

## Repairs

Make needed repairs to your home, but do not do anything expensive, such as remodeling. Remember, you are not fixing up the place for yourself. You want to move. Your goal is to simply eliminate negative impressions in those who may want to purchase your property.

### Plumbing and Fixtures

When looking at a house, prospective home buyers often play with things. They flick light switches. They open everything with a handle. They turn on all the faucets and flush all the toilets. Having nice, shiny fixtures that work makes an impression.

All your sink fixtures should look shiny and new. If this cannot be accomplished by cleaning, buy new ones. Don't buy something fancy; this can be accomplished inexpensively. Make sure all the hot and cold water knobs are easy to turn and that the faucets do not leak. If they do leak, have them repaired or repair them yourself.

It sounds like hard work, but it's pretty easy -- even for the inexperienced. Many home supply stores offer free classes, and there are plenty of good guides to making simple home plumbing repairs.

Check to make sure you have good water pressure and that there are no stains on any of the porcelain. If you have a difficult stain to remove, hire a cleaning crew on a one-time basis to go through the whole house. They'll take care of those tough stains and a lot more.

### Ceilings, Walls and Painting

Check all the ceilings for water stains, whether the leak is caused by plumbing or a faulty roof. Find the leak, repair it, and make sure a proper job is done. Nothing irritates a buyer more than finding out - after the fact - about plumbing or roofing leaks. This can cause big problems even after the sale.

If a water stain is left after something you have already repaired, do the spackling and painting necessary to improve the appearance of your home.

You may have to paint anyway, especially if dirt has accumulated in spots or you have an outdated color scheme. Painting makes a home look fresh and new on the inside and never fails to impress.

Painting can be your best investment when selling your home. Compared to many home maintenance projects, it is not a very expensive operation and often you can do it

yourself. Do not choose strong or bold colors. In fact, you will do best to choose an off-white color because white helps your rooms appear bright and spacious.

### Carpet and Flooring

Unless your carpet appears old and worn, or if it is definitely an outdated style or color, you probably should do nothing more than hire a good carpet cleaner. If you do choose to replace it, do so with something inexpensive in a neutral color.

Repair or replace broken floor tiles, but, again, do not spend a lot of money replacing flooring unless it is worn beyond repair.

### Windows and Doors

Check all of your windows to make sure they open and close easily. If not, a spray of WD40 often helps. Make sure there are no cracked or broken windowpanes. If there are, replace them before you begin showing your home. Clean your windows inside and out or hire someone to do this for you. Make sure screens and storm windows are available or in place and work well.

Do the same things with the doors - make sure they open and close properly, without creaking. If they do, a shot of WD40 on the hinges usually makes the creak go away. Be sure the doorknobs turn easily, and that they are cleaned and polished to look sharp. Make sure glass doors are spotless and that screen doors are in good repair.

### Odor Control

You should use a carpet freshener and lightly scented fabric freshening spray throughout the house. Make sure your basement doesn't smell musty.

For you still smoke, it is best to move smoking outside. Smokers will have to do more cleaning of carpets, drapes and other surfaces that retain smoke odors. You could also purchase an ozone spray that helps to remove odors without creating a masking odor.

Apologies to pet owners, but pets come with odors. You may have become used to them, but they are immediately noticeable to those who don't have pets.

For those with cats, be sure to empty kitty litter boxes daily and use plenty of baking soda. For dog owners, keep the dog outdoors as much as possible. You might also try sprinkling carpet freshener on the carpet on a periodic basis.