

Jennifer & Jason's Homeowner News™

Courtesy of Jennifer Lange & Jason Kogok ✉ www.luxurymovers.com

Surviving the Back-to-School Mayhem

It's back-to-school time, and for many families with school-age children that means the return of the morning chaos. Instead of everyone getting up rested and with smiles, there are shouting matches, tears, and parents getting late to work. Sometimes it seems that getting kids out of bed and out the door in an orderly manner must require an act of divine intervention! But it does not have to be that way.

Organization

An established, non-negotiable morning routine is often mentioned as the key by the families who enjoy happy mornings. The morning routine really begins the night before. Since deciding what to wear can cause many a tantrum, getting this out of the way the night before is a great idea. Some parents make a rule that the child can pick each night what clothes to wear the next morning, but once the choices are made, no changes are allowed. All the clothes are laid out on a chair by their beds, so when they wake up, there's one less thing to fuss about. Packing the backpack is another task that should be accomplished the night before. It is easier to remember to pack everything (homework, school supplies, permissions slips, etc.) when you are not rushing to get out of the door.

In the morning, super-organized moms and dads often get up and get themselves ready first, then wake their children up. This gives parents some calm

time to prepare themselves for the day ahead, and enough time to help their kids get ready. And speaking of waking up, who says that parents have to wake their children up at all? Unless the kids are very young, they can learn to awaken by an alarm clock. This teaches children self-responsibility, and gives them a sense of autonomy – something that's a big deal for school-age children.

It's been said that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, so it should not be skipped. Just like with clothes and backpacks, it can be decided on the night before. Some families make weekly breakfast menus, some stick to cereal and fruit (and even lay out the bowls and spoons on the table the night before), and some have their kids eat breakfast at school. Whatever the case may be in your family, this is another decision that can be made

ahead of time so that you are not pressed for time and forced to skip this important meal.

Finally, getting enough sleep is very important for kids (and adults, too). Making sure that everyone gets at least eight hours of sleep each night will help ensure that everyone is less grouchy in the morning.

Motivation

After agreeing on the morning routine, moms and dads need to provide motivation for their kids to stick to it.

(continued, Page 2)



Your friendly, local real estate team needs your help. Our business depends on people like you who recommend us to their family and friends. We work hard for our clients and handle each real estate transaction that we are entrusted with as if it was our own. We believe this is the best way to earn our clients' loyalty and the best way to fulfill our professional duty. Right now there is probably someone you know who is thinking about buying or selling a home. Why not tell them about us?

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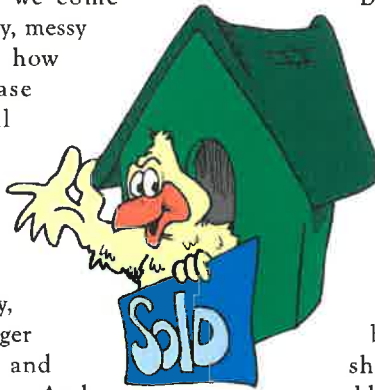
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Three Free Things That Will Sell Your House Faster

There are a thousand and one ways to increase a home's appeal. Some are practical, some are not; some are cheap, some are not. Here are the three easiest (and free!) things that will make your home sell faster:

Sparkle

We show dozens of homes to our buyers every month and we are always disappointed when we come across one that is dirty, messy and cluttered. Oh, how those things decrease appeal. Buyers will assume that if a home is messy, it must also be in poor repair and there must be things unseen that are wrong with it. Needless to say, this will result in longer time on the market, and possibly a lower price. And how easy it would be to make these homes look great with just a little bit of elbow grease. Having a squeaky-clean home (especially the kitchen and bathrooms) is a must if you want a quick sale. Removing clutter and keeping everything orderly and organized is also highly important. Make your home sparkle, and it will sell faster.



it look shiny, big and more appealing to potential buyers.

Warmth

You've heard this before – people don't look for houses, they look for homes – warm, cozy places they can call their own. How do you make your home feel like home to prospective buyers? One way is to tickle their noses. Well, not literally.

But by making your home smell really inviting you will give it that homey feel people love. The best smell is the smell of clean (and this goes back to the first thing on our list – make it shine). But you can go a step further. We know sellers who would bake cookies before showings, so the home would smell of fresh cookies. If baking is not your cup of tea, then a scented candle (vanilla, cinnamon or coconut) may do the trick. Having a pleasant (but not overwhelming) scent will give your home an aura of warmth and will put more smiles on buyers' faces.

These were but three easy strategies. For more tips, you know who to call!

(continued from Page 1)

There should be rewards for adhering to the plan, and consequences for not. One of our neighbors suggests using a chart that outlines the bedtime and morning routines. Upon completing a task, a child gets to place a star next to the item on the chart. After completing a certain number of tasks on time and without fuss, the child gets a reward. It does not have to be anything that costs money. An afternoon with dad in the park, or going for a walk with mom are both great rewards. And just like good behavior is encouraged with rewards, negative behavior is discouraged with penalties. For example, not getting up on the first call may result in having to go to bed 15 minutes earlier the next evening, or having to get up 15 minutes earlier the next morning.

Having good organization and providing proper motivation are both keys to conquering the morning circus. Still, the best way to instill good morning habits in children is to be a good example. "Do as I say and not as I do" really does not work. Children follow their parent's example, so if a parent is disorganized in the morning, rushing and stressing out, what can be expected of the child? All parents I talked to say that the best way to ensure happy and smiley mornings is to be happy, smiley and well organized themselves.

Shine

We live in America, which means we love big things. Big cars, Big Macs and big houses. So how do you make your house look big if it isn't (or super-sized if it's already big)? With light! The more light, the better. Before a showing, open all the blinds and raise all the curtains to let in as much natural light as possible. If privacy is a concern, use white curtains that let light in and block the view from prying eyes. Also, turn on all lights and lamps in the home, even in the middle of the day. Bathing your home in light will make

Free Special Report Available

The Seven Expensive Mistakes Sellers Frequently Make is a four-page special report that no seller should be without. If you are thinking of selling a home soon, arm yourself with the knowledge that can help you avoid expensive mistakes too many people have made. Request this report today – there is no cost or obligation.

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How to Paint Like a Pro

Painting can be a chore. Here are some helpful tips for making your next paint project more enjoyable:

Drip Tip

Before starting to paint, punch a few small holes in the groove of the paint can rim using a hammer and a nail. This will allow excess paint to drip back in to the can and will prevent you from splattering paint all over your floor when you put the lid back on. Or, use masking tape to cover the rim, so the paint won't accumulate in the groove of the rim.

Rules for Tools

Not sure what kind of brush or roller to use? For latex paint synthetic rollers and brushes are recommended; for oil-based paint either synthetic or natural applicators are fine. The rougher the surface that you are dealing with, the thicker the rollers and brushes are that you will need.

Fuzz That Was

Fuzz coming off of a brand new roller can embellish your paint job. Wrap masking tape around the fuzzy part of the roller before you start, then peel the tape off along with any loose fibers.

Plan for the Fan

You know those narrow plastic bags that your newspapers are delivered in? They are perfect for covering the blades of your ceiling fans, so you don't have to dismantle the fan before painting.

Stairs Affairs

Outside stairs can be slippery when wet. To prevent slips and injuries, mix in a cup or two of fine sand with your paint to make the surface rougher and less slippery.



Oh, Gosh, More Wash

No need to wash your brushes and rollers when taking breaks – simply wrap them in plastic or aluminum to prevent them from drying up. If using oil-based paint, wrapped brushes and rollers can even be stored in a freezer overnight.

No Complaint About Old Paint

After sitting unused for a while leftover paint can develop a thin, gummy film on the surface. To prevent this from happening, pour a few tablespoons of water (for latex paint) or mineral spirits (for oil-based paint) over the surface of the paint before closing the lid.



Happy Painting!

Painting to get your house ready for sale? There are special considerations! How you paint your home can make a big difference in how fast it will sell. Please call or email me for a free pre-sale consultation, and let's go over the steps you must take to make your home appeal to the widest audience possible.



Q: What's a biweekly mortgage and can it really save me money?

A: If you already have a mortgage, chances are your lender offers a biweekly "version" of it. The difference? With a regular mortgage you make monthly payments, which means twelve payments per year. With the biweekly mortgage you make a half payment every two weeks, which translates into thirteen full payments per year (26 half payments). In other words, you "unknowingly" end up paying one extra payment each year, which helps you pay off your mortgage faster. How much faster? A 30-year loan can be paid off in 24 years, saving you six years worth of interest. Any negatives? Well, yes. Not all lenders offer this program, and some that do charge an extra fee for it. While switching from a regular mortgage to a biweekly one is simple with some lenders, others require you to pretty much refinance your home. A biweekly mortgage can be a great idea, but make sure you understand all the costs and details before committing to it.

Have a tough real estate question? We are only a phone call or an e-mail away:

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8801 Stonegate Dr. Raleigh - \$659,900 – STUNNING ESTATE HOME!

109 Breckenridge Dr. Garner - \$385,000 – CUSTOM HOME!

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232 Butterbiggins Ln. Apex - \$249,800 - IN PRESTIGIOUS SCOT LAUREL POOL COMMUNITY

116 Carolina Town Lane, Holly Springs - \$236,000 – PRICE REDUCED - OPEN KITCHEN & FAMILY ROOM!

4906 Amber Clay Ln., Raleigh - \$212,000 – HIGHY SOUGHT AFTER GLENWOOD NORTH COMMUNITY!

1217 Harp St., Raleigh - \$394,000 – BEAUTIFUL HOME IN HEART OF MORDECIA!

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35 Waxwing Lane, Youngsville - \$189,900 – UNDER CONTRACT BEFORE EVEN BEING COMPLETED!

607 Broad Leaf Circle, Raleigh - \$99,900 – UNDER CONTRACT!

114 Brookfield Dr. Knightdale - \$144,500 – UNDER CONTRACT!

446 Manchester Park Ln. Morrisville - \$249,900 – SOLD!

7221 Blannie Farms Ln. Willow Springs - \$167,500 – SOLD!

8207 Rhiannon Rd., Raleigh - \$139,900 – SOLD!

8116 Primanti Blvd. Raleigh - \$224,900 – SOLD!

100 Franklin Chase Ct. Cary - \$389,000 – SOLD!

509 Homegate Circle Apex – \$289,900 -SOLD!

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10 Waxwing Ln. Youngsville – New Construction