



# Presentation is Everything

## A refreshing guide on how best to present your home.

The aroma of coffee brewing in the kitchen, fresh flowers on view and gentle background music. These are some of the better known tips many sellers use to help make their home inviting to potential buyers.

There are many other ploys you can use when marketing your home to maximise its full potential. Some may seem more obvious than others, but you'd be surprised how many people overlook the basic rules when presenting their most valuable asset.

We have put together this guide to help our clients 'set the stage' when marketing their home. Create the right atmosphere that goes with the property and the right amount of space for buyers to see themselves living there.



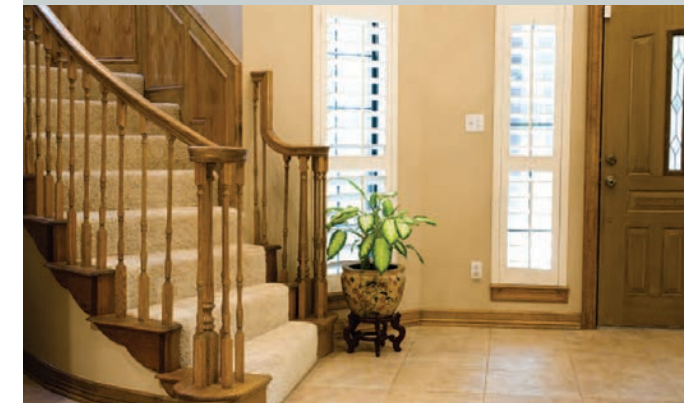
### Outside

First impressions do play a huge part in successful house selling. Make sure your property looks well-cared for from the outside. Sweep the pathways, remove the bins, clear the area around the front door and give it a good clean if needed, including the front door and its fixtures, tidy the garden and add a few in-season plants to make the outside look more inviting.

A scruffy exterior and peeling paintwork can be a big turn-off for the majority of buyers. So a fresh lick of paint to the front door and window frames if they're looking tired, can make a big difference. This is a potential buyer's first impression of your home, so make sure it's a good one!

### The Hallway

While the hall may just be a walkthrough, it's crucial to create the right impression to get the viewing off to the best start. Clear as much space as possible. Things such as pushchairs and childrens' bikes should be moved elsewhere. If it's a small space try to replace the hall table with a small shelf for post and keys. Co-ordinated accessories or pictures will add some interest and the right lighting will set the right scene.







### The Bathroom

A spotlessly clean bathroom is essential. Taps should sparkle and the areas around them free from limescale. Mirrors should be polished, tiles should be scrubbed to remove any mould from the grouting and toilets should be cleaned, bleached and left with the lid down. Always replace your shower curtain with a neutral new one or a more contemporary screen where possible.

Add some new fluffy towels for a touch of luxury. Clear away any shampoo and other similar clutter, leaving a few quality toiletries on show. Try to make as much space as you can by keeping any toys, potties, baby baths and other items that can make the room look smaller, out of sight.

### The Kitchen

The kitchen and bathroom are the rooms many regard as the most important and are often key to securing a sale. The kitchen should be spotless, so a good clean to remove any unsightly grease or grime 'spots and spills' is a must. Remove as much clutter as possible from the work surfaces, leaving only a few gleaming utensils, matching cooking jars and the odd cook book on display to create a 'useable' environment. Everything else such as piles of washing, pet's food bowls, childrens' 'artwork' and shopping lists on the fridge should be filed away.

If your units look tired, try painting them a neutral colour and add some inexpensive modern handles found in most large DIY stores. Consider replacing the doors if they're beyond repair with off-the-shelf or plain ready-to-paint MDF ones. This should help to transform the look of your kitchen.



### The Living Room

Less is definitely more here. Fewer things in a room will mean fewer distractions to the eye of the viewer and more importantly, the bigger the room will appear! You may be moving because you've run out of space, but you must avoid leaving the impression with any potential buyers that your property is cramped or too small.

When people view, they are visualising a life-style, so you should accessorise accordingly. If yours is a young professional's apartment, leave a few appropriate magazines on the coffee table. If it's a family home, it's acceptable to have several toys neatly stored in an appropriate place. This will show the room can accommodate children. Try to smarten up any tired furniture. A throw will cover that worn sofa or co-ordinated cushions can distract the eye, but keep them neutral and unpatterned.

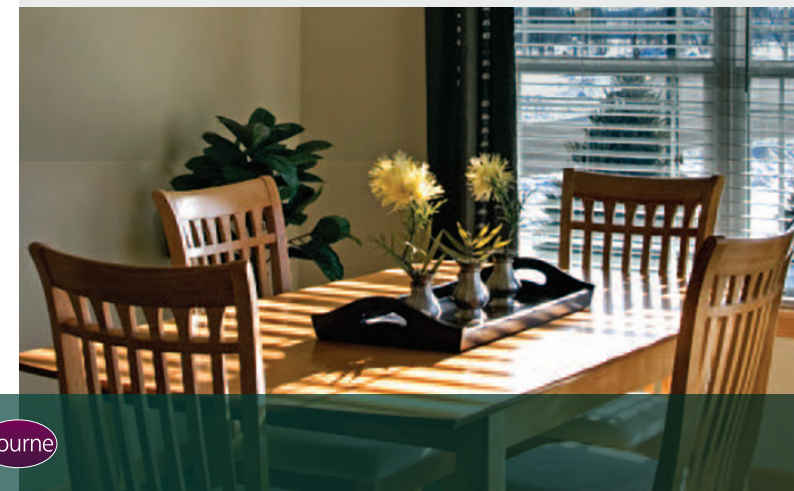
It's important if you have a fireplace to make it the focal point of the room, not the TV! Again, de-cluttering is important. Clear the mantelpiece, window sills and other display areas, leaving just a few co-ordinated objects. If it's winter, have the fireplace ablaze and really draw attention to it.

### The Dining Room

There has been a recent trend towards painting dining rooms bright intense colours. These may look nice and cosy at night, but the next owner may wish to use the room for another purpose, such as a play-room or office. Help them envisage the room being used in a different way by repainting it in neutral shades.

If you don't have a separate dining area, create a well-defined eating space in the lounge area. This will mean placing a table and chairs away from the sofas in order to create the space and may also mean placing some unessential items of furniture into storage until you have sold.

If your living room is too small to incorporate a defined eating area, you could apply the same method as per your kitchen.





### Bedrooms

Light coloured walls, carpets and curtains, colour co-ordinated bed linen, bedspreads and a few scatter cushions not only create that much needed 'wow factor', but add the sense of tranquillity and calm, which a buyer will want to experience when they walk into the main bedroom. Patterned and brightly coloured bed linen can make the bed appear larger than it is and shrink the room.

Try not to over-accessorise. A few framed prints, cushions and one or two perfume bottles on display can help make the place looked lived-in without overdoing it.

Position the bed so there is access on three sides, if there's a good view out of the window, place the bed so that people can imagine themselves relaxing on a Sunday morning, coffee in hand, taking in the view.



### Children's Bedrooms

Many DIY and home stores are now selling matching storage boxes, making it easy to get the children's 'paraphernalia' sorted and tidied away. Over-the-top themes such as Sponge Bob or Dora may need some toning down to help a buyer envisage their children of different ages or opposite sex playing in there. Removing boy band or similar posters is also recommended but may take some persuading and no doubt some incentives!

### The Back Garden

Can I maintain a garden without it 'taking up' every weekend? Can I relax out here with a glass of wine in the summer? Will the children be happy playing here? Is the garden overlooked? These are the questions people will ask themselves as they step outside into your garden. Put yourself in their shoes and try to create the haven they'll be looking for.

The garden should appear as low maintenance as possible. Ensure the grass is cut, the patio swept and there isn't a weed in sight. Add a few more plants to provide colour if you haven't any already. If you're selling in winter-time, add some evergreen plants for that year-round greenery.

Add some style to your garden with some galvanised steel planters or terracotta pots, filled with box shrubs of fashionable grasses. Keep children's toys to a minimum and try and put them in one corner or even away in the shed. This will help your garden appear bigger.

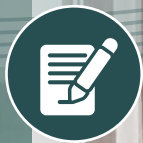


## Viewing preparation tips



- Leave all internal doors (except toilets) open
- Try to make the property a no-smoking zone, preferably for the whole time that you're on the market.
- Switch lights on during the day in any dull rooms.
- If you have a cat/dog, put them outside until you've established if the viewer likes pets.
- Invest in a few plug-in air-fresheners. They'll help disguise any pet smells, but don't go over the top!
- Make sure most of the family is out, too many people makes a home look smaller.
- File away any personal paperwork.
- Try not to cook any strong-smelling food the night before or just prior to a viewing.
- Clean ALL windows, inside and out.
- Professionally clean your property, including carpets and oven
- In winter months we recommend keeping the heating on a constant low temperature to help avoid burst pipes.





## Tips for showing buyers around

Whilst a member of the Bourne team will usually be on hand to show potential buyers around, there may be occasions when you'll want to show people yourself. There's something to be said for sellers 'waxing lyrical' about their home. Some clients actually prefer to show around potential buyers. We have compiled our 'top tips' to ensure the viewing goes as smoothly as possible.

- Make sure the chain is off the latch, you don't want buyers to think crime is a problem in your area.
- Start upstairs. It helps to whet the appetite for what's to come, gives them a view of the garden and as bedrooms are quite self-explanatory, offers an opportunity to discuss other general information about the house.

- Let the viewer enter a room first and follow them in.
- Let them know how happy you've been there, what attracted you to the property and why you bought it. Things such as local schooling, shops or public transport links (if relevant) can be worth mentioning.
- Keep it simple when explaining your onward move, buyers will want to feel they can buy your home with ease.
- Don't be pressed into discussing price. If asked simply inform them you'd like the best price but to discuss that with the agent.
- Buyers are sometimes late. Fifteen minutes is normally how long we would give them. After that just let us know and we'll give them a chase.



*We really do offer a refreshingly  
simple start to finish service...*