Open Houses

Open houses are more than just weekend events — they’re powerful opportunities to connect with buyers, generate leads, and showcase your listing in its best light. This section gives you a complete roadmap to running a successful open house, from prep to follow-up. You’ll learn how to set the stage, create buzz, engage visitors, and turn conversations into clients. With the right system in place, your open houses become a key pillar in your prospecting and marketing strategy.

- Open House Checklist
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- Vacant Open House Office Plan

Open House Checklist

Pre-Open House

- ☐ Prepare sellers with your process
- ☐ Prepare Market CMA
- ☐ Print list of latest sold in area
- ☐ Prepare list of nearby schools
- ☐ Ensure listing is live on Realtor.ca
- ☐ Advertise on social media
- ☐ Post an invite video on social media
- ☐ Know details about the builder
- ☐ Book a similar home for showings 30 minutes after
- ☐ Prepare and place open house signs
- ☐ Purchase a few $5 Tim Hortons cards (for guests or neighbours)
- ☐ Prepare and print feature sheets
- ☐ Remind sellers to secure valuables
- ☐ Invite a mortgage broker or provide an info sheet
- ☐ Prepare Sign-in Sheet or Open House Feature on Remarker

Morning of Open House

- ☐ Turn on all lights
- ☐ Tidy the property if needed
- ☐ Ensure pets are secured
- ☐ Bring Laptop/Tablet - Digital Sign-in?
- ☐ Make sure all visitors sign in
- ☐ Ask questions to understand buyer needs
- ☐ Offer to show a similar property after
- ☐ Keep motivations of visitors confidential
- ☐ Bring your charm and professionalism
- ☐ Have help on hand for greeting/sign-in

- [ ] Door knock nearby homes to invite neighbours
- [ ] Give Tim Card to neighbours with signs
- [ ] Pick up snacks or light refreshments
- [ ] Put out open house signs
- [ ] Confirm listing info is correct on Realtor.ca
- [ ] Call sellers/clients to remind them
- [ ] Have printed feature sheets ready
- [ ] Bring a laptop or tablet
- [ ] Dress professionally
- [ ] Bring printed sheets of comparable properties

After Open House

- [ ] Call sellers with results and feedback
- [ ] Pick up all signs
- [ ] Show any booked showings to interested prospects
- [ ] Follow up with all prospects
- [ ] Enter all leads into your CRM

Open House Checklist PDF

Standard Procedure

Purpose:

To outline the step-by-step process an agent should follow to plan, promote, host, and follow up on a successful open house that supports the seller’s goals, maintains professional standards, and generates high-quality leads.

Procedure:

1. Preparing for the Open House

Begin planning the open house 3 to 5 days in advance. Contact the seller to confirm the date, time, and any specific instructions regarding the home. Review your open house process with them, including preparation steps, marketing efforts, and expectations for feedback.

Prepare a Comparative Market Analysis (CMA) and print a list of recent sales in the area. Create supporting documents, such as a school map, neighborhood feature sheet, and builder background information (if applicable). These materials add context and credibility during the open house.

Ensure the listing is live and accurate on Realtor.ca. Schedule the open house through your MLS system and confirm the date and time are publicly visible.

Promote the open house on your social media platforms and record a short video invitation. This should be posted no later than 48 hours before the event. If possible, book a nearby, similar property for private showings immediately following the open house. This gives serious buyers an immediate next step.

Prepare your materials: open house signs, feature sheets, a sign-in method (tablet or form), Tim Hortons gift cards (optional for neighbours), and printed sheets of comparable properties. Invite a mortgage broker or have a financing information sheet ready for buyer prospects.

Remind your seller to tidy the space and remove or secure all valuables and medications before the event.

2. Day of the Open House

Arrive at least 45 minutes early. Turn on all lights, ensure the home is clean and tidy, and confirm pets are secured or removed.

Set up your open house signage in high-visibility areas, including directional signs leading to the property. Ensure your feature sheets, comparable listings, and sign-in tools are ready at the entrance.

Door knock nearby homes to invite neighbours, offering a small token of appreciation if appropriate. Verify the open house is correctly displaying on Realtor.ca and other platforms.

If refreshments are being served, ensure they are neatly presented and allergen-aware. Set up your workspace with a laptop or tablet for CRM access, lead input, or digital sign-in. Dress professionally and prepare mentally for interaction — remember, you are representing both the listing and yourself.

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3. Hosting the Open House

Greet every guest at the door and ensure they sign in before exploring the home. Ask open-ended questions to learn about their needs, timeline, and current real estate situation. Be mindful not to press too hard, and keep all visitor information confidential.

Offer additional resources such as your CMA, neighbourhood information, or details on similar properties. If a visitor seems interested, suggest a showing of the pre-booked similar listing nearby. Take mental or written notes on promising leads.

Maintain a professional, welcoming presence throughout. Ensure the property remains secure, clean, and safe at all times.

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4. After the Open House

At the conclusion of the open house, conduct a walk-through to ensure the home is returned to its original condition. Turn off all lights and secure all doors and windows.

Call the seller to provide a full report on attendance, feedback, and any interested parties. Gather your signs from the area promptly.

Within 24 hours, follow up with all attendees. Prioritize leads based on engagement and buying timelines. Enter contacts and notes into your CRM with proper tagging for future nurturing.

If any attendees expressed serious interest, coordinate a follow-up showing, introduce a mortgage broker, or begin the offer process as appropriate.

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TRESA Compliance Reminder:

All open houses must be conducted in accordance with TRESA (Trust in Real Estate Services Act) guidelines. If you are the designated listing agent, remember that you are in a client relationship and must always act in the best interests of the seller. If conversations begin to shift toward providing advice or services to a buyer, you must present them with the **RECO Information Guide** to clarify the nature of the relationship.

If you are not the designated listing agent but are hosting the open house on behalf of the brokerage, you are still providing a service to the seller. In this case, you may also present the RECO Information Guide to visitors to maintain transparency and compliance.

Vacant Open House Office Plan

Strategy Description: The Vacant Home Office Plan

Overview:

Inspired by real estate coach Dan Wood, this strategy turns vacant listings into mobile prospecting offices. Instead of passively waiting for foot traffic during open houses, agents double their productivity by actively working while they host. Prospecting from a quiet, staged space not only helps agents build their pipeline, but also creates engaging, authentic content and adds value to the seller.

Key Benefits:

• Maximize time efficiency—prospect while hosting

• Offer extra exposure for the listing

• Increase online visibility through live, on-location content

• Reinforce your image as a proactive, modern agent

• Get more comfortable making calls in new environments

SOP: Vacant Home Open House – “Double-Up” Prospecting Plan

Step 1: Find the Right Property

• Look through **brokerage-exclusive listings** or **MLS** for vacant homes

• Ask the **listing agent** for permission to host a longer open house and use the space as a temporary office

• Confirm if the property has **Wi-Fi**—if not, plan to use your **phone's personal hotspot**

Step 2: Promote the Open House

• Schedule a **longer window** than usual (e.g., 11AM–4PM) During the week is fine!!!

• Promote across:

• MLS / Realtor.ca

• Social media (Instagram, Facebook, TikTok)

• Brokerage email blasts or internal channels

• Use copy like: *"Hosting an open house and working from this gorgeous home today—come say hi!"*

Step 3: Set Up Your Mobile Office

Bring the essentials:

• Phone and laptop/tablet

• Business cards, branded signs, RECO Information Guides

• Charger and/or extension cord

• Tripod or ring light for filming video content

• Optional: branded mug, clipboard, light snacks for a "hosted" vibe

Set up in a **well-lit, central space** that showcases the home's lifestyle appeal (e.g., kitchen island or living room)

Step 4: Open House Procedure

• Place open house signs and directional arrows

• Greet walk-ins with warmth, give guided or self-tours

• Track all visitors and contact info for follow-up

• If you're **not the listing agent**, give out the **RECO Information Guide** and explain your role as a service provider to the seller

Step 5: Active Prospecting During Downtime

• Call your database or follow up with old leads

• Send handwritten notes or follow-up texts

• Post to Instagram Stories or go Live with a quick tour

• Shoot short form content:

• "Working from this beautiful home today"

• "Imagine living here? Let's talk!"

• Write a blog, email, or social post recapping your day

Step 6: End-of-Day Wrap-Up

• Reset the space to how you found it—leave no trace

• Send a thank-you note to the listing agent and/or seller

• Add leads to CRM with notes from the day

• Reflect: what worked well? What could you tweak next time?

Pro Tip for Agents

Even if you don’t have a listing of your own, **collaborate with a colleague** who has a vacant property. Offer to promote their listing in exchange for hosting. You get the leads—they get the extra exposure. Win-win.