



Selling With Pets

Tips to Sell A Home With Pets

Conrad Hyslop



Preparing Your Home For Sale With Pets



Tips to Sell A Home With Pets

“How do you sell a home with pets?”

This is a question that gets asked a lot in real estate sales. If you have a dog or cat, chances are you love your pet. While some home owners have strict outside pet rules, most allow their animals inside their homes as part of the family. But, while pets are great for your emotional health, it does not help you sell your home. When you decide to put the house on the market you need to do some serious housecleaning and repair work before you can command a competitive price.

You want buyers to be able to picture themselves in your home. This means giving them the space to envision living there, space that is free from too many of your personal things – including pets and all they bring with them. So how do you go about selling your property when you have pets?

Without further ado here are some of the best tips to prepare for selling your home with pets. These tips are general, and may or may not apply to your particular situation.

1. Talk to Your Pet’s Veterinarian First.

One important thing to keep in mind is that your animal has its own needs, needs that are best discussed with your veterinarian. Talk to him or her about what you plan on doing, and how it will work with your specific pet or pets. This is especially important when your pet is older and may not adjust well to change. Selling a home can be just as stressful for the pet as it is for the home owner.

2. Temporarily Relocate.

This may or may not be something you are willing to do, but it is easier to show-and-sell your home (and keep it clean), if your pets are not present when buyers arrive. If you have a friend or family member that you are comfortable leaving your animal with, it will give you the chance to eliminate all of the signs of having a pet in the house (which can significantly reduce a home's value) and avoid the pet causing further issues. While I happen to be a pet lover myself there are many home buyers who are not. In fact some folks consider it a huge turn-off when looking at potential homes they may want to own.

3. Remove Pets During Showings.



When selling a home with pets, at the very least, you should remove your them from your home when you are showing the property for sale. All the cute things your dog does will not help you sell your home, and will only remind the potential buyer that the house has contained pets previously.

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Ideally you should have your real estate agent showing the home, preferably while you are away. Having a pet in the house or yard can create complications for your agent while trying to show the house, and puts your pet at risk of accidentally getting out during the process. There are also liability issues to deal with as well. While your dog or cat may be ultra friendly, it is certainly possible they can have a bad day just like you and I.

When you leave your pet home during showings you are asking for trouble especially if a buyer brings a young child and they are curious. The last thing you want is Fido taking a chunk out of a buyers child's arm. Remember we live in a lawsuit happy society! You are taking a big risk when your pet is allowed to roam freely during showings.

There are times where it may not be possible to remove a pet from a home. Maybe due to your job you just can't come back and remove them or you can't find anyone who will help take care of them. If this is the case your next best option is to either put them in a contained space and let a buyer and their Real Estate agent know about it ahead of time or buy a pet friendly cage to keep them in. While your pet may not be accustomed to this and you love treating your animals like one of the family sometimes this is what is necessary when you are making selling your home a priority.

4. Repair Any Damage.

As much as we love our pets, they are still animals, and pet damage is never attractive when selling your home. Dogs and cats will inevitably destroy something, including carpets, furniture, hardwood flooring, walls, doors, turf in your yard and your fence.

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All of this damage should be repaired prior to showing the home. This may require some investment on your part, especially if the animal has damaged expensive items like your hardwood flooring or walls in your house. Regardless of the cost of repair, though, the value you will get for your house will be well worth paying for the repairs.

5. Remove Pet Odors and Stains.



Pets have accidents; and while it is possible to get used to the pet smell over time, new visitors to your home will be sure to notice the smells. This is not something you want to happen. In fact, above all else, this may be important tip for selling a home when you have pets.

Our sense of smell has a powerful effect on our emotions, our memory and on our perception of things. An initial urine odor on entering a house is sure to stick in the buyer's mind, and he or she will likely deduct the cost of carpet replacement immediately from an offer as a result. A strong odor is in fact one of the [top reasons a buyer will pass on a home](#).

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Avoid this by having your carpet and flooring professionally cleaned, with a focus on removing pet odors. If the staining or odors are too bad, you may need to replace the carpet in the problem areas.

6. Clean Your Yard.

Pick up any messes in the backyard, and have any sod replaced and other damage repaired as necessary. You may be the kind of person who picks up after your pet regularly, or you may have a cat that causes very little impact to your yard. However, a large number of dog owners give their pets free reign of the backyard. This is a great life for dogs and cats, but it can be hard on the look of your lawn. One of the best tips, when selling a home with pets, is to make sure you don't neglect the yard as this is just as important to some buyers as the inside of the home.

7. Erase Signs of Your Pet for Potential Buyers.



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You want to buyers to be as unaware of your pet ownership as possible. If they ask the question, you will have to answer honestly. However, you can often avoid this by taking necessary steps like those listed above. In addition, put away all pet toys, bedding, litter boxes and food – preferably at another location besides your home.

Some realtors recommend removing all photos where your pet is present as well, and to look and make certain the animal does not show up in any marketing materials you create for your home. Like other forms of [home staging](#), removing extra pet clutter is an important consideration when you are selling your property.

8. Prepare Properly.

Selling a home with pets takes work, but it's worth it in the long run! You may do all of these things and yet still have buyers ask about whether you have pets. Sometimes it is impossible to hide all evidence, and sometimes they just ask anyway. Even if this happens, though, you have still done everything necessary to return your house to its prior pet-free status. Buyers will have little to complain about, because your house now looks as good as it did before you had your pet.

9. Remember Pet Liability.

Did you know that you can be held liable for your pet biting someone while on your property? According to Kenneth M Phillips who specializes in law surrounding dog bites, there are more than 4.7 million dog bite cases reported in the US every year. Further the average lawsuit resulting from an injury is settled for more than \$29,000 and climbing much higher when extensive plastic surgery is needed.

If you own a pet and are leaving them in your home during showings this should be a real wake up call! I know you are probably thinking Fido would never hurt a flea. Is it really worth taking a chance?

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One of the things you should do if you own a dog is check your home insurance policy and make sure that it does not exclude dog bite coverage. You will want to check the exclusion in the coverage section to make sure it does not mention dogs or even animals in general. Some insurance policies will exclude certain breeds such as Pit bulls, German shepherds, Rottweilers, Great Danes and others.

Pet owners can be held liable for injuries resulting from a dog bite even if the animal has shown no previous aggression. So while it was previously mentioned that you shouldn't leave your dog around for showings it can't be emphasized enough. *If you want to know how to sell a home with pets this tip should be the one you don't forget!*

About the author: The above Real Estate information on **tips to sell a home when you have pets** was provided by Conrad Hyslop, a Nationally recognized leader in his field. Conrad can be reached via email at chyslop.robina@ljh.com.au or by phone at 0427 674 262. Conrad has helped people move in and out of many Gold Coast suburbs for the last 7 years.

Thinking of selling your home? I have a passion for Real Estate and love to share my marketing expertise!

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