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We all know that first impressions count so why should it be any different when we are selling our home, our most prized possession?

“You do not want to be confronted with a situation in which you cannot sell your property in good time and for the price you are looking for, this makes it all the more important to make that first strike when you put your home onto the market.”

The truth is that you only get one chance to impress that potential buyer on show day, so it is critical to always show the best side of your [property for sale](#).

This is the view of Rupert Finnemore, Pam Golding Properties (PGP) joint area manager Hyde Park. He says some homeowners do not see a need to spruce up their [rental properties](#) when it comes time to sell. This is because first impressions really do count. Potential buyers may be turned off by the chipped paint on the wall and the damp areas come show day. For this reason, it is critical that we properly prepare our homes for sale.

“You do not want to be confronted with a situation in which you cannot sell your property in good time and for the price you are looking for,” adds Finnemore. “This makes it all the more important to make that first strike when you put your home onto the market.”

Just what can you do to your home in order to give yourself a better chance at making that sale then? Jason Shaw, manager of PGP’s Fourways/Dainfern office believes changing your own thinking may be a good place to start. “It can be a good idea to let go of all of the fond old memories that you have of your home and start seeing it as a product,” he points out. “Remember that your property is something that you need to sell in order to move on with your life and make new beginnings. Therefore, it is important to mentally prepare yourself to sell your home and visualise yourself actually making the sale.”

Buyers today are on the lookout for value and do not want to spend their hard-earned cash on a myriad of expensive repairs after they move in. In addition, damaged fittings, window panes and paintwork leave a bad impression. For these reasons it is critical that you make all of those minor repairs that you have been meaning to do for years but have never got around to. So paint your home inside and out if this is necessary, and repair cracked walls, damaged fittings, leaky faucets, damaged baths and anything else, large or small, that could potentially turn off a potential buyer. Security is important to many South Africans and for this reason it is well worthwhile to ensure the alarm and garden beams are all working.

“Another step you can take to improve the marketability of your home is to simply clean it inside and out,” says Shaw. “The good thing about this exercise is that it needn’t cost the earth and it can make all the difference in the world to the appearance of your property. Make sure the windows are clean; the cobwebs are dusted out; the dog hairs are vacuumed; the fans, light fixtures and other surfaces are dusted; the floors are polished; the walls are washed, etc. Bad odours are a no-no so be sure to eliminate them. New towels hung in the bathrooms and rugs on the floors can also go a long way to sprucing up the home.”

Shaw advises sellers to make their homes as light and bright as possible for show days. You should therefore make sure that all your windows are free of creepers or other obstructions. Pull those curtains as far back as possible and be sure to clean your windows so they sparkle.

Your garden is also important to prepare ahead of a show day. This should be mowed, weeded, landscaped and kept immaculate. Don’t forget your verge, which creates that all-important first impression. If your existing garden furniture is looking scruffy and worn it might be a good idea to consider buying new, and arrange it so that it appears that you and your family take every advantage of our beautiful South African climate. “Remember that you are selling not just a property but also a dream,” says Shaw.

PGP Hyde Park joint area manager Jonathan Davies advises sellers to also keep their front entrances, patios and stoeps clean and ensure that all creepers are cut back to ensure they are tidy. Damp is a big turn off for prospective buyers so do be sure to sort out any problems the home may have in this regard. Swimming pools that are crystal clear create an excellent impression, so don’t hesitate to call in experts if you need help to get it in tip-top shape.

It is important get rid of all of your clutter, which you should rather put away or place in storage. Uncluttered spaces appear more spacious and cleaner and allow would-be buyers to imagine how they can fit into your home rather than how they can’t! So remove all those kitchen and other items from your countertops and tables, and books that are piled on the floor.

And finally, be sure to choose an experienced and trusted estate agency to assist you with a [property valuation](#). “It is important that you get the advice of experts who know your area, can market your property appropriately and can assist you through every step of the transaction, concludes Davies

**If you are considering selling your home, we recommend contacting Pam Golding Properties to obtain professional advice or obtain a valuation.**

