



## The summer real estate cycle is heating up

Alice Cooper summed up real estate's yearly seasonal shift with just four words: "Schools out for summer!" His hit song rings true each year as the kids pack up their bags, say goodbye to their friends and put their summer gear on.



For parents getting ready to make a move to another suburb, city, or state, it means the "For Sale" signs go up and the hunt starts for the next home. Not surprisingly, 60% of all moves in America take place in the summer. It's a seasonal shift that has been around as long as school has been in. Here are some points to consider when buying or selling your home during the summer months.

### **SUMMER SELLING SEASON**

The nicer weather brings buyers out of hibernation and into your spring-cleaned home. As a seller, know that the summer cycle typically causes an increase in inventory creating more competition in the market. It's likely though, that more people will be looking at your house, making it easier to negotiate on price. Buyers who want to move in before the new school year starts may forego any unnecessary haggling for a move that fits within their time frame.

On the other hand, don't be too optimistic about price – the market today is still facing rough waters – and a higher price, not to mention more options, will probably put you at the low end of the buying list. This could leave you waiting for a buyer on into the winter months, when homes typically sell for less. And if you're one of the many who are selling and buying all before school starts, pricing your home correctly so that it sells quickly is crucial.

### **BUYERS IN BLOOM**

Buying during the summer months, as we know, has its pluses: it's an excellent time to pack the kids up and relocate while school's out and the weather is nice, there's more inventory on the market and you can use your income tax return toward your down payment.



If it's in the cards for you, there could be some benefits to waiting – late summer opens up a window of leverage for buyers who are working with slow moving family homes. Ultimately the family wants to move quickly before school starts (maybe you do too) which means getting to the table fast could cut down on time spent haggling over price. Buyers remember: it takes time to close on a home, so start looking in the spring months when more "For Sale" signs start to peek up out of the ground.

There are many important issues that come into play when deciding to buy or sell your home. As a real estate agent it's my job to provide expertise on the unique shifts and help you either sell your current home or find one that fits your family's needs. If you're looking to move out-of-state, I have an excellent network of agents I hold within high regard who will take great care of you and your family while you search for a home. Give me a call or send me an email anytime.



## Homeowners Advice: Growing the garden of your dreams!

Every homeowner dreams of having the perfect garden: flowers that flourish, shrubs that shine and plants that perk up no matter current weather conditions. The tricky part of having the glorified garden is the right combination of water, fertilizer and well, a little love. So whether you were born with a 'green thumb' or not, sowing the seeds for a show stopping garden takes some skill.



Here are tips to take yours to the next level:

### **WATER WISE**

Keeping your lawn or garden perfectly hydrated could be considered an art in and of itself. Water too much and your plants could suffer. Water too little and you may never see the beautiful bloom you were hoping for. The trick is to find the perfect frequency.

- Hydrate your plants during the early morning when the temperature is cooler – this helps plants keep most of the moisture, rather than losing it to the heat that happens later in the day.
- Knowing how much water is too much or too little depends on the flowers. Newer plants typically need more water than ones that have deep roots. A good rule to follow is making sure you can penetrate the soil six-to-eight inches.
- Also, spend some time reading about each plant's specific needs and how they'll grow in your region. If you live in a drought-prone area you may need to water more, and rainy areas less.

Hint: Consider investing in a rain sensor so that your sprinkler system doesn't water on the same day.

### **FERTILE FLORAL**

Success in your garden will depend largely on the work of your fertilizer. Ready for a quick science lesson? The three most important plant nutrients found in fertilizer are Nitrogen (N), Phosphorus (P) and Potassium (K). The nitrogen contributes to the healthy green leaves, phosphorus builds a strong root system and potassium helps to regulate metabolic systems in the photosynthesis process. A soil test is a great way to determine what ratio of NPK your garden needs to flourish. Remember to read up on your specific region – fertilizing more or less during certain seasons may be needed. For example, gardens in the Pacific Northwest Region require less fertilizer starting in mid-to-late July.

There are also several organic options available including cow manure which is a great chemical-free option to growing a greener garden. For the benefits of using chemical free fertilizer, visit

<http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/conserv/rrr/greenscapes/owners.htm>.



### **Fun July Fourth Facts!**



*Pledge more than allegiance – pledge to impress with these fun freedom facts.*

Last year more than 78 million people celebrated our country's birth. That's a lot of hot dogs, hamburgers, and potato salad and a lot of celebrating! How many to be exact and where did they come from? You might be surprised at the numbers:

**More than 1 in 4:** The chance that the hot dogs and pork sausages consumed on the Fourth of July originated in Iowa. The Hawkeye State was home to 19.3 million hogs and pigs on March 1, 2009. This represents more than one-fourth of the nation's total. North Carolina (9.4 million) and Minnesota (7.3 million) were the runners-up.

**6.8 billion pounds:** Total production of cattle and calves in Texas in 2007. Chances are good that the beef hot dogs, steaks and burgers on your backyard grill came from the Lone Star State, which accounted for about one-sixth of the nation's total production. And if the beef did not come from Texas, it very well may have come from Nebraska (4.7 billion pounds) or Kansas (4.1 billion pounds).

**About 4 in 10:** The odds that your side dish of baked beans originated from North Dakota, which produced 39 percent of the nation's dry, edible beans in 2008.

**Please Pass the Potato Salad:** Potato salad and potato chips are popular food items at Fourth of July barbecues. Half of the nation's spuds were produced in Idaho or Washington state in 2008.

**Florida:** The state that led the nation in watermelon production last year (861 million pounds). Other leading producers of this popular fruit included California, Texas and Georgia, each with more than 500 million pounds.



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