



organizing an open house

After you've set the date and posted pictures of your house online, you need to get your house into tip-top shape for those up-close looks. Feeling overwhelmed? Start a bidding war with this smart list of to-dos.

2 WEEKS BEFORE

- Reserve a trusted cleaning service for the day before your open house.
- If you've never used one before, have a trial cleaning to make sure you get someone you really like; then request that same person to come again.
- Fix chipped paint spots (outside and inside).
- Plant flowers.
- Repaint bold walls with neutral colors.
- Unclutter closets and bookshelves.
- Secure a storage facility with an open unit (or your parents' basement).
- Make plans for pets to be away 24 hours before open house.
- Have rugs cleaned and floors polished.

1 WEEK BEFORE

- Trim hedges.
- Clean gutters.
- Move excess furniture, appliances, books, clothes, and canned goods to a storage unit (basically, you want to make the house, closets, and cabinets look as spacious as possible).
- Scrub the doors and deck.
- Create handouts (or make sure your Realtor does) so visitors can take information about your house with them for reference.

2 DAYS BEFORE

- Hide cords (even if it means unplugging electronics).
- Hide traces of a pet or a smoker (air out your place as much as possible).
- Lock up your valuables.
- Verify cleaning service.

1 DAY BEFORE

- Check in on the cleaning service before they leave; make sure the house meets your standards.
- Place handouts by the door.
- Get a sign-in sheet ready so people can write their names and email addresses.

MORNING OF

- Open drapes and curtains to get maximum light.
- Turn on lights in dark rooms.
- Ensure temperature is comfortable throughout house.
- Straighten up bedroom and bathroom.
- Create a nice scent by grinding coffee beans or by baking cinnamon roll dough in the oven on low.
- Turn soothing music on at a low volume.
- Leave the house (if you have a Realtor).