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How to sell your NYC apartment 'as is'

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You want to move, but you own an apartment that could use a refresh, be it an outdated kitchen or bath. However, you don't have enough money saved for both a renovation and a down payment. You decide to sell the property “as is,” and let the next buyer worry about fixing things up.

But “as is” apartments can be difficult to unload, and the longer one stays on the market, the more you need to lower the asking price. And you don't want to take a bath on the sale.

“It's even more challenging than it has been in years past to sell an apartment in ‘as is’ condition as the market has softened,” says Rick Ashenfarb, an agent with [Citi Habitats](#), adding that the potential loss in sales price on an apartment that needs work can range anywhere from \$50,000 to \$200,000 or more, depending on its size.

So what can you do to maximize the value in your NYC apartment without putting in too much money? We asked agents with experience selling “as is” properties for their advice.

Properly price the apartment

Multiple agents noted that one of the most important things when selling an “as is” apartment is to price the place correctly. Have an appraisal done and aim to get that amount once it’s on the market. Otherwise, if you over price a place even a little, it will sit.

To avoid that, determine the apartment’s best elements. Does it have a view? Is it sizable? Is it in a desirable location or building? If so, play those positives up so “people can step in and realize the value. If they have to spend a lot of money fixing something up, they want to feel like they’re getting some equity, so pricing is essential,” Ashenfarb says.

A fresh paint job for the best impression

Once an apartment is priced correctly, how it’s presented and marketed is the next most important factor. At a minimum, spring for a new paint job, agents say.

Carson Alexander, with [Keller Williams NYC](#), prefers linen white walls.

“You want it to be a blank canvas for buyers to project their dream home onto. Plus, the smell of fresh paint is almost as intoxicating to buyers as fresh cookies,” he says.

Before starting, be sure to read Brick's [best advice for painting](#) your New York City apartment.

Try to make a few updates

You can't hide defects, but you can try to lessen the problems in a place to make it look as good as possible.

In the kitchen, if the cabinets aren't that nice, you can reface them, Ashenfarb says. You can also buy new appliances. For the bathroom, a cheap fix is a new vanity and new toilet. Or you can refinish the bathtub. "These are cosmetic fixes that could work to help sell an apartment, but you really have to weigh how much it will cost, and what it will take to sell it," he says.

Declutter and organize

First impressions are key, and if you have too much clutter in your apartment, you're not able to highlight the space's best features.

"Declutter the space, and organize the closets," recommends Barbara Ireland, an agent with [DJK Residential](#). ([Here](#) are tips to help you get started.)

Ashenfarb agrees: "Especially in Manhattan, people want to see closet space. I tell people that anything you are going to throw out when you move, do it now."

This will allow for a buyer to see the bones of the apartment, says Lisa Mathias, a [Halstead](#) agent.

Have the place professionally cleaned

Once you've removed as many belongings as possible, have the place **professionally cleaned**.

"Hire a cleaning service to conduct a deep clean prior to the first open house," Ireland says. "And most importantly, keep the unit extremely clean for each showing."

This includes removing any wallpaper as well as carpets in order to show off bare wood floors, says Mary Phelan-Kavanagh, an agent with **Douglas Elliman**.

Stage the apartment

Agents noted that for "as is" apartments, while decluttering helps, an empty apartment makes it even easier for proper staging. Staging isn't just for high-end properties, experts say **it's still worth it even if your place is worth less than a million**.

"Staging is a great way to sell an 'as is' apartment," Mathias says. "Stagers have an eye and know how to neutralize the apartment and highlight the important features. It will allow for a buyer to visualize what can be done for the room. If staged properly, it also makes the apartment look like it needs less work than it does."

If empty isn't a possibility, "move around the existing furnishings to give the apartment a new flow, and remove old heavy curtains to let in natural light," Ireland says, adding that bright pillow covers, a new light-colored bedding set, and white towels and shower curtain help, as do fresh flowers.

Consider virtual staging

If the apartment is in dire straits—it can't be cleared, it can't be decluttered, or the remaining furnishings are too unattractive to show in photos, virtual staging is the next best option. Just remember that all virtually staged images have to be clearly marked as such.

"Virtual staging has become a very useful tool for those who don't want to spend money on actual staging. You could include virtually staged pictures in the online listing, and have them printed and in the apartment for showings," Mathias says.

Partner with a contractor or architect

Own the fact that the apartment needs work, and make it as easy as possible for potential buyers to estimate what a renovation would cost them, and the possibilities for the space.

Provide potential buyers with the building's alteration agreement and know the rules, Ireland says.

Get quotes from contractors, suggests Phelan-Kavanagh, or bring in an architect to draw up alternative floorplans, Mathias says.

“Have them price out, in general terms, what the most common upgrades will cost and have this on hand for buyers to look at as they walk around the property,” Alexander says. “If you have good traffic, have the contractor or architect there to talk buyers through a renovation.”