

10 Things You Can Live With About Your Home That Buyers Can't—And Won't

1. Light switches/fixtures that don't operate or have mystery functions. If there's a switch, it should do something. There should be a working light bulb so that people can see it in action--and for goodness sake, the switch should not come with any warning labels! (See picture). Don't leave any questions about the integrity of your electrical system and make sure all fixtures work properly and safely.

2. Things that wiggle, shimmy, shake or teeter. While you may know where to grab the basement handrail so it doesn't wiggle, buyers won't and inspectors will be sure to notice and list the item in the report. So walk through the house as if you are a buyer, note any items that need securing and fix them right away. (You might even enlist the help of a friend since it will likely be hard to find these things that you are so used to).

3. Anything that takes "magic" to operate. If there is an item in your home that requires a "magic touch" to properly operate, chances are it's something that should be on your list of necessary repairs. People who walk through your home will expect every item to work the way it's supposed to--without jiggling, banging, jerking, or secret combinations of lifting, turning and shoving. (This includes stuck windows and doors).

4. Sinks or showers that don't drain efficiently. We get used to sinks or showers that don't drain well, but this is a symptom of an issue. It's time to remove the stopper, remove clogs, and if necessary, snake drains. Buyers will appreciate it, and you'll probably realize how much nicer your bathroom functions (and wish you'd fixed the issue years ago).

5. Leaks, drips, or water stains. Buyers don't want to see any little brown spots, no matter how small or old the stains are. If you have water anywhere where it shouldn't be, it's time to take care of it and repair the damage it left behind.



6. Loss of pressure in the shower. Do you have low pressure in your shower or do you lose pressure if anyone else in your house so much as *thinks* about using another fixture? This may seem like a minor nuisance, but your buyers probably won't think so. Start by checking for a clogged shower head or a shower shut-off valve that has been inadvertently knocked partially closed. If that doesn't work, have a plumber evaluate the system to determine what and where the problems are.

7. Moist or musty basements. The first thing buyers think when they smell a musty basement is water problems. So take an assessment of your basement: why does it smell musty? Do you need a dehumidifier? Do your walls need to be sealed? Is a basement professional necessary for water penetration issues? It's better to address this now, rather than later. A musty smell is something that could instantly turn-off potential buyers.

8. Fireplaces that don't work. It's a great idea to make sure that your fireplace is in tip-top shape when you are selling. Fireplaces are features that draw buyers, but they can also bring worry if there is any uncertainty about its condition, especially for a buyer who has never

had one before. If it's functional and recently serviced or clean, that's one less thing the buyer has to worry about--and just think how nice winter showings can be with the fireplace going in the background.

9. Uneven walks. Can you say tripping hazard? Now can you say it five times fast while a stranger walks up your path for the first time with a baby in her arms? Are you wincing? Anyone visiting your house should be able to safely navigate your walkways without risking bodily harm. So if that's not the case at your place, fix it, and fix it fast--you're about to have a lot of foot traffic!

10. Toilets that run or need special instructions to flush properly. One thing MANY of us get used to over the years is our quirky toilets. I'm sure all of us have been to someone's home and witnessed first-hand a toilet that doesn't operate as expected--or you are laughing to yourself right now because you have one of these trick toilets. Toilets are a great invention, but they're also pretty simple--one of the easiest items around the home to fix. So address any issues right away so they don't end up being another question on the mind of a buyer.