

- Clean off everything on kitchen counters.
- Put essential items used daily in a small box that can be stored in a closet when not in use.
- Think of this process as a head-start on the packing you will eventually need to do anyway.

4. Rearrange Bedroom Closets and Kitchen Cabinets. Buyers love to snoop and will open closet and cabinet doors. Think of the message it sends if items fall out! Now imagine what a buyer believes about you if she sees everything organized. It says you probably take good care of the rest of the house as well. This means:

- Alphabetize spice jars.
- Neatly stack dishes.
- Turn coffee cup handles facing the same way.
- Hang shirts together, buttoned and facing the same direction.
- Line up shoes.

5. Rent a Storage Unit. Almost every home shows better with less furniture. Remove pieces of furniture that block or hamper paths and walkways and put them in storage. Since your bookcases are now empty, store them. Remove extra leaves from your dining room table to make the room appear larger. Leave just enough furniture in each room to showcase the room's purpose and plenty of room to move around. You don't want buyers scratching their heads and saying, "*What is this room used for?*"

6. Remove/Replace Favorite Items. If you want to take window coverings, built-in appliances or fixtures with you, remove them now. If the chandelier in the dining room once belonged to your great grandmother, take it down. If a buyer never sees it, she won't want it. Once you tell a buyer she can't have an item, she will covet it, and it could blow your deal. Pack those items and replace them, if necessary.

7. Make Minor Repairs.

- Replace cracked floor or counter tiles.
- Patch holes in walls.
- Fix leaky faucets.
- Fix doors that don't close properly and kitchen drawers that jam.
- Consider painting your walls neutral colors, especially if you have grown accustomed to purple or pink walls. (Don't give buyers any reason to remember your home as "the house with the orange bathroom.")
- Replace burned-out light bulbs.
- If you've considered replacing a worn bedspread, do so now!