

# 5 Biggest Turnoffs When Touring a Home

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A real estate agent's job entails more than assisting clients with the nitty-gritty details of buying or selling a home. Good [agents](#) also tour as many homes as possible. Knowing the local inventory gives them an edge over the competition and provides great value for future [buyers](#) and [sellers](#) because those agents know the market — their product.

Having toured hundreds of homes through the years, agents have come to loathe certain sights. They sometimes leave houses wondering whether the seller even knew a showing was scheduled for that day. Here are five huge turnoffs agents and their buyer clients see when touring homes and how to avoid them:

## Pets and their stuff

Pets bring so many great things to a family and home. But no potential buyer wants to see a dirty cat litter box next to the breakfast table or Fido's bitten, saliva-filled bone on the sofa in living room. When your home is for sale, nobody needs to know that a pet lives there. Potential buyers who are allergic to dogs or cats will be turned off immediately, and the mere presence of a pet will send some buyers right out the front door. Have a plan in place to keep the pet remnants at bay, the home tidy and your pet's stuff out of sight. It may seem like a burden, but if you are serious about selling, this is of utmost importance.

## Toys and baby supplies

Selling your home when you have children — especially a newborn — can be trying and stressful. For the most part, buyers can appreciate that keeping the home tidy under such circumstances is a challenge, and they are forgiving. But it is important to make an effort before showing the home. If possible, have a toy chest or large closet dedicated to storing your kids' stuff. Also keep in mind that buyers have a hard time with the more sanitary or personal items associated with infants. Leaving breast milk, a breast pump or dirty baby bottles on the kitchen counter could make a buyer feel that the home isn't clean or sanitary. If you have a newborn, put a plan in place and allow 20 minutes to store baby items before a showing.

## Cluttered counters and dirty dishes

Kitchens and bathrooms help sell a home. Most people spend the majority of their time in the kitchen, and buyers will want to spend some time in yours.

If the counters are crowded with the blender, coffee maker, toaster oven and other items, it will appear that there is little counter space, or worse, that your kitchen lacks cabinet space. And last night's meatloaf caked onto plates sitting in the sink is sure to turn buyers off. Clear the countertops and put away the dishes before leaving home for a showing.



## Personal items and toiletries

Don't stop with the kitchen; the same holds true for bathroom countertops as well. Clean the toothpaste off the sink and put away your prescriptions, open body lotion containers, toothbrushes and dirty towels. Buyers want to feel clean in the bathroom, and although it's clear that they won't be the first to use this bathroom, they don't need to be reminded that they will be taking over a "used" bathroom.

## Toilet and toilet seat

Imagine a serious buyer touring your home. They've fallen in love with the chef's kitchen and are already planning where they would put the television and how their sectional couch would fit in the living room. Then, they stumble upon your bathroom to find the toilet seat up and not clean.

The last thing anyone wants to see is a dirty toilet, so make sure the toilet seat is down at all times. Will buyers be scared off otherwise and not move ahead with an offer? Probably not. But you want them to fall in love with your home, not be turned off.

Most home sellers won't make these mistakes, but for the 20 percent who do, these five turnoffs could mean the difference between a full-price or lowball offer — or worse — an offer on a competing property.

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