

What Jim Smith's Sellers Did to Prepare Their Home for Sale — In their own words:

1. We have read your columns for years and have gleaned a lot of information from them 😊
2. We have always done a pretty good job keeping up with issues, so it was manageable to fix the issues.
3. I retired in May so this became my job, but I started with getting rid of A LOT of stuff. We really made every attempt to keep things out of the landfill. We sold and gave away things on Craigslist, I took many trips to Habitat for Humanity, ARC, Goodwill, Treasure Trunk in Wheat Ridge (which benefits Family Tree), Sherwin-Williams (who take up to 5 gallons of paint at a time) Play it Again Sports, Larsons Ski and Sport swaps. The list goes on, but one of my final trips was to Rooney Ranch Hazardous Waste Recycling Center where I dropped off things that I couldn't give away or donate but that I definitely did not want in the trash - (e.g.: household, lawn and auto chemicals, fire extinguishers, fluorescent light tubes, empty 1-pound propane bottles, etc.).
4. We took some things that we knew we were not going to use in the short term, but we wanted to keep, to a small storage unit.
5. We put a "To do" list together to think about every possible thing that needed to be done, knowing that we wouldn't get to everything but it helped us focus.
6. About halfway through the purge, we talked to this great Realtor (Jim) and asked him to come and take a look at the house and let us know what we should focus our attention on. He gave us great advice to get new carpet. Many people said that we should not spend the money, "just sell it with the old carpet and let the new people get new," but I think the new carpet was huge in making the place shine. Your other advice was to focus on the eyesores but not bother with things like our laminate countertop because it was still in good shape.
7. So we kept working. I painted the kids' rooms to a neutral color which had been an "eyesore." We also had a lot of left-over house paint, so I touched up some of the trim that was showing wear and spots on the walls that needed it. I filled the holes from the pictures and art that we had taken down and painted those spots. Scott caulked most of the window sills and some baseboards. Those are pretty easy things to do and it is amazing how taking care of some of those little things makes a big difference.
8. We had the front and back patio mudjacked and Scott sealed all of the cracks. Those things had needed to be done for a little while but we were trying to decide whether to fix or replace. The concrete would have been very expensive to replace and since we were leaving, we elected to fix, which might be permanent but if nothing else, it will buy the new buyers many years before they need to address it.
9. Scott was running out of time for his portion of the To Do list so once again, we reached out to you and you gave us your handyman's cell number. It was great having him get two big jobs and one small job off of Scott's plate. He does great work and he is reasonably priced. It was a big relief to have those things done without Scott being overstressed about finding the time to do them.
10. When we thought we had things pretty well perfect, we invited your stager, David, to come and look at it and guess what, he recommended getting rid of more stuff!! He said that you want people's eyes to remain focused on the house and not on the items in the house, so we purged some more. There were many items that we are planning on keeping so we designated an area in the basement storage room for things that we will be keeping but needed to be out of the main house. We got rid of the rest in various ways. I also went through every cabinet and closet and made sure they were neat and tidy. I took the opportunity to get rid of things that we would not be taking with us and box up things we would not be using before the move.

Finally, I cleaned! I had been cleaning baseboards and walls throughout the summer as I saw things but at the end I got down on my knees and I scrubbed. While we keep a fairly clean house most of the time, I can honestly say this house was never cleaner than the day we walked out for the showings.

That was kind of our process, but I can honestly say that hiring you was the best thing we did. You gave us advice and resources that we would not have had otherwise. We did the work, but we were following your advice.

Thanks!

Juli and Scott