

## **Does Your Home Attract Potential Buyers?**

Most of today's buyers are looking for homes they can take pride in from the onset. They want to move in and be comfortable and make it their own immediately. Although we have some distressed properties and other properties offered "as is," most buyers are not looking for fixer uppers or renovation projects. "They don't want to spend their limited leisure time repairing or waiting for contractors," according to Ginger Foust with Dream Interior Redesign & Staging.

"Buyers are becoming more and more particular with what they will accept and pay for. They do not want your house with your style choices. This is why professional stagers recommend updating and neutralizing your house," said Foust.

A key factor in selling your home is the buyer's first impression. Thus, it should be presented at its best. The majority of buyers are budget, time, and style conscious. "Only a drastic price reduction might attract today's buyers if they see 1980s and 1990s choices in style, design, and décor. Even then, they will probably present a low-ball offer," says Foust.

Offering allowances at closing such as new flooring and counter tops is not very effective today. "Buyers do not look that far into the future and many cannot visualize what a house could be," she added.

What do buyers want? Foust recommends updating features such as light fixtures, appliances, flooring, cabinet finishes, plumbing fixtures/faucets, and countertops and backsplashes. Colors are also sometimes in need of updating. There are mixed suggestions when it comes to color. Although, it generally ranges from white to soft, earth-tone colors, which can bring the outside in.

Lighting is absolutely crucial as it warms rooms and creates ambience. Foust cautions though that lighting which is old, outdated, and in need of repair, can be a negative distraction, and that the message this projects is, "I'm a low-dollar house." The results could mean a sales price that is lower than what is desired.

She recommends updating lighting fixtures. "This is a relatively small financial investment that can reap big rewards and measurably improve the wow factor in any house. It is worth the money and effort of installation," Foust said.

Foust also offers some lighting guidelines for sellers. Fixtures need to shine, (no rust, no tarnish, no dust, and no cobwebs). All light bulbs must be working and need to be dust free.

Consider clear bulbs in fixtures where there is down light. Add up lights in dark corners and below silk plants for drama. Add a timer to important fixtures if you will not be home to turn on the lights or ask REALTORS® to turn on the lights before potential buyers come into the house. Foust says, “Two minutes of preparation can make a lasting impression.”

In many of our older homes and some of our newer homes we are seeing sculpted, two tone carpet. This type of carpet is outdated! In fact, many buyers are moving away from carpeting or using it sparingly.

Most buyers will just say no to shag carpeting, avocado-colored appliances (or golden, olive, or bronze), walnut cabinets and baseboards, Formica counters, and items trimmed in gold. Some outdated items according to Foust include shiny brass lights and plumbing fixtures, laminate counter tops, tile countertops with dark grout, wallpaper and borders, themed rooms, bold paint, and golden oak, honey oak, or whitewashed oak.

“If you cannot provide the upgrades in your house, then potential buyers will move on. Buyers want it all and they want it now or they move on to the next listing to find it,” said Foust. To learn more about redesign and staging, you can visit Foust’s website at [www.dreamredesigns.com](http://www.dreamredesigns.com) or call her at 559-877-2442.

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