

When your Realtor uses Homes and Land magazine as his or her marketing partner they get a number of effective ways to present your home to potential buyers. But from the full colour listing that appears in thousands of copies of the magazine going into the hands of motivated buyers to the virtual tours and unparalleled online component of the Homes and Land marketing system nothing beats the one on one of an open house. By inviting prospective buyers into your home on a specific day for a more intimate look at what initially caught their eye between the pages of H&L you and your Realtor can really go a step beyond in presenting your home.

So, discuss the prospects of having one with your Realtor; but remember, while your Realtor will manage and supervise the event, there are a few things to keep in mind that will help you to make that important good first impression and to ensure that it's a good experience for everyone involved. The following is by no means an exhaustive list; rather, it is one to get you started and thinking about what potential buyers may be looking at in and around your house.

Start by looking at the outside:

- mow and weed your lawn;
- make sure to trim the grass from your steps as well, as it makes them look wider;
- clean up the back yard and make sure all lawn furniture is organized and inviting;
- clean oil stains off of the parking pad;
- notify your immediate neighbours and ask them to remove anything unsightly;
- clean your windows;
- paint your front door;
- oil creaky doors;
- make sure the address is visible;
- clean your barbeque area;
- clean and organize your garage;
- shovel your walk and the sidewalk in the winter;

Move onto the inside:

- The three c's are paramount: clean, clean, clean. Prospective buyers will look at how you live and assume that's how you treat your house;
- Clean and organize under the sinks - some people may want to look at the pipes and drains;
- Replace all light bulbs and make sure that all the lights are on. This makes the space look bigger;
- Open your drapes to let the sunlight in, and replace dark drapes with lighter ones. This also increases the size of a room;
- Make sure the carpets are clean – steam clean if you have to;
- Accentuate what you feel your homes best attributes are;
- If you have pets, ask someone to take care of them for the day;
- Remove any clutter - this will also make the space look bigger;
- Polish door handles, faucets, and any additional hardware you have in the house;
- Put a full roll of toilet paper in the bathroom and hang clean towels;
- Ensure that all of your valuables are put away and out of sight;
- Make sure to open your windows to air it out;
- Put a fresh coat of paint any walls that need it;
- Don't leave any renovations incomplete;

Finally, when the date of your projected open house approaches let your friends and family know so you won't have any unexpected guests; make sure that you're ready to start on time; and, most importantly, get ready to show your home off!

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