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Whether you're a seller or a buyer... CHOOSE DWYER



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If you're thinking of making a move, or are just curious as to real estate trends in your area, please feel free to call at any time. It's always good to hear from you!

All the best,

Barbara, Jerry & Scott



Each office is independently owned and operated.

The Waiting Game

While young adults from age 18 to 34 represent the most likely age group to buy a home within the next two years, 55 percent of them responded to a recent survey saying they're not quite ready now, and, in fact, probably won't be ready until at least next year. Why the wait?

An Ipsos Reid survey, conducted in January 2011 among 2,103 Canadians, found that rising real estate prices, along with providing a large enough down payment, were the biggest concerns for the young people.

Committing to the purchase of a first property, or even – for current homeowners – a second property, should be done with all the facts in hand, which is why doing your research now, with the help of a real estate sales representative, has never been more important. For example, you'll want the latest information on what types of properties sold in which neighborhoods, and in which price ranges. You'll also need to determine what you can afford, and what financing options are available to you.

Keep in mind that mortgage rates have been at historical lows over the past couple of years, but are starting to inch up now. We are lucky to live in an economy that shows steadily improving activity, however, the other side of the coin is that mortgage rates will

eventually have to rise, making homeownership challenging. In a few short years, potential buyers might nostalgically look back on these times as the "good old days," when financing a loan was affordable.

Even if you're not ready to move right now, remember that you are always welcome to call with any questions. Why wait? Please call for a no-obligation discussion on how your plans fit into today's real estate environment.



CNSF



Tread Softly

OUT WITH THE OLD, IN WITH THE NEW. CARPETING, THAT IS. ARE YOU REDECORATING? OR PREPARING THE HOME FOR SALE? WHATEVER YOUR REASONS FOR INSTALLING NEW CARPETING, HERE'S A GUIDE TO HELP YOU MAKE THE BEST CHOICE FOR YOUR NEEDS.



WHAT'S YOUR STYLE?

There are two categories of carpeting: loop pile and cut pile. Loop styles include Berber and level loop. Both are durable, stain resistant, easy to clean, and leave little evidence of walking or vacuuming, making them great for high-traffic areas. Level loop, which is often used in commercial spaces due to its resilience, has a tough texture, while Berber is soft. Because they're looped, however, both are vulnerable to snagging.

Cut-pile begins as loop pile, but the loops are cut during manufacturing. Styles include plush, Saxony, textured, and frieze. Footprints and vacuum marks easily show on plush and Saxony carpets, thanks to their velvety soft surfaces. Less suitable for high-traffic areas, they're often used in master bedrooms and formal living rooms. Textured and frieze are very popular choices for floors in every room of the home, as they mask imprints well and are quite durable (frieze especially so).

GET YOUR FIBER

A carpet's durability is largely determined by its fiber type. Most carpets are made of synthetic fibers: nylon, olefin (polypropylene), polyester and acrylic, for example. Nylon is the most commonly used fiber, and no wonder — it's strong, easy to clean, and resistant to dirt, mildew, and crushing, making it great for floors that see lots of activity. Polyester is nylon's less expensive, less resilient alternative.

Olefin has traditionally been used for outdoor carpeting, but is becoming more popular indoors. Relatively

inexpensive, it offers excellent stain and moisture resistance, but is susceptible to crushing.

Acrylic resembles wool in look and feel, but is much less expensive. It's stain and mildew resistant, and easily cleaned. Acrylic can pill, however. More commonly used in rugs than carpets, it's not recommended for high-traffic areas.

A natural fiber, the luxuriousness of wool is pricey. Its advantages are that it's naturally durable, made from a sustainable material, and soil resistant due to its tightly packed fibers. However, it's high-maintenance and moisture absorbent.

CARPET COLOR

If you're selling your home, or there's a chance you'll be selling in the near future, your carpet-color choice should be dictated not by what's appealing to you, but by what's appealing to as many potential buyers as possible. And that means staying neutral: off-white, beige, or gray, for example.

If you're staying put, anything goes. But do keep the following in mind: Light colors show off stains, and are harder to clean. On the upside, they help make smaller rooms appear bigger and brighter. Dark colors better hide stains but more easily show lint; they also lend large rooms a sense of warmth. Also, a color looks different depending on lighting, so be sure to get samples and look at them under a variety of different light sources.



The Personal Touch

Setting the Stage

Have you discussed with your real estate sales representative the possibility of having your home professionally staged before it goes on the market? Here are four reasons you may consider going this route.

- Staging helps you think like a buyer. In other words, it helps you view your property not as your home, but as a product to be marketed and sold like any other. The sooner you adopt that perspective, the better off you'll be – everything from showings, to contract negotiations, to moving day is easier when you have a more objective attitude.
- Staging can help sell your home faster. Surveys have shown that properties that have been staged sell anywhere from 30 to 80 percent more quickly than those that haven't been staged. A staged home photographs and shows better, generating more interest, leading to more offers. As a result, staged homes tend to spend fewer days on the market.
- Staging can help to justify your asking price. In a sellers' market, justifying your asking price isn't as big an issue. But in a buyer's market, you need to pull out all the stops in order to convince buyers that your property is worth what you're asking. Staging helps to do just that – and it isn't likely to cost you as much as lowering your price would.
- Staging can help you fetch a higher price for your home. Just as surveys have shown that staged properties sell more quickly, they often also show that staged properties can sell for more money than those that haven't been staged. Often, the resultant price increase is far higher than the cost of hiring a home stager.

The Internet has been a boon to both buyers and real estate professionals. But it's no replacement for personal service. Here's why you still need a real estate sales representative to walk you through the home-buying process.

- Access to the most comprehensive – and current – information. Want to be in the know about properties not even listed on the MLS®? Want the most up-to-date figures on comparable sales to help you determine your offer price? Want insight into the local market? There's no more immediate source of information than your real estate sales representative.
- Negotiating is a skill. Having a real estate sales representative negotiate on a buyer's behalf allows for the best possible deal, without ruffling the seller's feathers. And knowing how to respond to a rejected offer is just one important way a real estate professional can help a seller.
- Contracts can be confusing. They're there to protect you and to provide an "out" if specified conditions aren't met – provided the contract has been properly drawn up. As the language can be confusing, and the legal ramifications serious, most people feel contracts are an aspect of home buying best left to experienced professionals.
- It's your real estate sales representative's job to look out for your best interests. Real estate licensees must adhere to certain laws and ethical codes; if they don't, there are repercussions. Many people prefer the security of having someone accountable on their side, and like knowing they're protected should they run up against an unscrupulous party.

BEAT THE HEAT

Hot enough for you? Take these few steps to prepare your house for the hottest weather of the year, and not only will you be more comfortable when the mercury spikes, you'll save energy and money, too.

- Test your air-conditioning system. Make sure your thermostat is set to Cool and turn down the temperature. If the system doesn't turn on, the culprit might be as simple as a tripped breaker. If the problem is more complex, you'll want to address it before the year's hottest days arrive and technicians are in high demand.
- Get a new air-conditioner filter. Dirty filters inhibit airflow, forcing your air conditioner to work harder to keep you cool, wasting energy and money. How often you should replace the filter depends on whether you have pets or allergies, or are a smoker, for example, but you should at least check it once a month in the summer.
- Make sure your attic is well insulated. A significant portion of a home's energy loss occurs through its roof; attic insulation acts as a barrier that, in summer, reduces the transfer of heat from outside your house to inside. Without adequate insulation, heat enters and builds up in your house, making it harder and more costly to cool.
- Just as cold seeps into a house through its cracks and gaps, heat and humidity use those same entry points. So to keep the cool air in and the hot air out, seal up your house. Leaks are commonly found around doors, windows, chimneys, and anywhere plumbing, ductwork, or electrical wiring passes through walls, floors or ceilings.



Terminology Tip

Appraisal Report — Usually commissioned by a mortgage lender in order to ensure a loan doesn't exceed a property's value, an appraisal report details the findings of home appraisers, whose job it is to estimate a property's value. Included in appraisal reports are: details about the property's condition, including significant flaws affecting the property's value; comparisons of similar properties; and an evaluation of local market conditions.

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Keller Williams Lifestyles Realty, Brokerage



Barbara, Jerry & Scott
Sales Representatives

*The greatest compliment we can receive from our clients is the referral of your family, friends and colleagues. We promise to treat anyone you refer with the greatest consideration.
Thank you for your loyalty.
Barbara, Jerry & Scott*

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