

Alexandria  
Old Town  
703-739-0100

Arlington  
703-237-1100

Burke  
703-913-8080

Fair Oaks  
703-279-1500

Fredericksburg  
540-373-1300

Front Royal  
540-878-4210

Gainesville  
703-468-2020

Kingstowne  
703-417-5000

Lake Ridge  
703-492-7900

Leesburg  
703-840-2000

Manassas  
703-393-0333

McLean  
703-734-8900

Reston  
703-318-9333

Stafford  
540-658-0992

Vienna  
703-242-2860

Warrenton  
540-349-7990



www.mbh.com

## The Upside to Selling a Home during the Holidays

Shopping. Wrapping. Cooking. Entertaining. Traveling. The six weeks between Thanksgiving and the New Year are notoriously busy for everyone. From the time we carve the turkey in November until we sip champagne at midnight on December 31st our lives are consumed by endless lists of action items and activities. Is it any wonder a potential seller is apprehensive about listing their home during the holidays?

### Convince the homeowner to list their property

Apprehensions aside, the holidays are actually an ideal time to list a home and it is your job as a seller's real estate agent to convince them to do so! It begins by assuring the seller that you will make yourself available during this busy time -- that although you have the same holiday distractions and stresses as everyone else, you are committed to selling their property. That you are a professional and your obligation to your client will have you giving 100% effort to show, market, and sell their house.

THE HOLIDAYS ARE ACTUALLY  
AN IDEAL TIME TO LIST A HOME.

There are several valid arguments you should use to convince the homeowner that, regardless of the hassle of having a home on the real estate market when there are so many other things to focus on, the holidays are the right time to list:

- *Supply & Demand* – there is less competition during the holidays because others are also hesitant about selling then. Fewer homes are on the market which means less competition. Reduced inventory is to the seller's advantage.
- *Buyers are motivated* – if a buyer is looking during this busy timeframe, they want to make a purchase. When you consider that traditionally buyers shop in the Spring so they can move during warm weather and once their children are out of school on summer break, you can draw the conclusion that someone shopping in the winter needs to purchase sooner rather than later. Perhaps they are relocating. Maybe there are tax reasons for the purchase.
- *Statistics* – Online brokerage firm Redfin gathered statistics to show that homes listed during the colder months of December, January, February, and March sell faster than those listed in the warmer months. Buyers are urgent to make a purchase. Sellers also tend to net more above their asking price

than during the warmer months. Again, buyers have an urgent need to purchase if they're looking during the holidays.

### Once the house is on the market

Setting the right price is important to selling a property during the winter months. With fewer buyers there is less likely to be a bidding war for a property. So, although you can argue buyers have a bigger sense of urgency to make a purchase, they also know they do not have much competition.

During colder weather, buyers are more aware of the costs to heat a property. Once a property is listed encourage the homeowner to have the furnace serviced, have energy efficient windows in place, make certain the insulation is sufficient, be sure the roof is in good condition and that the gutters are maintained. The aforementioned items are always points of interest for a potential buyer, but they take on more importance during the winter months.

Regardless of what time of year you are showing a home the same rules apply: be sure the owner de-clutters all of the rooms and removes personal photographs. You want the buyer to easily envision the home with their personal touches. Since the gardens are dormant and the trees are bare suggest to the seller to put out pictures of the house and grounds during other seasons of the year.

Cold weather makes us long for coziness. Before a showing have the homeowner turn up the heat. Place throw blankets in living rooms and traditional gathering spots, have some stacked wood strategically placed if appropriate, and make sure there is adequate lighting. Winter is grey and dreary and a home will show better if the buyer can see the details.

Play on the buyer's emotions with tasteful holiday decorations so that they envision themselves making family memories in the home. The rule of thumb for clutter and personal items applies here, too. The seller needs to create a sense of comfort while allowing the buyer to imagine their decorations in the space.

A dedicated real estate professional, motivated buyers, less competition, and a home that projects a sentimental feel through the holidays are all reasons you can use to convince your seller that the ideal time to list their house is now!

See you at the settlement table!