

# Avoid Buyer Turnoffs

By ANNA CHANG-YEN | Green Shoot Media

Selling a house is all about showing buyers how your home can become their home. Sellers work hard to make sure their home is at its best before the “for sale” sign goes up on the lawn.

Listing agents offer endless advice to their clients about how to make their homes attractive to buyers. Listen to your agent. He is familiar with all the issues known to drive buyers away. Here are just a few.

## MAINTENANCE AND MECHANICAL PROBLEMS

A door that sticks, a light switch that doesn't work or peeling paint will make buyers wonder if the home has been properly cared for. There's no way for them to know how the home has been maintained over the years, but even minor problems can give them cause for concern, as they could be signs of bigger problems. Make minor repairs to help put potential buyers' minds at ease that the home in which they're considering making a considerable investment has been properly maintained and they aren't on a path to large repair bills.

## CRAMMED SPACES

Buyers are looking for space — not just square footage but usable space. They'll be looking at how you're using your home's space to get an idea of how well their belongings might fit. An overflowing bedroom closet with every nook and cranny stuffed will make buyers wonder if there's just not enough room for their needs. A two-



car garage can feel tiny when it's piled full of sports equipment, storage boxes and bicycles. Organize storage

spaces to show how your home's space can be used efficiently, and put belongings that won't fit in a self-stor-

age unit until you move to your new home. It's one way to help buyers see the best your home has to offer instead of seeing potential challenges.

## OUTDATED FIXTURES AND APPLIANCES

Unless your home is a historic colonial or craftsman, older light fixtures probably aren't doing you any favors. Buyers don't expect every older home to be completely remodeled, but they do look for small updates, and other competing homes on the market probably have newer touches, too. Even a home that's 20 years old can feel newer on the inside with small updates. Replace outdated glass-and-brass fixtures with new ones in bronze or satin nickel. Update cabinet pulls and door knobs with newer versions. Replace an outdated oven or refrigerator with a new stainless steel unit.

## BRIGHT PAINT

Crayola box green might have been a great paint choice for your toddler's playroom, but it won't play so well when prospective buyers are trying to imagine the room as an infant's nursery or tranquil office space. It is well worth the expense of repainting in neutral tones to give buyers a blank slate on which to apply their own style. That doesn't mean you are limited to white or tan. A light gray or pale blue also could do the job. While repainting, fix small dents and dings to make your home feel newer and brighter.



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## REAL ESTATE 101



### Know Your Audience

A home office, low maintenance and home automation are among the home features millennials want most. If you're looking to market your home toward a younger crowd, consider Bankrate.com's “11 Must-Haves to Sell to Millennial Homebuyers” at <http://bit.ly/2joVtJ2>.

## HOMESWISE GLOSSARY

**Tax service fee:** This fee covers the cost of your lender engaging a third party to monitor and handle the payment of your property tax bills. This is done to ensure that your tax payments are made on time and to prevent tax liens from occurring.

**SOURCE:** Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

# AD SPACE