

Preparing for an Open House

7 STEPS TO PREPARING FOR AN OPEN HOUSE

1. Hire a cleaning service. A spotlessly clean home is essential; dirt will turn off a prospect faster than anything.
2. Mow your lawn, and be sure toys and yard equipment are put away.
3. Serve cookies, coffee and soft drinks. It creates a welcoming touch, but be sure to clean the kitchen after food prep. Use disposable cups to keep the sink and counters uncluttered.
4. Lock up your valuables, jewelry and money. Although the real estate salesperson will be on site during the open house, it's impossible to watch everyone all the time.
5. Turn on all the lights. Even in the daytime, lights add sparkle.
6. Send your pets to a neighbor or take them outside. If that's not possible, crate them or confine them to one room (a basement or bath), and let the salesperson know where to find them.
7. Leave. It's awkward for prospective buyers to look in your closets and express their opinions of your home with you there.

10 WAYS TO MAKE YOUR HOME IRRESISTIBLE AT AN OPEN HOUSE

1. Put fresh or silk flowers in the main rooms for a touch of color.
2. Add a new shower curtain, fresh towels and unused guest soaps to every bath.
3. Set out subtle potpourri or fresh baked goods for a homey smell.
4. Set the table with pretty dishes, linens and candles.
5. Buy a fresh doormat with a clever saying.
6. Remove one or two major pieces of furniture from every room to create a sense of spaciousness.
7. Put away small kitchen appliances and personal bathroom items to give the illusion of more counter space.
8. Lay a fire in the fireplace. Or clean and fill the space with a basket of flowers.
9. Depersonalize the rooms by putting away family photos, mementos and distinctive artwork.
10. Turn on the sprinklers for 30 minutes to make the lawn sparkle.