

What to Bring with You when Viewing Homes for Sale

When you're viewing homes for sale, you want to make the most of the experience. The last thing you want is to go home and wonder, "Will our sofa fit in that second house we saw?" That's why coming prepared is important. Here's what to bring:

- **A Checklist:** Before heading out, jot down essential features and attributes you're looking for in a home. How many bedrooms? Home office space? A street with quick access to public transit?
- **Measuring Tape:** Will your desk fit in the home office nook? How about that dining table? A measuring tape can help you visualize your belongings in the space and avoid any unwelcome surprises later. (Remember to bring a list of key furniture items and their measurements too!)
- **Comfortable Shoes:** You might be walking quite a bit, especially if you're viewing multiple homes in a day or touring extensive properties. Dress for comfort so you can focus on the homes and not on sore feet.



- **Notebook and Pen:** Make notes about each property – the good, the bad, and the in-between. These will be invaluable when you're comparing homes later on.

By packing these essentials, you'll be well-prepared to find a home that not only meets your needs but feels like, well, home.



The Role Carrying Costs Play when Buying a Home

When shopping for a new home, many homeowners compare the listing price with their budget. That's understandable. However, the listing price isn't the only factor that impacts affordability.

For example, you might find a property that falls just under the top end of your budget, but discover that the taxes are significantly higher than expected. So, although it seems at first glance to be within your price range, owning it could be more expensive than you anticipated.

Vice versa, you could see a home for sale that you love but is just over your budget. But, since the carrying costs of the property are less than what you pay now, that home could actually be affordable. In this case, if you didn't know the carrying costs, you might have missed a great opportunity.

The lesson here is obvious. When shopping for a new home, check out the carrying costs of the property and factor that into your decision to make an offer. Such costs can include taxes, utilities, maintenance, alarm service, and other regular expenses.

Knowing the carrying costs will give you a fuller picture so that you can make a more informed decision.

The 3 G's to Make Selling and Buying Easier

If you're thinking about selling your property and finding your next dream home, you might be worried about all the work and stress involved. You might even wonder, "Do I want to go through all that this year?"

That's a legitimate concern. Fortunately, it's simple to make the process easier and less stressful. Just remember the three G's:

1. Get the numbers

Selling and buying will be much easier when you know the numbers and, more importantly, know they will work for you. You'll need to find out what your current property will sell for on today's market. You'll also need to establish a budget for your next home. And finally, you'll need to get a clear picture of the type of home and neighbourhood that fits within that budget.

Once you know the numbers, half the stress is gone.

2. Get organized

When you're selling and buying, it can seem like you're rolling two boulders up a hill at the same time. Staying organized will make the task much easier. Keep a special calendar just for real estate activities. Also, take advantage of the many phone apps and tools available for home buyers and sellers.

3. Get your team together

You don't have to go it alone. Get the professional help you need



to make the process go more smoothly and easily for you. That may include a good contractor (for repairs and improvements), babysitter, pet daycare, landscaping service, etc. It might even be worth subscribing to one of the many services that deliver meal kits to your home — which frees up your time to prepare for viewings or to see properties for sale.

There is even more you can do to make selling and buying a less stressful, even enjoyable, experience for you. So, don't let these concerns get in the way of making a move.