

# Real Estate Tips



## WHERE OH WHERE HAVE ALL THE BUYERS GONE? *By Sidney Jimenez / Your Realtor*

How long has it been? Three months? Six? And your home is still on the market.

Don't panic. Don't throw in the towel.

Take a deep breath; now let it out—and take a step back. Let's look at the big picture to see how to attract the serious buyers.

We are approaching a slower part of the real estate season. Slower? It may already seem like the market has come to a complete standstill. In reality, plenty of homes did sell or are under contract; however the number of homes still available is so overwhelming that it seems the surface has barely been scratched.

In June 2005, a local newspaper reported that there were just over 15,000 homes on the market in Miami-Dade and Broward counties. Guess how many homes were on the market a year later? More than 54,000! Despite the 360% increase in homes for sale, the number of actual sales has remained about the same as last year.

So how do you make your house stand out among the other 54,000+? Because that's the key to getting your house sold—first you have to get it noticed. Are there things you can do to make your home more attractive? Viewing your home objectively to see what it might lack—and then making those changes—could make all the difference.

There are some simple and inexpensive ways to improve your home's appearance. Start by removing clutter, such as excessive family pictures on side tables or bookshelves and old newspapers and magazines that have piled up. Stow small kitchen appliances out of sight to clear off counters. If you have any unnecessary furniture, remove it if possible.

Painting is another easy option. Whether it's touching up walls that have taken some abuse, adding some color to brighten up a room, or toning down a

wall that is too vibrant, a good paint job goes a long way to making a home look clean and polished. And on that note, your home should always be clean when it's on the market. Wouldn't you be turned off by walking into a dusty and dirty home?

Carpeting is another element that is noticed. Start with a professional steam cleaning—that might be all you need, but also ensure that there aren't any worn areas that need replacing. You should also inspect seals and grout in your bathrooms and replace or clean as needed.

And don't neglect the outside of your home! Curb appeal goes a long way towards a buyer having a good first impression. Keep your lawn neatly mowed and properly watered, and ensure that landscaped areas are free of weeds. In addition, pay attention to siding, fences, driveways, patios, and decks, which also need to be well-maintained and clean.

All of the items mentioned above involve small tasks, but the end result is enormous. And yes, some of them may require a minor financial investment on your part. However, try to keep your eye on the prize. A small cash output to make these improvements could easily lead to a much quicker sale, which means you will have fewer carrying and maintenance costs than if your home lingered on the market—and saving money is just as good as earning money! In addition, with a freshened up home, you could also benefit from a higher offer.

So, it might be a little more challenging to sell your home during this time of year, but by making these small improvements, you separate your house from many others. It's really that simple!

**Editor's Note:** *Sidney Jimenez is a realtor and a contributing writer for The Pines & Miramar Advisor. For questions, or more information please call 954-665-9449, via email at [Info@SidneyJimenez.com](mailto:Info@SidneyJimenez.com) or log into [SidneyJimenez.com](http://SidneyJimenez.com).*