

It's a Tie! How to Choose Which Home to Buy

Imagine you're searching for a new home and checking out listings. You go and see several homes and fall in love with... two of them! How do you decide which is the right one for you, especially if you're in a situation where you need to make a decision quickly?

Here are three techniques to consider:

1. Each home probably has many of the features you either *want* or *need*. Which home has more of what you *need*? You can probably enjoy a home that doesn't have something you want. However, that's unlikely if it lacks something you need.
2. Rank your list of wants. Which are the most important to you? Consider applying a numerical score to each — for example, 1 for low priority and 4 for "I must have that feature!" Then, pick the home with the highest score of "wants." (This technique assumes each property has everything you *need*.)
3. Ask your future self. Imagine it's three years from now. Which home do you suspect you'll enjoy living in the most, considering the home and neighbourhood?



Even with these techniques, making a decision can be hard. However, if you love them both, you really can't go wrong.



Managing How You Feel about the Housing Market

There has been a lot of news coverage about the housing market over the past couple of years. In fact, you might be thinking that the market is like an out-of-control pendulum swinging wildly and in unpredictable ways.

It's not really like that. However, it's easy to understand why you might feel concerned, especially if you're thinking about moving sometime this year.

Here are some things to consider:

- The housing market, including your local market, is actually relatively easy to understand. When there are few homes for sale, but lots of buyers, homes are easier to sell and more difficult to buy. It's all vice versa when there are a lot of homes for sale and few buyers.
- If you're selling and also buying, the pros and cons generally even themselves out. You might sell your home quickly in a seller's market, but then need to be strategic in your approach to finding your next dream home.
- People buy and sell homes in every market, regardless of conditions. There is a solution to just about any challenge you may face. If you're worried about finding your next home in a competitive area, for example, find out about proven strategies for making that happen.

So, don't let worry about market conditions hold you back from making the best decision about where you want to live.

Boost the Perceived Value of your Home

If you want to sell your home for a higher price, you can boost its perceived value by doing a major upgrade. For example, you might consider a kitchen renovation. That would certainly pique the interest of more buyers.

But, what if you don't want to undertake such a substantial (and expensive) project?

Fortunately, there are many ways to increase the perceived value of your home that don't require major work. Consider these ideas:

- **Redecorating.** Decorating is simply the process of dressing up a room to make it look more attractive and inviting. It can also involve rearranging furniture and other items to make the room more of a showcase. This often makes for a fun Saturday project.
- **Adding new furnishings and other touches.** Adding new furniture, lamps and other items can instantly transform the look of a room. And, if you plan well, you can take it all with you when you move.
- **Painting.** This is another variation on decorating. Getting the interior painted is often not a huge nor expensive project. Yet, it's amazing to see the impact it can have. A fresh coat of paint can make a room look new and inviting.
- **Enhancing spaciousness.** Buyers love to see lots of space. So, the more spacious you make rooms appear, the more desirable your home will become. Explore techniques for making rooms,



especially small ones, look and feel roomier. (The trick is to maximize the usable floor space.)

As you can see, there are plenty of opportunities to boost your selling price without having to invest in an expensive upgrade.