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## Australia Property Sellers Warned: Dirty Bathrooms Kill Deals

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A poorly maintained bathroom can jeopardise the sale of a property in Australia, regardless of how well the rest of the home presents, according to celebrity interior designer Kellie Richardson.

Richardson, founder of Kurved by Design, has worked with politicians, athletes, and developers across both commercial and residential properties. She said that bathrooms are often the most scrutinised room during open homes, with buyers quick to spot faults.

“When people walk into the bathroom, they stop imagining and start analysing,” she said. “If something looks or smells off, it can cost you tens of thousands in perceived value.”

While many buyers are willing to overlook outdated tiles or fixtures, dirt and bad smells are much harder to ignore. Richardson warned that dirty bathrooms often suggest larger issues such as mould, poor ventilation, or plumbing problems, factors that can significantly drive down offers.

“In some cases, we’ve seen bathrooms with brown tiles and gold accents, very outdated. But clean. Buyers might think it needs an upgrade but are still open to the property,” she explained. “But when it’s dirty or smells damp, they start thinking about costly renovations.”

Common mistakes sellers make include overpowering air fresheners, stained bathtubs, grimy shower floors, carpeted bathrooms, hair in the sink, and cluttered vanities.

“If buyers see hair in the drain or dirty shower floors, it creates a sense of poor hygiene,” Richardson said. “People assume that if the bathroom is unclean, the rest of the home probably is too.”

Simple improvements like using scented candles, keeping vanities clear, and ensuring the toilet and bath are spotless can help buyers imagine themselves living in the space. “Buyers are emotional. Clean, fresh-smelling bathrooms give the impression that the property is well maintained,” she said.

In extreme cases, even minor design missteps, such as carpets in the toilet, have deterred buyers. “People think it’s unhygienic, especially in households with male occupants,” Richardson noted.

Her advice to property sellers is simple: pay attention to cleanliness and presentation. “You don’t need a full renovation, just a clean and well-maintained bathroom. It can be the difference between closing the sale or losing the buyer.”