7 Steps to Preparing for an Open House

- 1. Hire a cleaning service. A spotlessly clean home is essential; dirt will turn off a prospect faster than anything.
- 2. Mow your lawn, and be sure toys and yard equipment are put away.
- 3. Serve cookies, coffee, and soft drinks. It creates a welcoming touch. But be sure the kitchen has been cleaned up; use disposable cups so the sink doesn't fill up.
- 4. Lock up your valuables, jewelry, and money. Although the real estate salesperson will be on site during the open house, it's impossible to watch everyone all the time.
- 5. Turn on all the lights. Even in the daytime, incandescent lights add sparkle.
- 6. Send your pets to a neighbor or take them outside. If that's not possible, crate them or confine them to one room (a basement or bath), and let the salesperson know where to find them.
- 7. Leave. It's awkward for prospective buyers to look in your closets and express their opinions of your home with you there.

10 Ways to Make Your Home Irresistible at an Open House

- 1. Put fresh or silk flowers in principal rooms for a touch of color.
- 2. Add a new shower curtain, fresh towels, and new guest soaps to every bath.
- 3. Set out potpourri or fresh baked goods for a homey smell.
- 4. Set the table with pretty dishes and candles.
- 5. Buy a fresh doormat with a clever saying.
- 6. Take one or two major pieces of furniture out of every room to create a sense of spaciousness.
- 7. Put away kitchen appliances and personal bathroom items to give the illusion of more counter space.
- 8. Lay a fire in the fireplace. Or put a basket of flowers there if it's not in use.
- 9. Depersonalize the rooms by putting away family photos, mementos, and distinctive artwork.
- 10. Turn on the sprinklers for 30 minutes to make the lawn sparkle.