

## Ace the Open House

When preparing for an open house or for potential buyers to visit, you want the house to look neat, clean, memorable and lived in — but not too much like you.

You want visitors to have enough context to imagine themselves living there. It is going to mean a lot of house cleaning during the selling period, but it will be worth it when you find a buyer. Realtor.com suggested ways to put your house's best foot forward for visitors.

### CLEAN AND DECLUTTER

This should go without saying, but make sure your house is clean when you have potential buyers coming to visit. Dust, vacuum, sweep the floors, wash the windows and clean the bathrooms. Remove clutter from counters and desks, make sure your books are orderly, even keep the cupboards, cabinets and drawers neat. Potential buyers are going to open every door and drawer to see whether the house meets their needs, so resist the urge to throw all the mess into the never-opened closet under the stairs.

Realtor.com suggests getting rid of excess and overflowing stuff, either by donating it or renting a short-term storage space (which is one less task to do when you're actually moving). A house that's overflowing with belongings may cause buyers to worry the house won't have enough space for their belongings.

### DEPERSONALIZE

Remove items that tell potential buyers that someone else lives in that home. That includes personal items, family photos, bold or unusual art-



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### REAL ESTATE 101

#### Knock knock! Who's There?

According to the National Association of Realtors, not everyone who comes through the door of your open house will be a potential buyer. Of course you could get a nosy neighbor or someone who's purely a looky-loo, Realtor.com's "6 Surprising Reasons to Go to an Open House — Even If You're Not Buying" outlines some other legitimate reasons that bring people in. Among them are prospective clients of the agent looking to see the pro in action, and future buyers doing market research and getting to know the neighborhood. Read the full list at <https://bit.ly/2h0ycKH>.

work, the patchwork quilt on the bed and unique furniture. Create a blank canvas that allows potential buyers to imagine their family photos, favorite

decorations and furniture in the house.

### BUY A HOUSEPLANT

Greenery creates a welcoming envi-

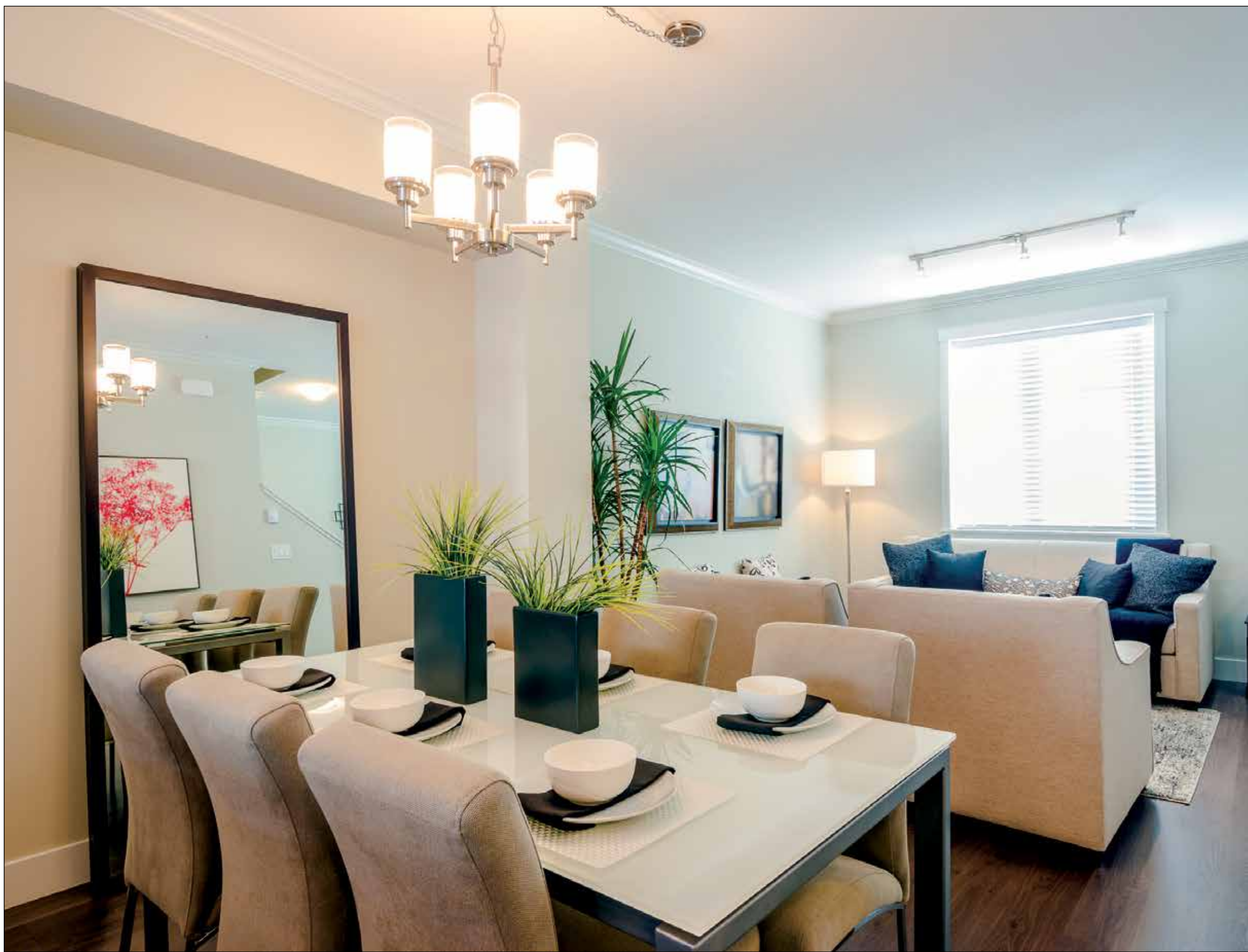
ronment. You can also put flowers in a vase on the dining or coffee table or the kitchen counter. A bowl of candy on the counter doesn't hurt either.

### TAKE A SNIFF

Invite a friend or your realtor over to conduct a smell test. Odors, no matter how slight, can discourage a potential buyer. Candles or air fresheners may do the trick, but don't go to too heavy; lots of air freshener can make buyers wonder what you're trying to cover up.

Cigarette smoke, cat urine and other pervasive smells may require deep cleaning.





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### HOMEWIS GLOSSARY

**Assumption:** A homebuyer's agreement to take on the primary responsibility for paying an existing mortgage from a home seller.

SOURCE: Federal Trade Commission

# AD SPACE