

HOME

YOUR



SELL FASTER: How to Improve the Selling Time of Your Home

How long is it going to take? Eight days? Three weeks? Ninety days? To figure out how quickly you can sell your home, first understand what factors can influence the time it takes to produce a serious buyer.

After listing your home, ask your real estate agent for the average sale time in your neighborhood. This can easily be determined by averaging the actual number of days it took to sell other homes in the same area over a set period of time, such as the previous six months.

Knowing that number, can help you figure out what can be done to speed up the time it takes to attract a buyer. There are three factors that affect the marketing time for a home: price, terms and condition.

If you want to sell quickly, consider the

A home priced close to the average of recent home sales will go quickly. If your home is in good condition compared to others currently for sale in your neighbor-



hood, your price may be adjusted up to reflect a greater value to prospective buyers. Home buyers always comparison shop.

can also be adjusted. If your home is priced at or above market value, consider offering seller financing at a lower than market interest rate on a portion of the price. Flexible terms could attract an entirely new group of buyers.

Impressionable buyers make fast buying decisions based on alone.

Consider upgrading your home with major repairs or cosmetic improvements. A home that shines can trigger emotions resulting in an instant sale.

TECHNOLOGY AND YOUR HOME:

SECURITY SYSTEMS

Security systems: they're not just simple burglar alarms anymore. Now homeowners can choose from wired or wireless options with motion detectors, glass-break detectors, closed-circuit TV monitoring and panic buttons to notify authorities in emergency. Some can help you in the event of fires or medical emergencies using sensors to monitor points of entry and detect dangerous levels of heat or smoke. They can provide early detection of gas leaks or freezing water lines before damage occurs. Contact a local security company to discuss what system would be best for you.

GETTING THE INSPECTION: A MUST FOR BUYERS

A home inspection could be one of the most important things you do before signing a contract for purchasing a home. Once the home is purchased, it's yours. You can find a list of qualified home inspectors at www.ashi.org.

A thorough home inspection requires a good home inspector. That inspector will focus on the structure, construction, mechanical systems and overall safety of the house. He or she will make you aware of any needed repairs or damages. Generally, an inspector checks the electrical system, plumbing and waste disposal, water source and quality, the HVAC system, potential presence of pests, the foundation, walls, ceilings, doors, windows and roof. An inspector is not expected, however, to give you an evaluation of whether or not you're getting your money's worth.

Another option is to include an inspection clause in the offer when negotiating. The inspection clause gives you an out on buying the house if serious problems occur, or it can give you the ability to renegotiate the price if repairs are needed.

FALL COMPOSTING:

Ensures a Bountiful Garden

Autumn is the perfect time to begin a project that will ensure a bountiful garden next year: a compost pile.

Decaying vines, vegetables, leaves and grass clippings contain excellent nutrients that break down over time to recharge soil with nitrogen for spring planting.

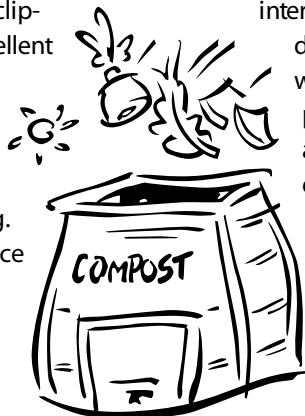
First, find a place for your compost. Drive four 5-foot wood or metal stakes one foot into the ground — one at each corner of a square three feet wide. Fence in three sides with chicken wire, leaving one side open for easy access. If you like the idea of a compost pile but don't have time to build one, purchase a prefabricated compost unit.

Next, collect chopped tree

leaves, grass clippings, and all the vines and fading plants from your vegetable garden and build a pile that's at least three feet high. This will create a hot

internal temperature to decompose the organic waste into fertilizer. To prevent odor, you can add a dusting of lime every six to 10 inches. As a safety precaution, avoid adding lawn clippings that have recently been treated with herbicides or weed killers.

Shape the pile like a volcano and make an indentation on top to catch rain. Water the pile at least once every two weeks to keep it moist and turn it once in a while to move drier outside material into the middle where it can break down into lush humus.



HOME TIPS:

Animal-Proof Your House

Some animals that venture into your backyard are fun and pleasant to watch.

Some are not. Some animals inside your house are welcome and tame. Some are not. From wild animals to the family kitten, here are some tips to help you keep control.

Are raccoons in your garbage cans waking you in the middle of the night? Try adding one cup of ammonia to the trash bag before you close it up. The smell drives raccoons away and keeps them from spilling trash everywhere. Eventually, they learn to steer clear of the garbage.

No one likes bats in the attic. Getting rid of them can be a challenge. If holes in your roof are the culprit, one way to keep bats out is to wait until dusk to patch them up. That way, any bats living there are already out on the prowl and won't be able to get back in.

Has your cat decided your sofa is its new scratching toy? To break the feline of the habit simply cover the scratched area with tin foil. Cats dislike the surface and will find a new place to let loose — hopefully on a scratching pole. Soon enough you can remove the foil when the cat has forgotten about its original appeal.

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Do you know someone who is thinking about buying or selling a home? **PLEASE MENTION MY NAME.**



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