



Sahran Shaoul
Broker Associate

H O U R H O M E

REAL ESTATE BLOOPERS

You've replaced the light bulbs, scrubbed the floors and touched up the walls in preparation for your open house. If you think you've got everything under control, think again. When sellers put their homes on the market, they often make mistakes that can become serious obstacles to a sale. Make sure you don't fall into any of these traps.

- 1 **Not hiring an agent.** People who sell by owner (FSBO) may think they're saving themselves money by going at it alone. But in the long run, if owners let their homes linger on the market for months — or even years in some cases — they are wasting time and losing money.
- 2 **Not recognizing a good offer.** You may have heard an agent say, "The first offer is the best offer." But often, sellers want to hold out for bigger and better. So they pass on the first offer and then, down the road, when the bigger number doesn't come through, they regret turning down the first one. So the rule of thumb is, if you get an offer and it's close to or above your minimum sales price, do your best to close the deal.
- 3 **Not leaving your home during a showing.** No prospective buyer wants the seller looming over his shoulder or following him around the house. It is much easier for a buyer to imagine living in a place if the current owners aren't there. Go see a movie, shop or visit friends — do anything but hang around the open house.
- 4 **Not deodorizing a home that smells.** After living in a home for years, you may not notice subtle (or sometimes not so subtle) smells, whether they're from pets, smoke or food. Odors tend to cling to carpets, curtains and furniture and once you've grown used to them, you think the smell is neutral. This is where a second opinion is critical. Have a trusted friend or neighbor come to your house and tell you if there are any

odors. If there are, make sure to eliminate them before your open house.

- 5 **Not making your last mortgage payment before closing.** Even if you're closing on the second day of the month, and your mortgage is due on the first, you must send in your payment. Sometimes sellers erroneously think that they can skip that final payment once they have signed a contract to sell their home. If you skip this last payment, you may incur late fees and missing it may affect your credit history. Don't worry about losing money for the weeks you're not living in the house. When the escrow officer or attorney produces the closing documents, the numbers will be calculated based on the payments that have been received by the lender.



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PERFECT TIMING

When it comes to being kicked out of your home for a showing, there's no such thing as an ideal time. But some hours are clearly more convenient than others.

Before you even sign your listing agreement, make sure to tell your agent when your home will be ready for showings and explain what times are off-limits. If you have young children, for instance, you might want to cut off showings at 5 p.m. on weekdays. If you work late and like to have your mornings at home for coffee and reading the paper, ask your agent not to start morning showings before 9.

But even after you've articulated your preferences about show times, keep in mind that the most flexible sellers are often the ones who close the deal fastest. You can set time limits, but then you're limiting the chances of selling the house. It's common for an interested buyer to want to return to see a house at night or check the noise level at different times of day, so it is in the seller's best interest to be accommodating.

The Choice Is Yours Which agent is right for you?

Choosing a REALTOR® to help you sell your home may feel like an arduous task. With so many REALTORS® eager for your business, it can be difficult to know which one you can trust. One way to narrow down the field is to look for a REALTOR® with credentials that can help both you and the buyer feel at ease throughout the entire transaction.

An agent who is a Certified Residential Specialist (CRS) is a proven leader in residential real estate. CRS agents are in the top 4 percent of agents in the country. They offer years of experience, demonstrated success and advice to help you make smart decisions about selling your home.



CRS agents have both a high volume of sales and high number of transactions, as well as advanced training in areas such as business planning, real estate investing, marketing and technology. As additional peace of mind, CRS agents must maintain membership in the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® and abide by its Code of Ethics.

The real estate market is tough, fast-paced and competitive, but with a CRS agent by your side, selling your home becomes an enjoyable experience.



Do you know someone who is thinking about buying or selling a home?

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If you are currently working with another real estate agent or broker, it is not a solicitation for business.

Please mention my name.



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