



## ***How to help sellers achieve 'sky-high ROI'***

Achieving 'sky-high ROI' isn't about spending thousands of dollars on massive home improvements before you sell. Here are 3 low- to no-cost actions that net sellers a lot more on their home sales

BY [KRIS LINDAHL](#)

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From the moment I got my start in real estate, I've been fascinated by the psychology of home sales. In addition to being [the biggest investment](#) in most people's lives, a house represents a powerful emotional space. As the pandemic has reminded us, no place in life is more important than "home."

But when it comes to home sales, buyer and seller perceptions don't always match. Something sellers might overlook in [getting their home ready](#) for market might be the exact thing a buyer values most. That's where it gets interesting.

In my experience as an agent, team leader and brokerage owner, these three action items make the biggest emotional impact on buyers and the smallest financial impact on sellers. I call them the "sky-high ROI items."

### **1. The right touch**

When we sell homes, we focus almost exclusively on appealing to buyers' senses of sight and [smell](#) — and understandably so. But buyers' first impressions are also formed by the first thing they touch: [the front door knob](#). They're going to be turning that knob for years and decades to come. Plus, it's going to form all their future guests' first impressions.

Getting sellers to replace the front door knob — and in fact, any knob that looks worn, tarnished or rusty — is one of the cheapest, smartest and highest-ROI actions I've experienced in selling thousands of homes. It costs peanuts, and it literally opens the [door to a better sale](#).

### **2. Remain neutral**

As our in-house staging team likes to point out, sellers often make the mistake of assuming that buyers share [their aesthetic tastes](#). A couple who bought a home in the late '90s when bold walls colors were

fashionable might assume that today's buyers will find them as attractive as they did. In reality, younger buyers tend to have vastly different tastes than older sellers — sometimes in the exact opposite direction.

That's why painting over those bold blues and reds with white, gray and other neutral palettes is so important. Creating a "blank slate" that frames a room is far more effective than picking a specific lane and hoping a buyer will like it. Like installing new door knobs, applying a fresh, [neutral coat of paint](#) is a quick, easy and inexpensive way to make a strong impression and score the sale.

### **3. More green yields more green**

This one is timely, as tons of homeowners are about to make a huge mistake at a time [when inventories are tight](#). Millions of people have searches set up looking for their next home, and they're getting frustrated because they're not finding anything. In the meantime, the leaves are falling, the sun is casting longer shadows, and winter is coming.

Today, it's all about winning the online beauty contest. If one [seller's home photos are lush](#) and green while another's are cold and dreary, the first seller has a huge advantage. Plus, an awesome garden or impressive water feature should be shown in action, not dormant or buried under snow.

Buyers don't want to be reminded of winter. They want to envision their new home during long, warm summer days. This emphasizes the importance of what we call "green photos" — pictures taken in spring or summer, and with the owner's smartphone. We started a program years ago to take professional architectural photos in summer (for free) and hold them until homeowners are ready to sell. And they work like a charm.

The bottom line? Achieving "sky-high ROI" isn't about spending thousands of dollars on repairs and other massive home improvements before selling. Sometimes it's a simple matter of thinking small — and thinking ahead.

*Kris Lindahl is the founder and CEO of Kris Lindahl Real Estate, the #1 team-owned real estate brokerage in Minnesota and #12 nationwide.*