

The Realities of Home Showings

We've already discussed the physical work involved in order to prepare a home for showing, but there are several other events that will also take place while your house is on the market.

Always Ready for Show Time

Requests for same day or last minute showings are common, so sellers be aware. When sellers add a stipulation requesting 24 hours notice in order to show, they are cutting themselves off from a large portion of the market. There is no reason to require this much time unless you are giving notice to a tenant. If your house is unavailable for show, it will get marked as "difficult" by agents and then you will receive fewer calls to show it. Fewer showings mean fewer potential buyers, so sellers need to be aware of the difficulties they may be causing themselves.

Keep it Flexible

Most agents will try to arrive during the scheduled showing time, but sometimes that just isn't possible. Unexpected occurrences, such as traffic, late clients, or longer than usual showings might cause agents to be late. Sometimes when this happens, there isn't a way for a phone call or time to reach you to let you know they'll be late. Be prepared to be patient or understanding. Also plan on staying away from home longer than you think is necessary, just to be sure that you don't interrupt a showing, especially if it started later than you'd planned on.

Sellers Presence

It is just a bad idea to ask to be present during a showing. Most sellers want to be present in order to see a buyer's reaction firsthand. Others think that the buyers won't see important features and would like to point everything out. However, buyers feel uncomfortable when sellers are present, and often it kills a sale. Some buyers won't even open doors or a closet when the seller is home, and if they don't feel comfortable viewing a house, they'll rush through it and then hurry onto the next one.

Most sellers want to talk, and usually about more than just the house. Problem is, you have no idea when what you will say will be a "turn off" for the buyer... even if it is only about the weather or your hobbies. Buyers are there to look at the house, not for conversation, and most especially not for controversial topics such as politics. If the seller must be home during a showing, it is a very good idea to remain outside or to stay in one location only, rather than walking around with the buyers and agents.

Sellers Agents During Showings

When an agent is selling complicated property or a large estate, there may be a reason for the agent to be present for all showings. If this is not the case, or for a typical house showing, it is better for the selling agent not to be around. Some agents are uncomfortable with the selling agent around, especially if they are trying to have discussions with the

potential buyers. It is difficult to have an open discussion if the selling agent is hanging around. If sellers are worried about small items being stolen, they should be stored away. Part of preparing the house for showings included packing up collectibles or small personal items as part of the process.

There is also one other negative thing about sellers agents that is probably important. Sometimes busy agents don't have time to work around your agent. If you require that the selling agent be present for every showing, your home may get the reputation of being difficult to show and therefore cause you to lose out on much of the buyer interest that could otherwise come your way.

Controlling Pets

During showings, no pets, especially large dogs or reptiles, should be in the house, because many people are afraid of them. Occasionally a buyer won't even make it past the front door if they hear a growl or bark coming from inside the house. Also, be certain there are no pet odors. Sadly most people can't smell the odors in their own home so you may need to ask for an outside opinion about whether or not this is a problem in your home. Sellers don't want buyers to remember their house as the house that smelled.

Most sellers just want to help. If you have any questions about what would work best for your home to be shown, ask your agent or consider some of the above ideas. If you're really worried some aspect of your home will be neglected in the showing, print up fliers to leave on a hall table or talk it over with your agent before showings begin. It is possible for a seller to help in the sale, without actually being there for the showing.