

So, you've been thinking about selling your house - and then you realized that **YOU HAVE KIDS!**

How is that going to work without losing your mind?
Here are **7** tried and true tips...



Give yourself some time to organize for a week or so. (naptime, while kids are at school)

Go through their closets, dressers and toys. What can you donate? What can you take to storage? When all of that is said and done, declutter a little more. Clear the tops of dressers and nightstands, take down personalized items (for the safety of your children), and put away all but 25% of the toys and maybe 1-2 weeks worth of clothing. If your kids are old enough or excited about moving, have them help choose what toys and clothes they use most often and let them box up the rest (packing and marking the box/boxes in a special way can make them feel included).



Make a contract with your kids - after all, you are signing lots of papers.

If they are elementary age or older, this can be a great life lesson! Find out what motivates them to help get the home ready for showings - let the "market" be the motivator! For littles, maybe there is a special toy that they've wanted. Print out a picture of the toy and put it some where (back of closet door, pantry door, etc) so they see it daily. (A sticker chart for littles helps to encourage them, too.) Maybe it's a special outing - could you find something that reminds them of why they want to help? For older kids, if not a special outing, maybe it's a "paycheck" that you hand them after closing on your home! Whatever the reward, make sure it's something they are REALLY excited about and be very specific about their chores and when you need them completed. Remember to be age appropriate and realistic. If you work, you'll need some things done before kids leave for school.

- ✔ Put away all "toys", (gaming stuff, too), school stuff (backpack, lunchbox - find special places for each), clothes, shoes and jackets. (It's great to have a laundry basket or tote that either fits under the bed or in the closet to toss toys in quickly.)
- ✔ Make the bed. (or do their best to "straighten - maybe they don't need as much on their bed if this causes stress)
- ✔ Clean off the bathroom counter (toothbrush, toiletry items - find a special place for them to put everything and have cleaning wipes handy), close toilet and hang up towels.
- ✔ Put dirty dishes in the dishwasher or hand wash and put away.
- ✔ Help turn on all lights in the home and open blinds before school. (Your home shows better when it's brighter!)



Set up Showing Bags and keep them in the car.

These can hold your kids favorite treats, drinks, a special toy/book, cozy clothes/blanket. Whatever you do, make these fun (something unique that they only get when there's a showing - it makes that time exciting!) Make sure there's a showing bag for you - include some personal items, just in case you have to run out of the home quickly and forgot to put on deodorant!



Gather some ideas of easy trips when showings happen.

Maybe that's when you go to the park, go on a hike/walk, grab some fast food, or walk around the mall. If your kids are still in the napping stage, do you have friends or family that are willing to let you show up for nap time if needed?



Determine a checklist for yourself.

An empty laundry basket is a great help if you need to gather items quickly - you can even throw it in the car, if needed! But have something written down so you don't miss the important things. Then, plan to do a final sweep of the home once the kids are buckled in the car!



2 Hour Notice!

Now that you're ready to go on the market, ask your agent to give you 2 hrs. notice. That should be enough time for your little one to finish a nap or for your older kiddos to accomplish their contract items and for you to do a final inspection.



Try to minimize your "work load".

- ✔ Cook your meals on the grill or in the oven in a single dish - less clean up if there isn't a cooktop to wipe down.
- ✔ Think about only using 2 bathrooms - less to clean!
- ✔ Have one place for homework (and hide ALL kids craft materials - trust me, you'll thank me for this one!)
- ✔ Have toys/books/games etc in ONE room - whether it's each child's bedroom or a playroom - leave the main spaces a little less chaotic.
- ✔ LOTS of outside play - if whether permits - and shoes off at the door!



Finally, RELAX!

There is a good chance that the person thinking about buying your home has children - or at least has been around children enough to know that families have to LIVE in their home. Not everything will be perfect and there will be times when you can't get everything on your list! It's okay. Your kids are going to take their cues from you - remember to breathe!

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