



Finding Your Dream Home

House hunting is an exciting adventure but if you're not properly prepared, it can become very aggravating. Here are some things to consider before you start your search:

1. Finance Forward - Get pre-qualified so you're able to determine how much you can afford. Figure out how much you'll need for expenses such as legal fees and taxes.
2. Know Your Needs - Make a list of the features your new home must have. Think about how long you plan on living in the home and whether or not it has to be in move-in condition.
3. Location, Location, Location - Determine whether the location of your home's more important than the home itself. Investigate different areas to determine what amenities are available as well as the location of schools.
4. The Bold & the Beautiful - Don't be put off by the orange shag carpet or floral wallpaper. On the other hand, don't be wowed by their amazing furniture. The key is to visualize the home with your own tastes.
5. Old vs. New - Older homes have lots of character and enjoy prime locations but they're less efficient and require more maintenance. Newer homes on the other hand are designed with functionality in mind but they're often located in unestablished areas with ongoing construction.
6. Get out There! - Get acquainted with the market by viewing listings that match your criteria. Being familiar with a variety of different homes in different areas means you'll be able to act quickly and with confidence when your dream home finally comes along.

House hunting can be a daunting task if you're not properly prepared. To make things easier, let us know what you're looking for and we'll arrange to have listings which match your criteria automatically sent to you as soon as they hit the market! You won't have to worry about missing out on the perfect home. Just sit back, relax and enjoy the process!

You can refer our Team with confidence!



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TIPS, TRENDS & UPDATES

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Bernice Bartlett & Johanne Laforest

Above-Average Home Sales in August

Members of the Ottawa Real Estate Board (OREB) sold 1,329 residential properties in August 2011 compared with 1,099 in August 2010, an increase of 20.9 percent. There were 1,326 sales in July 2011.

"Through the summer, the resale housing market has picked up some momentum and made up for the quiet start to 2011; this year's unit sales to date are now within a percentage point of the number of homes sold by this time last year. However, we are seeing that homes are taking slightly longer to sell than they did in July," said OREB's President.

The average sale price of residential properties, including condominiums, sold in August in the Ottawa area was \$337,372, an increase of 6.2 percent over August 2010. The average sale price for a condominium-class property was \$252,999, an increase of 3.1 percent over August 2010. The average sale price of a residential-class property was \$360,405, an increase of 6.3 percent over August 2010.

Not intended to solicit properties currently listed for sale.

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Fall Maintenance Checklist

- Have furnace or heating system serviced by a qualified service company every two years for a gas furnace, and every year for an oil furnace, or as recommended by the manufacturer.
- If you have central air conditioning, make sure the drain pan under the cooling coil mounted in the furnace plenum is draining properly and is clean.
- Check chimneys for obstructions such as nests.
- Vacuum electric baseboard heaters to remove dust.
- Remove the grilles on forced-air systems and vacuum inside the ducts.
- Turn ON gas furnace pilot light (if your furnace has one), set the thermostat to "heat" and test the furnace for proper operation by raising the thermostat setting until the furnace starts to operate. Once you have confirmed proper operation, return the thermostat to the desired setting.
- Check and clean or replace furnace air filters each month during the heating season. Ventilation system, such as heat recovery ventilator, filters should be checked every two months.
- Check to see that the ductwork leading to and from the heat recovery ventilator is in good shape, the joints are tightly sealed (aluminum tape or mastic) and any duct insulation and plastic duct wrap is free of tears and holes.
- If the heat recovery ventilator has been shut off for the summer, clean the filters and the core, and pour water down the condensate drain to test it.
- Check to see that bathroom exhaust fans and range hoods are operating properly. If possible, confirm that you are getting good airflow by observing the outside vent hood (the exterior damper should be held open by the airflow).

Personal Commitment



Fall Maintenance Checklist

- Check smoke, carbon monoxide and security alarms, and replace batteries.
- Clean portable humidifier, if one is used.
- Remove interior screens from windows to allow air from the heating system to keep condensation off window glass and to allow more free solar energy into your home.
- Ensure windows and skylights close tightly; repair or replace weatherstripping, as needed.
- Ensure all doors to the outside shut tightly, and check other doors for ease of use. Replace door weatherstripping if required.
- If there is a door between your house and the garage, check the adjustment of the self-closing device to ensure it closes the door completely.
- Cover outside of air-conditioning units and shut off power.
- Ensure that the ground around your home slopes away from the foundation wall, so that water does not drain into your basement.
- Clean leaves from eavestroughs and roof, and test downspouts to ensure proper drainage from the roof.
- Drain and store outdoor hoses. Close interior valve to outdoor hose connection and drain the hose bib (exterior faucet), unless your house has frost-proof hose bibs.
- If you have a septic tank, measure the sludge and scum to determine if the tank needs to be emptied before the spring. Tanks should be pumped out at least once every three years.
- Winterize landscaping, for example, store outdoor furniture, prepare gardens and, if necessary, protect young trees or bushes for winter.

Team Strength