

# YOUR HOME



TIPS AND TRENDS TO HELP MAXIMIZE HOME BUYING AND SELLING

JULY 2006

## tit for tat



**C**ongratulations! You've received an offer on your home. You must have done *something* right in order to attract a solid contract. If you're less than thrilled with the offer, however, or if there are requests by the potential buyers that could be sticking points for you, a negotiation is in order.

The goal for any successful negotiation is for both parties to leave feeling like they got their way on some important items. Listening to the advice of your CRS agent is key. Let them take the lead. They've done this many times before and know how to finesse the situation in your favor. Your agent also will help prepare you for a negotiation. Follow these tips

and you're sure to come away smiling:

**STAY RELAXED.** Your facial expressions and mannerisms can help set the tone for the other party. Above all, avoid any kind of confrontation.

**COMPROMISE.** You don't have to win on every point. Compromising on the less important items will help the other party feel good about compromising as well.

**KEEP EVERYTHING IN PERSPECTIVE.** Think about what points are truly important to you and ask your CRS agent to stress those items.

**DON'T TAKE THINGS PERSONALLY.** If a buyer finds an aspect of the house they don't like, it's not a reflection on you. Do your best to stay objective.

## GREAT ROOM EXPECTATIONS

For many homebuyers, a house that combines the amenities of both a living and dining room can be a big bonus. In fact, recent home trends suggest that more buyers prefer a "Great Room" off of the kitchen to separate dining and living rooms.

Likewise, home building designs have reflected this idea. Formal living rooms no longer exist in many homes, giving way to more casual, family-oriented rooms. These Great Rooms often combine all aspects of the living, dining and sometimes library and playroom, into one.

Transforming a separate living or dining space into a combined family area is not as difficult as it may sound. Here are a few ideas to make your space into a functional asset:

- If your space will support it, add an island with bar stools in the kitchen. This will create an eat-in room — perfect for family gatherings or more formal entertaining.
- Transform formal dining rooms into a room you can use daily by adding books, cozy seating and a large library table that can double as a dining room table.
- Consider decorating with more relaxed furnishings, such as big tables and chairs, upholstered seating and televisions. The right accents can create a livable family space that's also suitable for guests.



## OFF THE WALL

An empty house really highlights every scuff and mark on the walls. What looked spotless during the house showings now may look worn and dingy.

Try washing the walls thoroughly to see if you can make them look fresher before you resort to new paint. It might make all the difference! The folks at [www.hgtv.com](http://www.hgtv.com) offer these useful tips:



- Before washing the walls, wrap a strip of terry cloth around your wrists and secure it with rubber bands to keep drips from running down your arms.
- Move all furniture to the center of the room to gain access to the walls.
- Don't remove picture hooks or nails. Instead, cover them with a piece of household sponge. This will keep your knuckles from bleeding and, when you finish cleaning, you can easily re-hang pictures.
- Cover the floor with a drop cloth or old bed sheet.
- Combine 1/4 cup washing soda (in the laundry additive aisle), 1/4 cup white vinegar and 1/2 cup of ammonia to a gallon of water to create a wall-cleaning solution.
- Crayon markings can be easily removed with lubricating oil and a paper towel. Just spray on the oil and wipe. Use a toothbrush and lubricating oil on textured walls. Work the brush into the grain. Finish by wiping the wall down with a dollop of undiluted dishwashing liquid on a damp cloth (work the liquid into the cloth before wiping the wall).
- Scuff marks can usually be cleaned with a dry gum eraser. But for stubborn scuff marks, try non-gel toothpaste and a damp cloth. Add toothpaste to the cloth, and then wipe the marks away. For the really tough marks, add some baking soda to the damp cloth, work it in, and then wipe the marks away.
- Use a natural sponge (available at hardware stores) to wash the walls. Work from the bottom up, making sure to keep the solution clean and dunk the sponge frequently. Be sure to clean the entire wall or you could leave wash marks.

Source: [www.hgtv.com](http://www.hgtv.com)



### TOP OF THE LINE.

Choosing the perfect REALTOR® is vital to a successful sale, but it can be a difficult task. Knowing the credentials to look for in a REALTOR® will help both the seller 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. They are in the top four percent of residential agents in the country. CRS agents have both a high volume of transactions as well as advanced training in areas such as business planning, real estate investing, marketing and technology. As additional peace of mind, they offer years of experience, demonstrated success, and professional advice to help you make smart decisions about selling your home. A CRS also 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 Designated agent by your side, buying or selling a home becomes an enjoyable experience.



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