

(estate) ^ REAL STORIES



SPRING INTO A NEW HOME!

Did you know that spring is typically the busiest time of year in real estate? For sellers, that's great news because it means more buyers are out looking at their homes and they can show off their beautiful yards! For buyers, it often means there is a greater supply of homes available to them.

Whether it's due to the longer days and warmer weather, timing after the winter holidays or before summer vacations, more time and better weather to do renovations and yard work, or just general supply, it's a great time to host or attend open houses!

We spoke with our REALTOR® Shannon Rose to gain a better understanding of the value open houses afford both sellers and buyers, and what a typical open house with her looks like.

For sellers, there are tons of benefits to offering open houses! "Allowing open houses when you are listing your home is so important," Shannon expressed. "You open the doors to more visitors, which means more potential buyers. Even if the people who go through your home don't think it's right for them, they might mention it to someone else they know. Increased visibility and word of mouth are great marketing tools."

Of course it's not comfortable to think of people going through your home, but open houses can be a seller's best tool. What could be better than bringing a customer directly to your doorstep? In Shannon's experience, "open houses give me the chance to share the extras about the home! I try to put everything about a home in the listing, but nothing really beats seeing those features in person."

Open houses do require that the sellers prep the home a little in advance. "Before it hits the market, I typically hire a professional cleaner and also stage the home, so ideally my clients don't have to spend too much time prepping for the open house. I do ask that they tidy any personal and private belongings, make the beds, and clear the sink. I also set the heat or AC to a comfortable temperature. I want everyone who enters to feel like they could happily and comfortably live in this home."

Letting prospective buyers tour the neighbourhood is also key. "When you're buying a home, you want to think about more than just the structure itself. Does the neighbourhood work for your lifestyle? Is the commute to work or school feasible? I encourage all prospective buyers, whether they're my clients or those who have attended my open house,

to explore the neighbourhood, and I also do my own research so I can share anything I know about the area."

For buyers, there are many other benefits to attending open houses. For one, "a lot of my clients typically work during the week and don't feel like seeing a home right after a long day, so it's easier for them to see a home on the weekend," Shannon explained. "The best open houses are also low-stakes because you want anyone who attends to feel like they're taking their time and aren't pressured or overwhelmed in any way."

To create an atmosphere at her own open houses that benefits both the seller and the buyer, Shannon believes in "really setting the tone for the space. My role at an open house is to provide an overview of the property, highlight key features, and also allow the prospective buyers to tour at their own leisure. I can chat or offer a casual tour if they seem interested, but I want them to feel comfortable while exploring."

To prep for a successful open house, Shannon says, "I of course put up signs and social posts to advertise the event in advance, but I also bring printed materials they can take home, offer light snacks, and play chill music. My clients are trusting me to put my best foot forward on their behalf, and I don't take that lightly."