



From the Broker's Desk

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Why all the emphasis on "market ready properties"?

Sellers often question why they should take the time and money to improve their properties when they could lower the price and let the buyer address the deficiencies. Often buyers lack the expertise or funds to make repairs after closing and would prefer that the mortgage cover that expenditure. A property in need of repair will experience a longer marketing period and receive lower offers. Disclosing to a buyer that the listing price already reflects the need for repairs does not discourage the buyer from making a low offer. Properties that require work often attract the investor buyer whose focus is on the profit margin. Houses that are de-personalized, de-cluttered and in a good state of repair will attract the serious buyers who are more likely to offer a fair market value.

Should square footage be disclosed? Square footage is an important factor in a real estate transaction and the basis on which appraisers assign a value. Attorneys advise against the use of square footage because of liability issues but real estate agents should be capable of accurately measuring both the exterior of a structure to compute square footage and each living area for room dimensions. A buyer seeks this information to determine if the space will accommodate the buyer's lifestyle and furniture. When square footage and room measurements are not listed, I have found that buyers eliminate that property from consideration.

When is it better to rent than to own? Home ownership may not be the answer for every individual. If you anticipate relocating in less than three years, then renting may be a more practical alternative to ownership and allows you freedom to move immediately without the worry and delay of having to sell. If you lack the expertise or funds for maintenance, then having a landlord to contact for repairs may provide you with a level of comfort. Renting does present restrictions and requirements that are not present in home ownership. Rent payments are expense based with no ownership benefits while mortgage payments provide for an accumulation of equity.

Can you make money flipping houses? The TV "flipper" shows create the perception that flipping is easy money. Most local flippers have had moderate success but rarely experience the monetary return as shown on TV. Those who can address the improvements themselves, instead of hiring assistance, will reap the most profit. Before making an offer on a property thoroughly inspect the structure, list all the work needed and price the materials for these jobs. Project a realistic time line as time is money when flipping a property. Research the location to determine the price range of housing as you don't want to over improve for the area. This price range will guide you in the selection of materials that will yield your greatest return for your investment. With cost figures in hand and a realistic projected sale price, you can calculate the price to offer on a property. The purpose of a flip is to make a profit so perform your due diligence and walk away when the purchase price or cost of improvements won't generate the anticipated profit.

The experienced agents of WILLOW Realty are always available to answer questions or assist on your next real estate transaction.

GRILLING SAFETY TIPS

© NFPA.org



Fire in the grill, under hot dogs and burgers, is a welcome sight at the family cook-out. But fire anywhere else can make your summer kick-off barbecue memorable for all the wrong reasons.

- Propane and charcoal BBQ grills should only be used outdoors.
- The grill should be placed well away from the home, deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches.
- Keep children and pets away from the grill area.
- Keep your grill clean by removing grease or fat buildup from the grills and in trays below the grill. Never leave your grill unattended.

Charcoal grills



- There are several ways to get the charcoal ready to use. Charcoal chimney starters allow you to start the charcoal using newspaper as a fuel.
- If you use a starter fluid, use only charcoal starter fluid. Never add charcoal fluid or any other flammable liquids to the fire.
- Keep charcoal fluid out of the reach of children and away from heat sources.
- There are also electric charcoal starters, which do not use fire. Be sure to use an extension cord for outdoor use.

When you are finished grilling, let the coals completely cool before disposing in a metal container.

Propane grills

Check the gas tank hose for leaks before using it for the first time each year. Apply a light soap and water solution to the hose. A propane leak will release bubbles. If your grill has a gas leak, by smell or the soapy bubble test, and there is no flame, turn off the gas tank and grill.

If the leak stops, get the grill serviced by a professional before using it again. If the leak does not stop, call the fire department. If you smell gas while cooking, immediately get away from the grill and call the fire department. Do not move the grill.



Chili Dogs

© Tyler Florence/Food Network

Extra-virgin olive oil	1 med. jar ketchup, about 2 1/2 c	4 all-beef hot dogs
1 med. onion, chopped	1 tsp chili powder	4 hot dog rolls
2 cloves garlic, chopped	2 tbs prepared yellow mustard	1/2 c grated Cheddar
1 lb lean ground beef	Kosher salt & black pepper	dar



Put a skillet over medium heat and drizzle in a 2-count of olive oil. When the oil gets hazy, add the onion and garlic and cook, stirring, until it is soft and translucent, about 5 minutes. Add the ground beef, breaking it up with the back of a spoon, and cook until nicely browned, about 10 more minutes. Stir in the ketchup, chili powder, and mustard and simmer for 15 minutes until thickened. Season with salt and pepper. While the chili is cooking, get the grill going. Place a large grill pan on 2 burners over medium-high heat or preheat an outdoor gas or charcoal barbecue and get it very hot. Take a few paper towels and fold them several times to make a thick square. Blot a small amount of oil on the paper towel. Then carefully and quickly wipe the hot grates of the grill to make a nonstick grilling surface. Bring a pot of water up to a simmer and parboil the dogs for about 5 minutes. Take them out of the water, pat them dry, and grill them just long enough to mark them. (That'll give them a grilled flavor too.) Brush the insides of the rolls with olive oil and lay them face down on the grill; cook until toasty. To serve, put a dog in each roll and top with the chili and some Cheddar.

The greatest gifts you can give your children are the roots of responsibility and the wings of independence.
~Denis Waitley