all new windows & new patio door. New Price \$111,900.

Family rooms for real people

The family room is the center of today's home. It is the place where families get together to watch television, listen to music, work on the computer, do homework, eat, pay bills and entertain informally. With all of these functions, the family room must be a truly versatile room that stands up to a lot of wear and tear. Since it is the room where you spend the most time, you want it to look great, feel comfortable, and reflect your lifestyle.

Upholstery fabrics are more durable and stain resistant than ever. We've come a long way from the boring upholstery fabrics of the eighties, and today's fabrics look great and are easy to care for, too.

Does your family room have panelled walls that you are itching to replace? Often, you can cover panelling with a wall liner and wallcovering, without going to the trouble and mess of ripping off the old panelling. And today's wallcovering come in a beautiful array of vinyls that are washable as well as beautiful.

It seems like the carpet industry makes new advances in fiber technology every year. Many carpets possess stain resistant character-

istics and are heat set so the carpet wears well, but also keep in mind your family's comfort. If you have children, they are apt to lie on the floor just as soon as sit on a sofa. Some fibres, like polypropylene, feel very uncomfortable to the touch. On the other hand, polyester feels extremely soft. Weigh the pros and cons of carpet fibers before you make your decision.

If you have struggled with trying to find a place for the television, cable box, VCR, and stereo, look no further. The entertainment center can hold them all. If you still haven't invested in one, you'll be happy to know that entertainment centers are made to suit any style, from traditional to contemporary. Make a list of your needs, and be sure to check the dimensions of your television before you begin shopping for an entertainment center. Measure the outside and inside doorways to be sure they will allow for delivery - entertainment centers come in some pretty hefty sizes!

So sit back, relax and enjoy your family room - after you've decorated, of course!

This article has been provided by June Wilson of Decorating Den, Milton

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