

## Look Closer when Attending an Open House

If you're searching for a new home, even casually, you might visit a few Open Houses. They are a convenient way to view properties for sale.

However, people often make the mistake of being too casual when attending an Open House. For example, a couple might drop by an Open House, look around briefly, and then leave. As a result, they may not get a clear idea of whether or not the property is right for them. They may miss other crucial details as well.

So, if you're thinking of moving and intend to visit Open Houses, treat them as you would a private viewing appointment. Take your time and explore the property thoroughly. Bring a checklist of things you need and want in your next home. Notice any potential issues, particularly involving needed repairs and upgrades. Ask lots of questions.

Depending on the market, that Open House visit may be the primary way to get information on the property. So, you want to make the most of it.



Of course, if you find you're really interested in the listing, make a private appointment, if possible, to get an even closer look.

Ultimately, you want to learn enough about the property to make an informed decision about whether or not to make an offer.



## Do You Need to Use “Staging Furniture”?

As you may know, *staging* involves organizing and decorating your home so that it looks impressive to buyers. *Staging furniture* is sometimes used to accomplish this. This furniture — as well as other items, such as pictures — are loaned to your home during the listing.

Typically, staging furniture is brought in by the real estate agent or professional stager to set up in your home to optimize the sense of space and possibilities. Oftentimes, some of your own furniture is taken out and put in storage.

Staging furniture, when used as part of an overall staging plan, can have a dramatic impact on how well your home shows. In fact, it's been shown that a staged home tends to sell for a higher price than a comparable un-staged property.

Should you consider staging your home using staging furniture?

The answer depends on several factors, the most important being market conditions. If your neighbourhood is currently a seller's market, you might not need to stage your property extensively. However, if the market is a buyer's market, then having your home professionally staged (perhaps with staging furniture) may give your listing a significant competitive advantage.

So, pay attention to market conditions and get professional advice regarding staging furniture. That will help you make the best decision.

## The Role of Weather when Selling your Home

If you were planning on an out-of-town vacation, one of the things you'd probably do is check the weather. After all, you'd want to know how to prepare. For example, if it's going to be hot, you'll want to bring sunscreen. If there will be a few rainy days, you'll pack raincoats.

What does this have to do with selling your home?

Weather is one factor that influences how well your home shows to prospective buyers. So, it's wise to pay attention to the local weather forecast in order to prepare your property more effectively.

Say you have a few viewing appointments scheduled for early next week. If the weather reports indicate wet or cold weather, then it's likely buyers will be wearing the appropriate footwear for those conditions. In that circumstance, you'll want to ensure you have a good mat in the foyer and a place for those wet shoes and boots.

If the weather is likely to be sunny, you can take advantage of that to stage your home more effectively. For example, you can adjust the window coverings strategically to make the most of the natural light. You could also add potted flowers, which tend to perk up and bloom in the sunshine, creating a pleasant, upbeat atmosphere.

Checking the weather report also lets you know when the sun will set. In our busy lives, it's easy to forget when dusk begins. For example, you might assume it will still be daylight at 6pm when a buyer is due



to arrive. If in fact, it's darker than anticipated, your home may not show as well. You may need to adjust window coverings, lighting, etc. depending on whether it's daylight or dusk.

As you can see, the weather plays a role in selling your home. So, it pays to check the weather reports regularly.