

The Pros and Cons of Listing Your Home for Sale During the Holiday Season

It is "conventional wisdom" that December is not a good time to try to sell a home. True, most people are preparing for the holidays, have full social calendars, and are shopping — but not for their next home.

This fact begs the question of whether your home is likely to sell and weighing that prospect against the inconvenience of disrupting your own holiday season to make it available for showings.

Working in favor of listing your home is the fact that the number of active listings which would compete with your home for buyers is so small. Shown at right, courtesy of REcolorado, our local MLS, are charts displaying by month the numbers of sold and active residential listings for Jefferson County over the past five years.

Notice the dramatic change over past Decembers of the ratio of active listings to the number of sales. Last December, for example, there were 700 sales and 1,370 active listings — a ratio of less than 1:2. The previous December, there were 608 sales and 3,226 active listings, a ratio of about 1:5. The year before, it was 1:9. The year before that, it was about 1:12.

November statistics aren't available yet, of course, but I did an MLS search, and the number of active Jeffco listings as of Nov. 18th is 1,105, and there have been 459 closings of Jeffco properties so far this month. There are another 670 listings that have been under contract since before Nov. 1st, and are likely to close between now and the end of the year, so

one can guess that the number of sold listings will be higher than previous years for November and December.

I'm not going out on a limb to suggest that the ratio this December will be less than 1:2 again. This tells me that if you are thinking of putting your home on the market this holiday season and if you price it right, it will probably sell quickly. Moreover, because of continued low inventory and high buyer activity, your home will likely sell near

or above asking price with multiple offers. The key is pricing your home right, as I have written numerous times, and not pricing it at a wished-for price that isn't justified by comparable sales.

My strategy is always to price the home at or just below what comparable sales support and "let the bidding begin." Time after

time I see other listings going on the market at 5-10% above what comparable sales can support, and those are the listings that sit on the market the longest and even expire without selling, while the properly priced homes are selling for that 5 to 10% premium because of multiple offers.

The above paragraphs address the likelihood of your home selling if you choose to put it on the market despite how disruptive it could be to your own holiday plans. What are the other pros and cons of doing so?

At other times of the year, it is recommended by home staging profes-

sionals that you remove any religious icons along with personal photos and taxidermy. However, I believe that if you celebrate one of the religious holidays in December and like to decorate your house accordingly, go ahead and do so as festively as you like — but not enough to be featured on 9News at 10!

Another problem you'll encounter is buyers tracking snow and dirt into your home, but you can expect showing agents to honor instructions to remove shoes and/or use paper booties which you or your agent can buy at Home Depot or online.

REAL ESTATE TODAY



By **JIM SMITH**,
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JEFFCO SALES BY MONTH						
Month	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Jan	329	338	292	401	484	497
Feb	423	434	395	444	582	568
Mar	470	630	554	626	824	720
Apr	552	756	589	754	922	817
May	651	829	657	911	1,070	1,052
Jun	725	685	713	908	1,069	1,117
Jul	721	471	676	840	1,150	1,136
Aug	652	548	692	868	1,040	1,060
Sep	629	536	603	785	857	1,026
Oct	720	537	586	780	844	893
Nov	539	486	516	692	676	
Dec	477	488	521	608	700	

JEFFCO ACTIVE LISTINGS						
Month	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Jan	2,222	5,212	6,042	4,313	2,877	1,227
Feb	2,387	5,744	6,239	4,256	2,739	1,172
Mar	2,587	6,371	6,765	4,282	2,668	1,194
Apr	2,748	6,794	7,075	4,390	2,831	1,318
May	2,933	6,853	7,343	4,661	3,278	1,549
Jun	3,319	7,194	7,380	4,755	3,475	1,703
Jul	3,721	7,423	7,142	4,569	3,564	1,749
Aug	3,924	7,368	6,802	4,509	3,364	1,672
Sep	4,320	6,999	6,504	4,232	3,010	1,623
Oct	4,839	6,563	5,926	3,991	2,294	1,364
Nov	5,183	6,205	5,439	3,587	1,647	
Dec	4,933	5,930	4,867	3,226	1,370	

This Week's Featured New Listing

Spacious Home Has a Denver Address But Cherry Creek Schools

You will love this spacious two story single family home. Small fenced yard and corner lot is perfect for your pet or busy lifestyle. Features a large living room with vaulted ceiling. The open kitchen includes all appliances (gas stove, refrigerator, microwave, dishwasher) with a good sized adjacent eating space. Open to the kitchen is a cozy family room featuring a gas log fireplace and entertainment alcove. Upstairs offers a loft area perfect for an office space or play area. Master bedroom with walk-in closet and two additional bedrooms are upstairs. This home is in the Cherry Creek School District. It's listed by Jim Swanson, 303-929-2727.



Golden Real Estate Food Drive

It has been reported that one in four Colorado children face a constant struggle against hunger, and Golden Real Estate's agents want to contribute in any way we can to feed hungry children and their families. If you don't have a church or food bank or other organization to which you are already bringing non-perishable food, you can bring it to our office, and we will make sure it gets to one or more local food banks. Thank you for caring.



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