

Helpful Open House Hints

How to Prepare for an Open House

- **Advertise your open house.** Ideally you should advertise both in the local paper and online. Check with the Tallahassee Democrat on ad closing deadlines (it's usually Wednesday).
- **Create a "home book".** This book gives prospective buyers an overview of your home. Include dimensions for each room, copies of a property survey, summaries of utility costs and property taxes, and a list of when capital items such as roofs and HVAC were last replaced/repaired. Additionally, add information regarding school zones and restrictive covenants.
- **Develop a sign-in form for prospects' addresses.** You'll ideally want both phone numbers and e-mail addresses to follow-up with prospective buyers.
- **Put up signs.** One or two days before the open house, place directional signs at major intersections within three to four blocks of your house. Be sure to check on sign regulations with the city, county, and homeowner's association (*if applicable*).
- **Get your house ready.** Remove clutter, clean your house, wash your windows, add flowers, turn on lights, open draperies and blinds, remove valuables, breakables, and prescriptions, confine pets, turn on soft music, and set up a table for your "home book" near the entrance.
- **Develop a feed back/comment card.** Getting feedback on your home from prospects who attended your open house will give you a better understanding of how to make your home more appealing to buyers.

Open House Safety Tips

- **Call local law enforcement** and ask them to have a squad car drive by during your open-house hours.
- **Check your cell phone's strength** and signal prior to the open house. Have emergency numbers programmed on speed dial.
- **Determine several "escape" routes** that you can use in case of an emergency. Make sure all deadbolt locks are unlocked to facilitate a faster escape.
- **Turn on the lights** and open the curtains. These are not only sound safety procedures, but also great marketing tactics.
- **Make sure that if you were to escape** by the back door, you could escape from the backyard.
- **When prospective buyers begin to arrive**, jot down their car descriptions, license numbers, and physical descriptions.
- **When showing the house**, always walk behind the prospect. Direct them; don't lead them.
- **Notify a friend or a relative** that you will be calling in every hour and if you don't call, they are to notify the police immediately.
- **Inform a neighbor** that you will be showing the house and ask if he or she would keep an eye and ear open for anything out of the ordinary.

As always, no cancellation fee!



Bon Clarke
REALTOR®
850-510-8221
1520 Killearn Center Blvd.
Tallahassee, FL 32309
BonClarke@kw.com
www.TallyHomeSales.com
Each office independently owned and operated

KELLER WILLIAMS
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