

## Seven 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.**