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*Experience You Can Trust*

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The COVID-19 outbreak has created a new reality for all of us, at least temporarily. Chances are you're dealing with many new challenges, both personally and professionally. We all are.

Now, it's up to each of us to do our part so we can get through this as quickly as possible.

Remember, we're all in this together. Stay positive and know that things will get better.

In the meantime, you might have immediate concerns about the real estate market. For example, you might be wondering if you should put off moving. Or, you might need to move but are worried about all this uncertainty.

If so, give me a call. As a real estate professional, I have the latest market information, insights and tools - and can give you sound advice.

Good information and advice are often the antidote to stress, especially during challenging times. So, please, don't hesitate to reach out to me.

Take care and know that I'm thinking of you and wish you well.

# Not-So-Obvious Home Staging Tips

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When it comes to “staging” your home for sale - which basically means ensuring it looks clean and uncluttered - you probably already know the basics: clean the counters, vacuum the floors, mow the lawn, etc.



But there are also some less obvious home staging tips that can help to sell your property faster and for a higher price. Here are a few examples.

## **The Kitchen**

*Obvious:* The stove, sinks and countertops should be spotless.

*Not-so-obvious:* The contents of your cabinets and refrigerator should be facing forward.

## **The Bathrooms**

*Obvious:* They should be clean and uncluttered. Have fresh towels hanging neatly on the rack. (Create the “hotel bathroom” look.)

*Not-so-obvious:* All towels should match. Ensure toilet lids are closed.

## **Your Bedroom**

*Obvious:* Make the bed neatly. Check that the closet is organized and uncluttered. (If your closet is bulging with clothes, put some in storage.)

*Not-so-obvious:* Don’t leave any clothes out. Even clean clothes neatly folded in a hamper can seem untidy to some people.

## **The Kids’ Bedrooms**

*Obvious:* They need to be clean and uncluttered. (Good luck!)

*Not-so-obvious:* Arrange stuffed animals, games and other toys like an attractive display in a toy store. It’s okay to have a toy, like a racetrack, out of the box. Just make sure it’s completely put together.

# A Quick Household Check Helps Conserve Resources

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This is a good time to visually check of all your utilities, fixtures and appliances to make sure they are not using expensive energy and resources inefficiently.



Start with the faucets. Ensure they don't drip when closed. If they do, replace the washers (or in the case of washerless units, the valve cartridges).

Next, check that your toilets don't leak. To check for leaks, pour colored liquid bowl cleaner into the tank, then wait several hours to see if it appears in the bowl without flushing. If it does, you likely have a leak, and may need to replace the stopper in the bottom of the tank.

Then, make sure your hot water tank and/or pipes are not sweating. While you're at it, consider turning down the tank thermostat by a couple of degrees - chances are you won't notice a difference, except hopefully on your energy bill.

Finally, check that windows and doors are not drafty. If they are, consider caulking, repairing or replacing them.

## Help Buyers Understand the Area

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There's a famous saying in the real estate business: "Location, location, location". It simply means that where your home is located - your neighborhood - is just as important to potential buyers as the features of the property itself.



Sellers often make the mistake of creating a long list of home features while ignoring neighborhood features. They tout the spacious kitchen, and the newly renovated bathrooms, but say little about the area.

So, when you're ready to sell your home, sit down and create two lists: home features and neighborhood features. Buyers want to know both.

On the neighborhood features list, include:

- Locations of schools and daycare centers.
- Major retailers and shopping centers.
- Proximity to major commuting routes.
- Theaters, night clubs and other entertainment.
- Rinks, gyms and other sporting facilities.
- Green space, walking trails, and ponds.

When buyers have their eyes on two properties which are comparable in features, the neighborhood is often the deciding factor.

## Notable, Quotable, Quotes!



“When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves.”

Victor Frankl

“Character consists of what you do on the third and fourth tries.”

James Michener

“Small opportunities are often the beginning of great enterprises.”

Demosthenes

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