

[News](#) [Ukraine](#) [Sport](#) [Business](#) [Opinion](#) [Money](#) [Life](#) [Style](#) [Travel](#) [Culture](#) [I](#)[See all Style](#)

How to add thousands of pounds to the price of your home before selling in 2022

From decorating to renting furniture, a spruce-up can help your home change hands more quickly

By Jack Rear

8 June 2022 • 3:43pm



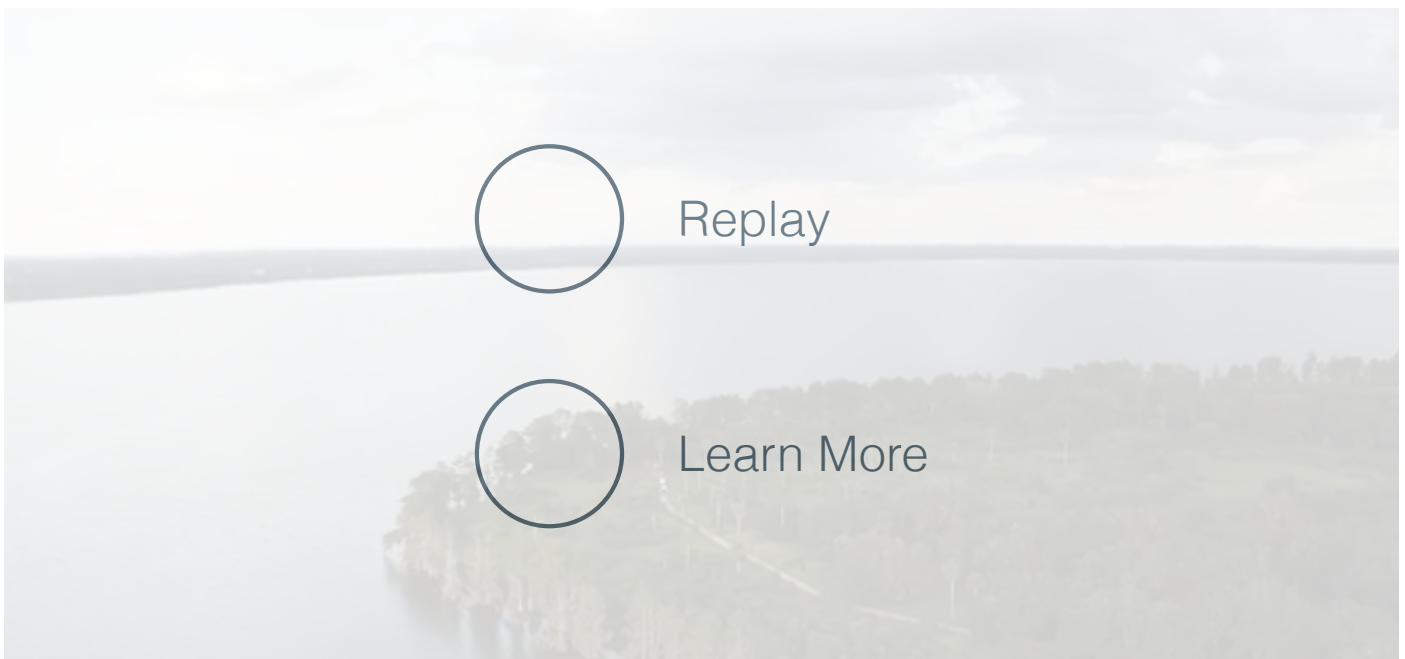
[The UK property market](#) remains at a peak in 2022. According to data gathered by real estate website [Rightmove](#), springtime attracted the highest number of enquiries and thus the most competition between buyers.

Though some analysts are predicting clouds on the horizon towards the end of the year, property sales are still red hot with demand outstripping supply across the country. So now is a great time to sell, and [to maximise profit](#).

But whenever you're selling, and no matter how hot the market is, it can really pay to [give your house a spruce up](#) before you put the property up for sale. With [a few tweaks and some careful dressing](#) it's possible to add tens of thousands of pounds to an initial valuation, and also speed up a sale.

"It is absolutely the best investment a person will ever make in their property," says Elaine Penhaul, a director at [Fine & Country](#) property staging and the author of *Sell High, Sell Fast*, a guide to modern property selling.

ADVERTISING



"Spending £1,000 on getting your house ready for sale can easily get you £10,000 extra on the offer," she says.

But while there are plenty of professionals out there who will help, [home-sellers need not spend a fortune](#) to secure a good sale. We spoke to the staging experts to learn [the small tweaks](#) that could help to sell a home in no time.

Decor tips: Paint your door blue and make sure your lawn has stripes on it



Blue front doors can inspire offers £4,000 higher than average, according to analysis | CREDIT: iStockphoto

When it comes to the exterior of your property, consider planting some bright, colourful flowers. And an oft-forgotten task, Penhaul says, is to make sure that your home's name or number is clearly visible from the road. "If they've been driving around looking for your house, they're going to be stressed and unhappy before they even step through the door," she says.

Make sure you mend fences and gates, rake up any leaves and mow the grass. "Stripes on your lawn look fantastic, so that'd be my top tip," adds Andrew Russell, co-founder of luxury property sales company the Country House Department.

More costly but equally important interventions include ensuring window frames have been painted, roof tiles are in place, and driveways are in good order (you might consider re-gravelling if necessary). “The rule of thumb here is that if the job is mostly tidying up what’s already there, do it,” says Rachel Johnson, founder of The Secret Seller, a property consultant and home stager. “However, if it needs a complete refit involving scaffolding or brand new windows, you won’t see a return on investment, so it’s usually cheaper to just knock some money off the asking price after the surveyor has seen it.”

Your front door might also require a lick of paint: an analysis of houses on Zoopla by Sellhousefast.uk found that blue front doors get offers £4,000 higher than average, white adds £3,400, but brown will reduce a home’s value by £700. You can do that yourself, or pay someone to spray it for less than £300.

Another important factor is light. “Make sure you have outside lights,” says Johnson. “Buyers do drive by in the evening because it’s a different vibe. They don’t want to see a house that’s dark. It doesn’t have to be an expensive job: a pair of stick-up solar-powered lights on either side of your door can make all the difference in making the house look welcoming both night and day. Outdoor lights are generally very cheap, so most of what you’ll pay here, if you don’t go down the stick-up route, is the cost of the electrician. I wouldn’t expect it to cost more than £150.”

Those selling flats might not have a lawn to mow or a garden to tidy, but Johnson reminds sellers to give the communal front door a wipe down, tidy away post from common areas and ask neighbours to keep bicycles and buggies out of hallways.

Declutter and fix up your home: Fill cracks and remove scuffs

After tidying the exterior, move inside. Go over your walls and ceilings, checking for scuffs and cracks. “A movement crack isn’t a big issue, but a buyer will panic and think they need to get an expensive survey. You can get a handyman to fill it for peanuts,” says Johnson.

Then it is time for the dreaded de-clutter. “Lots of people will go too far – they will take everything out and make it quite sterile,” warns Johnson. “Viewers don’t want that;

they want to buy into the lifestyle that you already have. They're looking for ideas on how they might use it. If you strip out everything a buyer will wonder what's happened."

It's a careful balance, but Johnson's advice is that if you don't use something on a weekly basis, buyers don't need to see it. "You can create space anywhere, and present the house in a way that makes people think, 'I can live here,'" she says. "The way to do that is taking out the things that aren't relevant to somebody else's lifestyle."

Pay attention to interiors: Find furniture that fits and don't forget bedside tables



"People cram big sofas in and find a way to make them fit, but what that says to buyers is, 'They've outgrown this house – am I going to outgrow it too?' " | CREDIT: Dana Hoff

"Huge pieces of furniture make rooms feel smaller," explains Johnson. "People cram big sofas in and find a way to make them fit, but what that says to buyers is, 'They've outgrown this house – am I going to outgrow it too?' "

Help is at hand. For a few hundred pounds per month, furniture rental companies such as Harth and Fat Llama, and even department stores such as John Lewis will loan designer furniture which might be a better fit while you put your own furniture in storage. (Storage prices vary around the country, but Checkatrade estimates a 200 sq ft storage unit – about the size of a single car garage – will cost around £88 per week.)

That will also help with Penhaul's next bit of advice. "Always stage rooms so that they look their best from the doorway," she says. "You want to be able to walk through the door cleanly and then look straight at the bed. Avoid big blocky furniture at the entrance of a room because that will really block your view and ruin the first impression."

Johnson also offers two unusual tips for bedrooms. "I've noticed that not having bedside tables really puts people off," she says. "People seem to wonder where they're going to put their phone or a drink at night. I also advise putting in a chair if you can fit one. In reality you'll just end up throwing clothes on it, but it looks nice, photographs well, and makes the room feel bigger."

It also pays to give potential buyers flexibility and different ideas. For example, if you're currently using a spare bedroom as a home office, put a daybed in there too to give options. By the same token, if you can explain to estate agents which walls can be knocked through that can help fire buyers' imaginations.

Another important factor is storage space. "One of the main reasons people are buying bigger houses is because they want more storage," says Johnson. "If you're selling a family house you'll need storage. An Ikea Kallax [a cubed shelving unit, from £29] is a brilliant, inexpensive option which, with the right accessories, can look upmarket. Plus they're great for hiding your clutter during viewings."

Know your house's selling points: focal points and features

Ahead of photography, think about focal points and key features. According to Spec, a virtual home tour service for properties, kitchens are the most viewed rooms in a house, accounting for 23 per cent of all views on the site, so it might be a good idea to start here.

“If you’re trying to capture a lifestyle, it’s about more than just shots of rooms,” advises Russell. “It’s taking detailed shots of period features or focal points, like a fireplace, or it might be a particular view through a window or a door.” He says these tips are important whether you are directing an estate agent photographer or taking your own pictures for a site like Purplebricks. “It’s the things that make a place a home.”

Sometimes a focal point can be obvious, like a window with a great view, but with clever staging you could make it even more of a feature. “Kitchens are usually at the back of the house overlooking the garden so we’re putting a lot of mirrored splashbacks in at the moment to bring the garden inside,” says Johnson.

In general, the advice is to angle the furniture towards a focal point, but in the living room, beware of the “false focal point”, warns Penhaul. “We take out televisions where possible,” she says. “They don’t photograph well and everyone angles their furniture towards the television, which isn’t a great focal point for selling. Better to position furniture towards a nice view of the garden or a fireplace.”

Redecorate your home: Repaint your red walls and buy a bunch of flowers



Kitchens are the most viewed room in the house – but don't spend £25,000 | CREDIT: iStockphoto

“As silly as it sounds, people think it’s really expensive to redecorate,” says Johnson. “If walls are too daring and too bold, like deep reds, it puts people off as they think they will never get it back to a neutral colour. They can, but it’s best to take it out of people’s worries by doing it for them.”

But that’s not to say painting everything plain white is the answer either.

“Estate agents are always telling people to paint their walls white, but that can look very sterile and it can be quite unforgiving,” says Bella Marshall, interiors expert and home stager behind Bella’s Gone Home. “You want pale shades to be a blank canvas, but you do need a bit of colour. The colours that we go for all the time are Fenwick & Tillbrook ‘Dry Earth’, and Farrow & Ball ‘Light Blue’ and ‘Setting Plaster’.”

White is useful in other ways, however. “We use heavy cotton white bedspreads, which you can put over absolutely everything,” says Penhaul. “Tuck them in, then just get a nice throw and some cushions to pick up any accent colour you have in the room

already. Then you don't have to iron or even clean the bed linen but it looks as though the bed is immaculate. It's not so much a blank canvas as an, 'Oh, yeah, I could live with that for the time being until we get round to painting.' ”

One final tip: buy some blooms. “Get some freshly cut flowers in the house for the day of photography,” says Russell. “You don't need to spend a fortune – you don't even need to buy multiple bunches – get one and move it around. That pop of colour can really lift the photograph.”

Find faster fixes for renovation: Don't put in a new kitchen, but consider changing carpets

While some of the above might sound like major changes, most property consultants advise against significant remodelling, despite estate agents often suggesting sellers do so.

“Some estate agents will tell you to put in a new kitchen or bathroom, because they can make a property easier to sell, but they won't give a huge return on investment,” says Johnson.

“People get told that if they spend £25,000 on a kitchen, they'll get an extra £100,000 in the sale. You really won't. But you could spray your kitchen and change the handles. That might cost £6,000 maximum, but it can easily add more than £10,000 because if you're clever, you can make it look like a brand new kitchen.”

The same usually goes for carpets. Often they come down to personal taste, so it's possible your buyer will change them anyway. The exception, Penhaul says, is if your house smells.

“Get friends to tell you if your house smells,” she says. “If you have dogs or you smoke or if you have damp, you're probably used to it, but it will put off buyers. If there's a smell, get rid of the carpets: it might be a two or three thousand spend but it's worth every single penny. You won't sell the house while the carpet smells.”

How we did it: Siobhan Gilley and Roz Watkins explain how they staged their homes for a quick sale

“We spent £750 on staging our house and got £10,000 over the asking price” – Siobhan Gilley, who sold a three-bed house in Morden, London last summer



Before this bedroom had the basics but there was room for more, but after they spruce-up included wall art, lamps and cushions

“It was purely superficial. We added some accessories, moved furniture and decluttered. I have a three-year-old daughter, so as you can imagine, the living room was a de facto playroom.

“The consultant we used – Jo from Staged & Sold – was recommended to us by a friend who’d had success in staging her property. She was really good at reminding us that just because something is beautiful doesn’t mean it’s right for the room. We had quite an imposing Newgate wall-clock in our living room, for example – it was quite dominant in the space – and Jo advised us to take it down and put up a relatively cheap print to tie the colours of the room together a bit more.

“She provided 2D and 3D designs for optimal layouts, a few pieces of wall art, and a list of accessories, such as cushions and throws to buy. We could have gone further – Jo did

say that there was one sofa too many – but we didn't have space to store it out of sight.

“I think staging is quite an American thing to do and a lot of my friends were suspicious – my sister laughed at some of the things we did. English people are quite judgmental of these tactics, but they absolutely worked for us. It presented the house in a really nice way.



“We paid £750 for all of the staging before the property went up for sale online. It went up on Monday and by Thursday we had received an offer for £10,000 over the asking price.”

“We paid £750 for all of the staging before the property went up for sale online. It went up on Monday and by Thursday we had received an offer for £10,000 over the asking price.

“I do put that down to the staging we did because other similar properties in the area which went up at the same time as ours still haven't sold. A neighbour knocked £30,000 off their valuation and when I looked up his house on Rightmove it seemed obvious they could have spent £5,000 on staging and got the asking price.”

“Properties like ours tend to take a long time to sell, but our first viewer put in an offer immediately.” – Roz Watkins, author, who before Christmas, sold a property comprising a farmhouse, two holiday cottages, barns and land in the Peak District

“I’ve actually sold houses before and I know that people are really influenced by the look and that emotional gut reaction when you first see somewhere, but this one was quite a challenge. We had a lot of clutter and it was all a bit overwhelming.

“Elaine helped with everything from getting workmen in to do a bit of plastering, re-tarring the driveway, and even helping us with reflooring the kitchen. In all, it came to less than 2 per cent of the asking price (around £20,000).



“Then they swept in and provided furniture, cushions, throws and pictures – all for hire. For me to get a hold of all that stuff myself would have been expensive and really time consuming, whereas they just came in and did it.”

“Then they swept in and provided furniture, cushions, throws and pictures – all for hire. For me to get a hold of all that stuff myself would have been expensive and really time consuming, whereas they just came in and did it.

“Usually these properties take time to sell because there’s not a huge market for somewhere with holiday cottages and land. It had been on the market for months. But the staging created the impression that it was a spacious, nice house that people would be able to walk straight into without having to work on.

“Within days, we started getting offers, before it even went on the open market – the Rightmove people didn’t have a chance. I think, honestly, we probably could have got over the asking price for it, but we liked the people.”

This article is kept updated with the latest information.

Related Topics

Interiors



The Telegraph values your comments but kindly requests all posts are on topic, constructive and respectful. Please review our [commenting policy](#).

Show comments

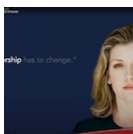
More stories



Eight candidates through to next round of Tory leadership race, as Sajid Javid drops out



Penny Mordaunt is Labour's worst nightmare



Penny Mordaunt would see off every Tory leadership rival, grassroots poll shows



Putin raids prisons for soldiers after massive losses in Ukraine



Jacinda Ardern is paying the price for her hermit zero-Covid economy



Telford scandal: 1,000 children abused as police feared investigating Asian men

More from Interiors



Five new posh paint collections loved by Britain's middle class

By Jessica Doyle

9 Jul 2022, 10:00am



6 best interior design trends to try for summer 2022 – and the ones to ignore in your home

By Jessica Doyle

8 Jul 2022, 9:10am



The best sofa beds for sitting and sleeping

By Abigail Buchanan

4 Jul 2022, 10:55am



How to make an extra £6,000 a year from your house

By Olivia Lidbury



1 Jul 2022, 8:00am



How flower arranging got cool again – and three ways to master it

By Susan Griffin

29 Jun 2022, 10:00am



How to design a beautiful space for your dog, and the best kit to buy

By Anna Tyzack

21 Jun 2022, 11:18am

Sponsored



‘I turned pro just at the time women’s football leapt forward’



‘We’ve achieved so much but the next step is equal pay’





'Seeing Rachel Yankey in a magazine was my inspiration'



A modern day match report on the first women's EURO in 1984

More from The Telegraph



Germany punish Spanish carelessness to seal Euro 2022 quarter-final spot



Just not cricket: Watch as amateur match descends into mass brawl



Mo Farah is not my real name and my life story was fake, says Olympic champion



Top banker suspended after telling colleague he needed 'love and affection'



Check the latest Tory leadership odds with our live tracker



Revealed: The BBC's best-paid stars of 2021

The Telegraph

[Back to top](#) ^

Follow us on:



[Contact us](#)

[About us](#)

[Telegraph Extra](#)

[Reader Prints](#)

[Branded Content](#)

[Syndication and Commissioning](#)

[Guidelines](#)

[Privacy](#)

[Terms and Conditions](#)

[Advertising Terms](#)

[Fantasy Sport](#)

[UK Voucher Codes](#)

[Betting Offers](#)

[Modern Slavery](#)

[Tax Strategy](#)

[Broadband and Mobile Deals](#)

[Manage Cookies](#)

© Telegraph Media Group Limited 2022