



NEWS - February 2013

How to Set the Mood for an Inspection

When selling your home, you'll undoubtedly do all you can to present your house beautifully and attract buyers to your door. You may now be wondering what's next - what more can you possibly do to ensure the sale of your home?

After all your hard work, buyers have no doubt started enquiring about your home and your first inspection is on the way to being booked in. Here are a few handy inspection tips that will help set your home apart from the rest:

- Your hours of cleaning will no doubt have removed most unwanted odours, but it's important to keep things fresh. Carpet deodorisers and air fresheners may help, but it's always best to remove the source rather than mask it.
- Fresh flowers, reed diffusers, and scented oil burners will all enhance your home's ambience. Don't let the smell overpower buyers' senses; there's nothing like walking into a fog of incense to bring on a migraine, but a subtle hint of a calming oil may be just what's needed to set the right mood.
- If you're hosting a summer inspection, open the windows and let the fresh air blow through your home. A sparkling home with clean linen and fresh air will always be enticing.
- Show off your home's features by keeping it at a comfortable temperature. In the coming months you can impress buyers with your house's cooling features, and in the cooler months your home's heating system will leave buyers feeling snug.

● Soft background music gently humming along in the background can help set a calming mood and help to sell the lifestyle your home affords.

● Remove your pets during inspections. Some buyers are wary of animals, particularly if they have children with them. Take your dog for a walk, or call on a relative or friend to 'babysit' your pets for you during inspection day.

● Buyers will feel more comfortable without the property owner watching their every move, and they'll be free to concentrate more on the home. It'll be much more difficult for buyers to visualise themselves living in the home if you're standing there looking over their shoulders.

● Make the most of your 'new listing' status, and ensure your first inspections are memorable. Remember, your best offer will likely come in the first 4 to 6 weeks of your house going on the market.

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When did you Last Check your Smoke Alarms?

With most people now back from their summer holidays and beginning to settle into their work/school routines, there is no time like the present to ensure you have adequate smoke alarms in your home. Many people don't realise that smoke alarms should be tested monthly, and batteries should be replaced annually. You also need to be aware that smoke alarms have a limited life-span, so checking them 12 times a year is crucial to the safety of your family and your home.

Smoke from a house fire is toxic; only early warnings can assist in giving your family vital time to escape a smoke filled room. Also, when asleep you will not smell the smoke from a fire and the smoke will actually put you into a deeper sleep. A smoke alarm can provide the early warning you need, and is the critical first step in your home fire safety plan.

There are hard wired (connected to mains power with a battery back-up) or battery powered smoke alarms available. There are models available for use in kitchens and caravans and for those with special needs such as the hearing impaired. Models incorporating an emergency light are also available. A combination of photoelectric and ionisation alarms (hard wired and interconnected) should be installed.

So why wait? Check your smoke alarms now.



Is it the Right Time to Buy?

After the RBA's decision to drop interest rates at the end of last year, to a cash rate of just 3% (the same low figure reached at the peak of the global financial crisis in 2009), it seems many are worried about the sturdiness of our economy.

The main difference between the low interest rates of today and those of 2009 are the reasons behind the RBA's decision to make the cuts. In 2009, rates were lowered to stimulate the broader economy, whereas the low interest rates we see today are due to the effect of the high Aussie Dollar on our export-oriented industries. With the USA printing huge numbers of American Dollars, and overseas investors viewing our Aussie dollar as a safe haven for their cash deposits, it remains difficult to bring our dollar value down. Normally the RBA would be wary of inflation from such a low interest rate figure, but with mortgages costing more now than in 2009, there is far less risk of this being problematic.

Some are even predicting that the RBA will make further cuts between now and August 2013, with the ASX futures market already suggesting that two further 0.25% decreases could be on the cards. This should bring a smile to all real estate owners and buyers alike.

There are so many people teetering on the edge of buying their first home, but who have hesitated because they're not sure if it's the right time. If this sounds like you, we're here to say that now is most certainly the time to buy!

With many buyers caught up in the back-to-school rush there is usually less competition at this time of the year, and with interest rates now at a 3-year-low, what are you waiting for?



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