

A Last-Minute Showing! Are You Ready?

If your house is for sale, you know you need to keep it picked up – in case you get a call from a REALTOR who wants to bring very interested buyers to take a look in the next 20 minutes.

Your house, as a rule, will be clean. But in those few minutes that you have before the potential buyers arrive, there are a few things you can do to make your home shine!

Here are my top 11 items that need special attention when buyers are on their way.

I suggest starting at the top of this list, depending on how much time you have. That way, the key items will get done before the REALTOR and the buyers arrive.

1. **Lighten Up the House.** You don't want potential buyers entering a dark, gloomy home. So, turn on all the lights, even those in your closets, garage and basement. If home shoppers are coming in the evening, make sure you turn on your exterior lights too. If it's daytime, open your shades and drapes to let all the light in. (Hopefully, your windows are clean.)
2. **Set the Temperature to a Comfortable Setting.** Again, you want potential buyers to feel comfortable when they tour your home. To help, maintain a good indoor temperature around 70 degrees.
3. **Remove the Clutter.** This is especially important for the kitchen and gathering areas. Remove and put away any mail that is stacked up on a kitchen counter, small knick knacks or odds and ends, and even small appliances. Make sure they are out of sight. Outside the home, make sure any lawn tools and toys are also picked up and stored in their proper place.

4. **Empty Garbage Cans.** All garbage cans need to be empty. And, while your house is on the market, try to wash them out once a week and spray them with disinfectant to cut down odors. A stinky odor in the house will be a turn off any potential buyers.
5. **The Bedrooms.** Do a quick tour and make sure all the beds in the home are made. While doing the tour, make sure all the furniture drawers are completely closed and that all clothes are picked up and put away.
6. **The Bathrooms.** Wipe your shower and tub area dry, if necessary, and make sure the toilet lids are down. Remove any clutter or toiletry items from the vanity areas.
7. **The Kitchen.** Make sure all the counters are clean and clear. Put any dishes into the dishwasher, but don't start the cycle if it will be running during the showing. Store any kitchen gadgets out of sight. Do a quick sweep up of the area, using a cleaning towel or sponge to clean away any spots. Straighten the eating table or chairs.
8. **Vacuum Carpets.** Give the carpets a quick vacuum, especially in the entry and living areas.
9. **Open Doors.** Make sure you open all interior doors, except for closets and the pantry. An open door is much more inviting.
10. **Dust!** You might be running out of time at this point, but if you still have a few minutes, dust the furniture. A quick wipe down of furniture, TV screens and computer monitors will make the home shine. While you're there, make sure the TV and computers are turned off.
11. **Finally, leave the house.** Buyers don't want you there when they are looking at the property. Plus, your departure should remove any vehicles from the driveway and/or garage.

