

Put it in Neutral: Holiday Staging Tips to Help your Home Sell

Why wait for spring to sell your home? This is expected to be a record setting year throughout Wisconsin. The latest housing data indicates that home sales are the highest they've been in more than 10 years and real estate professionals report that they could sell more homes if they had more to sell.

Demand continues to exceed supply in 2016. Even this time of year when traditionally home sales slow, October's housing numbers again show that 2016 is the strongest year for sales since 2005 in Wisconsin. Homes sales this year are predicted to reach 80,000, compared to 76,700 homes sold in 2015. In addition, the median sales price continues to increase, rising 6.5 percent to \$165,000 over the past 12 months, thanks to an active market.

Before you haul out the holly and deck the halls, consult with your local real estate agent who can best help you stage your home during the holiday season to attract more buyers and get the optimal price for your home. Here are a few tips for sellers from RE/MAX real estate professionals that will help put you in the selling spirit.

Less is better. A home that is clean, decluttered and neutral inside and out will attract the most buyers. Sellers should keep most of their decorations in storage, particularly if they are personal or religious. Real estate professionals advise that sellers decorate their home for the holiday season with minimal, winter themed trimmings.

Make it cozy. Get buyers to stay as long as possible in your home by turning up the heat, playing soft music and offering a holiday treat. As a seller, you want potential buyers to imagine themselves living in the home. Buyers who feel cozy and comfortable in your home, especially during the holidays, are more likely to make an offer.

Accentuate the details. Using subtle lighting and holiday décor is a great way to highlight a home's architectural details. Mistletoe in an archway, a few ornaments on the mantel and white lights on a pine tree outside all are ways to highlight the best features of a home.

Appeal from the curb. Before a potential buyer even steps foot into your home, they'll form an opinion of the house from the outside. Ensure your exterior is appealing by clearing sidewalks when it snows and using simple string lights or wreaths on the door. These basic adornments will appeal to a buyer from the curb. But remember, once the holidays are over – take the décor down and focus on keeping the yard and sidewalks clean and clutter free.



95% of staged homes sell in 23 days or less on average.

The International Association of Home Staging Professionals and StagedHomes.com



49% of REALTORS® report most buyers are affected by home staging.

National Association of REALTORS®



The median dollar value to stage a home is \$675 for each home.

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