

11 STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL OPEN HOUSE

1. HIRE A CLEANING SERVICE. Spruce up the entire house, including often overlooked spots like baseboards, picture frames, ceiling fans, etc.

2. NEUTRALIZE ODORS. Shampoo carpets. Clean drapes. Air out house. Add potpourri or scented candles and diffusers.

3. DEPERSONALIZE ROOMS. Remove family photos. Clear items from the refrigerator door and bulletin board.

4. ORGANIZE CABINETS AND DRAWERS. Clutter makes it appear that the home doesn't have enough storage.

5. HANDLE MINOR REPAIRS. Fix sticky doors, torn screens, burned-out light bulbs, cracked caulking, dripping faucets, etc.

6. PROTECT BELONGINGS. Remove or lock up valuables and medications.

7. TIDY UP OUTDOORS. Cut grass, rake leaves, add new mulch, trim bushes, edge walkways. Also, consider a pot of bright flowers near the entry to boost curb appeal.

8. CLEAR CLUTTER. Empty counters, cut down on decorative items, thin clothes in closets, clean garage.

9. REMOVE PETS.

10. BRIGHTEN ROOMS. Replace burnt bulbs and consider higher wattage in low-light areas. Clean windows and screens, and replace heavy curtains with sheers to bring in more light.

11. ADD COLOR. Put out colorful new towels and add flowers to give rooms some "pop."

