

IMPROVEMENTS TO INCREASE A HOME'S VALUE IN QUARANTINE



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There are many improvements that a homeowner can make to their property to increase the house's value, but there are only so many they can do while in Quarantine!

If you are thinking about selling your house in 2020 and are looking to get a jump on house preparation, then these tips are a great place to start with all the free time on your hands!

PAINTING

Painting has one of the best Return on Investments (ROI) when it comes to increasing the value of a house compared to its cost... Especially with the DIY (Do it yourself) homeowners. Simply put, Painting is one of the easiest and most cost-effective ways to increase a house's value.

According to the International Association of Home Staging Professionals, painting is the least expensive investment for the biggest return. Painting the interior results in a 107 percent ROI while painting the exterior leads to a 55 percent ROI.

When it comes to interior paint, the trick is to select warm natural colors. When it comes to selling, personalization is a detraction.

Neutral colors make it easier for potential buyers to imagine themselves living in the space as a neutral color paint goes with just about anything.

The recommended warm neutral colors are beiges, tans, golds, grays and "greige" which is a blend of gray and beige. You do want to avoid white as white is seen as too stark of a color on a wall.

When it comes to painting and getting an ROI, you will want to prioritize painting the Kitchen, bathrooms, entryway and foyer. Kitchens and baths are considered the most important parts of a house while the entryway and foyer help in the development of a positive first impression.

LANDSCAPING

April showers bring May buyers... Not exactly how the saying goes, but improvements to the landscaping now can pay huge dividends when it comes time to sell. A buyer's first impression is when they pull up to a house which makes landscaping a very important part of that buyer's overall impression.

First and foremost, cleanup of a yard comes first. A homeowner will want to remove leaves in landscaping beds and prune trees and shrubs. Tackling any overlooked pruning is important because nothing says neglect like a bunch of dead branches. You will also want to pay some special attention to any container plants in and around the house.

If you have an outside area, make sure the area is cleaned and staged with outdoor furniture

to help a potential buyer's imagination of spending time with their friends and family in the space. A savvy homeowner looking to increase their house's value may also consider power washing paved surfaces. With very little time or effort, a grungy and grimy surface can look brand new.

Another tip is to edge all landscaping beds, apply fresh mulch and add flowers to help make the yard pop. Nothing spruces up a place like a new application of mulch. The color of the new mulch will help enhance the contrast of the surrounding plants.

To add some additional pop, flats of annuals are relatively inexpensive and offer a splash of several colors and styles.



DECLUTTERING

The most common reason people give for moving is the lack of space in their current house. They feel they have outgrown the space and are therefore looking for a home that gives them the space they need. So, if they view a home and come to the conclusion that the homeowner is running out of space then it can turn into a huge turnoff.

The first and most important aspect of decluttering is removing all personal items. This includes family photos, large collections on display (think knick-knacks) and unusual décor. When we take out our personality in a house, it leaves room for the buyer to imagine themselves. And that maximizes a homeowner's selling price!

Removal of furniture that is not in excellent shape or furniture that is crowding a room is another excellent way to increase a property's value. Taking extra furniture out of a room instantly makes it look larger.

Homeowners that take as much furniture out of a room as possible often feel that the room looks empty. But to a buyer, they will look at the same room and think it has tons of possibility and place their furniture in the room. This is what a seller wants! A buyer envisioning themselves in the house.

Decluttering all the other stuff! The rule of thumb is if you are not going to take it with you to the next place, then get rid of it now! A decluttered house looks fresh and clean to a potential buyer. Be ruthless in your removal of clutter. All surfaces on tables, counters and bookshelves should be clear or almost clear. Clear everything off the fridge, tidy up the toys and straighten out the garage.

Decluttering bonus is to not forget to declutter inside of cupboards, closets and drawers. Buyers look behind them as well! The impression of closets, drawers and cupboards overflowing will give the impression that the house doesn't have enough space.



IMPROVE LIGHTING WHERE POSSIBLE

The type and quality of light in a house can positively attract buyers to it or repel them away. Most people aren't looking for a new house to live in a dark cave! And keep in mind that not all potential buyers will visit a house during the day which makes proper lighting even more important.

The easiest and most obvious is to make certain all curtains and blinds are open.

If lightbulbs are broken or burnt out, replace them. If there is a switch that hasn't worked in years, but never bothered you then now is the time to call an electrician and get it fixed.

Examine all prominent lights in a Dining Room or Living Room to ensure that all light bulbs are working and that the fixture is clean and shiny.

Harsh lighting can be a huge detraction of a house. In bedrooms, buyers will want to see a soft light so change out any light bulbs that are not of soft lighting. In darker less inviting spaces, you may want to add additional light. Examples of this could be adding bedside lamps, desk lamps or floor lamps.



REPLACE OLD FIXTURES

Tastes change quickly. What was the latest design five or ten years ago today could now be outdated. Replacing fixtures modernizes a space for short money.

Fixtures that a homeowner can quickly change out and update include light fixtures, light switch plates and outlet covers, bathroom faucets, and kitchen hardware are examples of easy updates that can make a huge difference.

SPRING CLEANING

It's a quarantine in the Spring. So now is the time to get ahead of the spring cleaning. Be sure to clean around doors, paying special attention to areas like doorknobs, frames and sliding door tracks.

Be sure to dust light fixtures and ceiling fans while scrubbing and caulking the bathrooms.

Don't forget the windows! Be sure to scrub each pane on the inside and out of the window. Remove and/or launder the drapes and be sure to dust the blinds. Scrubbing the sills and trim can also be of great value when it comes to making each window sparkle.

Especially if there are pets in the house, cleaning carpets can be a big step to freshen the look of the carpets as well as remove any pet odors that we have become nose blind to.

Speaking of being nose blind, smell is sometimes the most evocative sense when it comes to selling a house. With the warmer weather coming, opening the windows to air out the entire house is a great idea. Febreze, scented wall plug ins and scented candles are also some of our best friends!





STAGING THE HOUSE

It has been proven, staged houses sell faster and for more money. A lot of what we have already talked about is part of successfully staging a home. It's important to remember that it's all about the buyer when selling a house and everything a homeowner does must be with the buyer in mind.

For the most part when we talk about staging, we are talking about the process of strategically arranging furnishings and décor to make a house look its best while selling. Again, this is about making it look its best... Not necessarily about functionality!

A National Association of Realtors study found that the Living Room is the most crucial space to stage. Followed by the Master Bedroom and Kitchen. So if time is of the essence, then start on the room that will give the biggest bang for the sweat labor!

The rule of thumb is to remove about half of each room's furniture. This will make every room more appealing to most buyers as the

rooms will feel bigger with less furniture in them. It's important to always have at least one piece of furniture in every room. Without one focal point, the human eye has trouble figuring out just how large a space is. For vacant bedrooms, blow up mattresses propped up on crates work wonders to help showcase the overall size and warmth of a room.

In the bathroom some simple touches can go a long way. Ensure that all hanging towels are fresh and maybe even consider buying some new white fluffy "show" towels. Examine the bathmat and shower curtain and consider swapping these out for something new. And don't forget that no one wants to see your toothbrushes and razors laying around. Keep all personal items packed neatly under the sink or in the linen closet. And for the biggest pet peeve... Make sure the toilet seat is DOWN!

CONCLUSION

Getting top dollar on a house can be a pain in the back side. That is why it is important to know what items to focus on and what items to let the next homeowner do. Some areas might provide a gain in equity, while others will ensure that a buyer doesn't run away scared.

At the Chubb Realty Group, we will have our stager come to your house and provide a Staging Consultation as part of our marketing program. If you are thinking about selling your house in the future, then give Jeffrey Chubb a call at 617-480-2600 or send an email at Jeff@Boston2.com.

