

# Good To Know

## Dream Home Athens Tips & Guides

### Important Tips for Home Sellers

#### Find a professional listing agent

Find a dedicated, responsive, and knowledgeable real estate agent – someone you can trust to guide you through every step of selling your home. A good seller's agent will make informed recommendations about a listing price, advise you on which repairs will help you sell your home, and make recommendations about decluttering, staging, and maximizing your curb appeal.

A good seller's agent shines the most when it comes time to negotiate an offer. The goal is to make sure you earn top dollar for your house and to sell it quickly. This process starts by focusing on the right listing price.

- If your home is priced too high, it will likely sit on the market and possibly longer than most homes in your area. This may cause prospective buyers to second-guess its value.
- If your home is priced too low, you could leave money on the table and diminish the equity you would bring to the purchase of your next home.

Your ideal selling agent will have well-developed instincts for what the real estate market is doing in your area. Take your time and speak to several agents to find someone you can comfortably work well with and will work hard for your interests.

#### Determine the best time to list your home

Reliable real estate wisdom suggests that spring into summer is when most people start hunting for a new house. Buyers will typically research properties online months before touring their first home in person. This way they can understand how much house they can afford in neighborhoods that appeal to them most.

Usually, the end of March or the beginning of April is considered the start of homebuying season. However, this year's homebuying season seems to have hit early as nearly half the homes listed mid-January into February went under contract in under two weeks. Meaning we are currently in a seller's market and you do not have to wait to fetch top dollar for your home.

#### Professional photography and 3D walkthroughs are key

Many real estate agents now offer 3D tours of their listings. Virtual walkthroughs are a massive advantage for both buyers and sellers. Buyers can "shop" any time of the day or night, and sellers can "show" their house 24/7. It also cuts down on showings to only the serious buyers. If a buyer is genuinely interested, they will view the virtual walkthrough (probably several times) and then request a showing.

Professional photography is another great option to show your home in its best light. Homes listed with high-quality, professional images are known to sell quicker and for more money. A professional real estate photographer will capture each room at the best angle and highlight its best features. You can also request photos shot at dusk with both interior and exterior lights shining. It is all about painting those special pictures in your buyer's mind.

If you are selling a luxury listing with a view or large plot of land, consider drone photography to fully capture everything your property has to offer.

#### Handle the repairs from a pre-listing home inspection

It might be tempting to put off small repairs and let the next owner handle them. Unfortunately, if you list a house with evident and necessary repairs, prospective buyers will also scrutinize your property more closely for larger deferred maintenance issues. If you want to be proactive, one of the best real estate tips for selling your home is setting up a pre-listing home inspection.

When you choose to fix everything, the inspector finds before you list your house, you gain valuable peace of mind during the closing process. Your buyer will most likely want their own inspection as part of the sales contract, but when that inspector finds everything is in perfect order, your buyer will have confidence in the sale.

#### Boost your curb appeal

It may feel counterintuitive to work on the outside of your home as you get ready to sell. But when you keep up with lawn maintenance, pull weeds, fix the fence, power-wash the siding, and clean up the cobwebs, your property will stand out and really "wow" prospective buyers.

Think back to the last time you drove around looking at houses for sale. If the house looked like it was in rough

shape on the outside, most of the time, you probably did not bother to request a showing. Good curb appeal will draw buyers into your home. They will start to envision themselves playing basketball, grilling in the backyard, or relaxing on the porch. You want to help buyers fall in love with your house and curb appeal will help you do that.

### Declutter, then declutter some more

It is no secret; we all accumulate stuff. However, you want potential buyers to be looking at your home, not your belongings. So, another great real estate tip is to have your home appear move-in ready so homebuyers can see themselves – and their things – in your space. To do this, you will need to be relentless about removing as many personal items as possible and commit to a minimalist lifestyle, at least until you go under contract on your house.

Of course, you have items you use daily and weekly. Keep those accessible but out of sight if you can. Remove anything seasonal, like decorations, extra blankets, or anything you will not use for months. Renting a storage unit or on-site storage container could be helpful and allow you to eliminate extra furniture and other items from your home until you move into your new space. It is all about perception. A house with minimal furniture, unstuffed closets, tasteful artwork, and a general lack of surface clutter will look clean, spacious, and appealing.

### Stage your home

One of the most important real estate tips is staging your home. Key staging tactics involve placing furniture and throw pillows invitingly. You can also set a dining room or kitchen table. And placing a vase or two of fresh flowers around the home is a nice touch. The purpose of staging is to show buyers the home's potential. You want all the main rooms – kitchen, dining room, living room, bathrooms, and master bedroom – to create the feeling that they are already home.

### Always be ready for a showing

When you list your home, you could get calls from agents within hours regarding potential buyers who want to see your home. It is easier to handle those calls if you do your best to keep your home "show ready." Of course, that involves keeping the home clean at a minimum. Before you list the house, do a good deep cleaning in every room.

Be sure to give extra attention to air vents and ductwork by cleaning out the dust and any debris stuck in the vent. Dust all remaining furniture and artwork. Wash the windows and glass doors so they sparkle and run the vacuum to help refresh the carpets.

Finally, use an odor remover to eliminate any pet odors or lingering smells from last night's dinner. You can make an incredibly positive impression if the only scent a buyer remembers is the smell of fresh-baked cookies or fresh flowers.

### Accommodate requests for last-minute showings

Unfortunately, buyers are not always available to see the home when it is most convenient for you. Here is a list so you can easily clean up and be out of the house in 20 minutes.

- Place any dishes in the dishwasher.
- Wipe down the bathroom and kitchen countertops.
- Wipe down the toilet seats.
- Grab a bin and place any loose toys or books inside.
- Toss any stray clothing in the laundry hamper.
- Close all the closet doors.
- If you have paperwork or other clutter on the countertop, tuck it out of sight in a drawer, or worst case, make an organized pile. Organized is better than scattered.
- Make the beds.
- Sweep the floors.
- Take out the garbage as you leave and bring your pets with you.

### Respond to offers in a timely manner

Be respectful of all reasonable offers. You know what price you will accept and on what terms, including what you would be willing to negotiate on if asked. Most contracts expect a response within 48 hours, but why wait? Respond with a counteroffer or acceptance as soon as a good offer comes in.