

## **Staging to Appeal to the Senses**

By Erica Starich

In order to impress to the largest number of potential buyers when selling your home, it is important during staging to appeal to the senses. When all senses are considered, the house will be presented in the best possible way.

*Sight* – Present a house that is light and bright by opening all blinds and curtains to let natural light in, and turn on lights in darker areas or at night. Eliminate patterned wallpaper and bright colors from the wall, keeping a neutral tone throughout the house (bring in color through accessories instead). Remove clutter so they can see the space, not your stuff.

*Sound* – Fix any squeaky doors and creaky floors. Send barking dogs to doggy daycare during showings. Play classical or easy listening instrumental music to create a pleasing atmosphere. Run a water feature/fountain for a natural, soothing sound.

*Smell* – Eliminate pet and tobacco odors. Stay away from strong air fresheners as some buyers may be sensitive or allergic, and you don't want to give the impression that you're covering another odor. Instead, focus on the smells of cleanliness to leave a great impression (lemon oil, lemon wax or fresh flowers create a lasting scent).

*Touch* – Touch their emotions, elicit a positive and emotional reaction for prospective buyers because emotions sell! Rearrange furniture so it is conducive to conversation. Focus on the positive features of the house. If they emotionally connect with a house, they can see it as their home.

*Taste* – Present a house that will appeal to a wide range of buyer's tastes. This is done by un-decorating (removing themes and collections) and de-personalizing the space (removing personal photos, awards, and memorabilia). This will allow buyers to envision themselves living there instead.

Remember that you are never given a second chance to make a first impression. The importance of establishing a positive first impression is critical to achieving a successful sale. Appealing to the senses of potential buyers is key.

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