

The GOOD Life

Trends
Spotlights
Updates



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Get Ready

Homeowners who want to sell in the next year should start preparing now. It's possible that the housing market will be volatile, with periods of increased sales activity followed by lulls. The only way to take advantage of a bounce is to have your home already on the market, or have it ready to show to buyers when your agent calls and says there's increased demand for homes like yours.

Don't make the mistake of waiting until the last minute to get your home ready to sell. Some agents advise their clients to do nothing to their home before selling. They encourage sellers to list at a low price to compensate for the fact that the home is not in good condition and will not show well.

The way to sell your home for as much as possible in any market is to have it looking as good as possible. At the least, most homes need to be de-cluttered. Usually homes need some cosmetic updating like painting walls a more appealing color replacing worn carpet, updating light fixtures and clearing out the yard. If you live in an area where the homes that sell for the most money are staged for sale, you should consider staging to be competitive.

The closing; If the major preparation work is done in advance, you'll be able to call your agent and get your home on the market quickly. It takes some sellers months to prepare their home for sale.

— San Francisco Chronicle

President Obama has signed a bill extending the Federal Tax Credit for first-time home buyers, which was set to expire on November 30, 2009, to April 30, 2010, with a 60-day extension if a binding contract is in place prior to the deadline. The bill also creates a new tax credit for repeat buyers who purchase a new primary residence.

The credit for first-time home buyers remains at 10 percent of the purchase price up to a maximum credit of \$8,000. To qualify, buyers must use the home as their principal residence and must not have owned a home in the previous three years. The credit for repeat buyers is 10 percent of the purchase price with a maximum credit of \$6,500. To qualify a person must have owned and lived in their home as a principal residence for five consecutive years at any time during the eight

years before the replacement home is purchased. Its designed for move-up buyers who want a bigger house, as well as empty nesters looking to downsize.

These rules apply to both credits, for first-time buyers and repeat buyers.

- (a) You must live in the newly purchased home for at least 36 months or you will have to repay the entire credit.
- (b) You must sign a binding contract to purchase the home by April 30, 2010 and close by June 30, 2010.
- (c) You may buy a new or existing home.
- (d) The price of the home cannot exceed \$800,000.

For further information or questions, please give me a call.

"If you think you can, you are right. If you think you can't, you are right."
— Henry Ford

| Santa Cruz County Single Family Residential | | | | | |
|---|--------------|-----|----------|-----|---------------------------------------|
| Oct. 2009 | Closed Sales | 174 | Avg. DOM | 108 | Median Price \$515,000 %LP Rec'd 96.6 |
| Nov. 2009 | Closed Sales | 141 | Avg. DOM | 101 | Median Price \$555,000 %LP Rec'd 95.5 |
| Santa Cruz County Condos | | | | | |
| Oct. 2009 | Closed Sales | 24 | Avg. DOM | 75 | Median Price \$347,500 %LP Rec'd 97.7 |
| Sep. 2009 | Closed Sales | 27 | Avg. DOM | 111 | Median Price \$360,000 %LP Rec'd 94.9 |

Interest Rates*

- 30 year fixed conforming **5.25%**
- 30 year fixed jumbo **5.375%**
- 5/1 ARM conforming **4.375%**

* As of 12/29/2009

"Call Me For Personalized Home Information"