

## Prepare For an Open House

By ALEX MASON | Green Shoot Media

Selling your home is usually a positive experience, especially if you take steps to ensure smooth sailing from start to finish.

Preparing your home for an open house is a key factor toward proper presentation and one area of the real estate sale where you should take every measure to get it right.

### AVAILABILITY

Your home should be available for buyer browsing every weekend for the duration of the sale. If you are able to vacate the home for a mid-week open house, all the better for rapid results and a sale.

Proper handling of the open house is to hand the keys over to your listing agent for a full day of showcasing two to three days a week for an occupied residence. Be sure your listing agent is marketing the open house in advance and uses plenty of signs to point the way from the main boulevards to your front door.

Website marketing and local ads in the newspapers create greater exposure to make your open house venture a prosperous one with dozens of home buyers responding to your listing agent's efforts.

### PRESENTATION

Your home should be sparkling clean to include baseboard scrubbing, the removal of cobwebs, and taking excess furniture and personal effects away from the main frame of the home. Store toys, books and anything else that takes away from the spatial orientation of the interior.

In addition, if you are presenting the home with a dining room, be sure the area is set up



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for that purpose or contains nothing at all. To have an office or gym in a designated dining area may confuse the buyer as to the actual living space in the home.

Your experienced listing agent will help you prepare your home for market with the proper usage of each room in the house in mind.

Lawns must be maintained and backyards should be open and clear of unused items that will make the outdoor living space appear smaller.

### REGISTRY

Your listing agent should be diligent when presenting your home. However, he or she must also be responsible and take care of your home security.

The agent will have a guest registry to sign for each person who wishes to roam through your home. If a potential buyer refuses to sign the registry or seems to be combative in any way, a good listing agent will show him or her the door. The seller's security must not be comprised by lookie-loos who have no intention of buying the

home or have not been pre-qualified for funding.

After each open house, be sure you or your agent bumps every window and checks every back door to ensure they have not been opened during the showing and that you have complete security after hours.

### STEP OUT

There is no written rule that the homeowner must not be present during open house. However, if you want your buyers to be com-

### REAL ESTATE 101

#### Open House Preparation Tips

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- You should be away from the home during the open house. Plan a day out, allowing at least eight hours for a full day of showing.
- Discuss with your real estate agent the planned security measures for the open house.

fortable, vacating the premises is a sound plan of attack.

Many homeowners get emotional over their property or make judgment calls about the potential buyers, both of which can undermine the efforts of a strong listing agent.

When you are planning an open house, plan to be gone for eight hours to maximize the showing options and make the day productive.

Vacating may be uncomfortable at times, but it is a part of the professional selling process and will serve you well in the end.

*Alex Mason is a former real estate agent and mortgage broker living in Los Angeles.*



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### HOMESWISE GLOSSARY

**Title search:** A review of the public records to determine the identity of parties having an interest in the property and to determine the existence and nature of any liens or claims outstanding on the property. Also known as title examination, rundown or abstract.

**Processing:** The preparation of a mortgage application and collection of supporting documents for underwriting.

SOURCE: Freddie Mac

# AD SPACE