

SHOWINGS AND OPEN HOUSES

Planned open house appointments will allow you time to prepare, but oftentimes the window of opportunity to expose your property to a motivated buyer can be small. Every time you leave your home, make sure it's ready for an unexpected showing.

General Preparation

When preparing your home for showings, think about the techniques used to show builders' model homes or what you might do to prepare for honored guests.

Clean off the front porch—remove advertisements, leaves and cobwebs.

Create as light, cheerful and serene an environment as possible.

Open drapes and light lamps. Turn on lights in closets, the pantry and basement.

Add a welcoming touch by filling candy dishes and putting out fresh flowers.

Bedrooms

Make beds, put clothes and toys away, keep decorator pillows orderly.

Turn blinds so slats are uniformly open. Flip light switches if room is dark.

Bathrooms

Put out a clean hand towel, fresh soap and soap dish.

Flush toilets, put commode lids down and ensure you have enough toilet paper.

A potpourri dish or diffuser can provide a nice sight and scent. (Try to find something that smells like fresh laundry.)

Kitchen

Put away last-minute dishes and conceal countertop items.

Simmer a few drops of vanilla and cinnamon on the stove.

Put away dish drainers and tidy coffee areas.

Living Room/Family Room/Den

Straighten pictures on walls.

Adjust couch cushions and throw pillows.

Dispose of newspapers and drink containers, polish tabletops, vacuum.

Light the fireplace in the winter.

Entryway

When leaving just before buyers arrive, turn around at the front door and see what the prospects' first impression will be. What is the first thing you notice from that vantage point? Is it an asset?

Notify your neighbors of scheduled open house days and assure them they'll be welcome. Their curiosity to see your home and eagerness to discover decorating ideas for their own homes may actually result in them turning up a buyer among their friends.