



# REAL ESTATE TIPS & ADVICE

## Open House Tips

*6 Important Things You  
Should Examine at Open Houses*



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Open houses may be staged to look like a home decor dream, but don't let that distract you from the real reason you're there: to potentially buy a home. Make sure you can look past the neatly arranged furniture and focus solely on whether the house would be a good fit for you and your family. To help, here's a home buyer's checklist of things you might have missed at first glance.

First, the obvious: When visiting open houses, make sure they are large enough, have enough bedrooms and bathrooms, have great flow and are located in excellent locations. Assuming that the house (or condo) passes all these checks, the following list is designed to eliminate homes which might have major (expensive)



flaws. As a buyer, you should always come back to the house for another viewing, preferably with your [own home buyer agent](#).

*"Bo Knows Real Estate"*

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A photograph of a modern kitchen with wooden cabinetry, a stainless steel refrigerator, and a large island with bar stools. The kitchen has a warm, inviting atmosphere with wooden floors and pendant lighting.

**Bo Kauffmann.** Blog.WinnipegHomeFinder.com

## While Visiting Open Houses, Check For These 6 Things:

- ✓ Major Systems Check
- ✓ Are there enough electrical outlets
- ✓ Are the floors level
- ✓ Ventilation in the attic
- ✓ Fireplaces
- ✓ Heating vents on 2nd floor



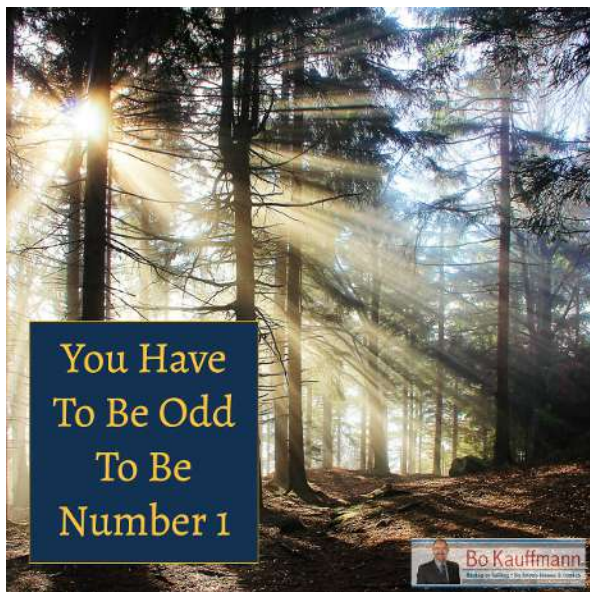
## Quick Major Systems Check

When visiting open houses, you're not going to be able to do a thorough inspection while you are there. But you will have the opportunity to quickly check the apparent age of the furnace (\$4,000), a/c (\$3,000), windows (\$10,000 to \$30,000), [electrical panel](#), condition of bathrooms and kitchen. All of these represent major upgrades, if required.

## Electrical Outlets

This is a less-than obvious issue with older homes (pre 1950's). I've seen bedrooms with only 1 plug, forcing owners to use long extension cords or power bars. Couple this with the fact that many of these older homes also feature wiring without protective

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grounds, and you could be inviting

trouble. So check to make sure all rooms have enough outlets, and see if they have 3 holes, or just 2 (ungrounded), which will not accept modern lights and appliances.



## Are the floors level

Here is a little trick home sellers like to use: prop the doors open with cute little door stoppers. When attending open houses, look at the bottom of the bedroom doors, and see if they

are being held open by objects such as blocks or wedges. If possible, move one of the objects and see if doors close on themselves. This is quite often a sign that the floors are tilted, perhaps [indicating foundation issues](#).

Another little trick is to close the bedroom doors and see if the spaces, between the door and jamb, are equal all around.



## Attic Ventilation

This is actually best checked from the outside. When looking at the condition of the [roofing shingles](#), see if the roof has a number of vents. Inadequate venting of the attic contributes to overheating and high levels of humidity. This will rot the roofing sheets of plywood. Replacement of those sheets will add to the cost of roof replacement (approx. 40-50% more cost)

## Fireplaces

If the home has a fireplace, check the condition of the chimney. Is it the newer, modern metal type chimney, or the original clay-lined chimney? If original, beware that over time, the clay liner erodes and may eventually render the fireplace unsafe. The fix for this is to either replace the chimney (expensive) or to convert to a [gas or electric fireplace](#).

## Heating vents on upper floors

I've shown homes with a 3rd floor (called '2-1/2 storey homes') where the top floor has no heating vents. Worse, I've seen 1-1/2 storey homes with bedrooms upstairs which have no heating vents.





The idea, presumably, was that since heat rises, the main floor heat would be sufficient to keep the bedrooms warm. That might be ok on -10C days, but during harsh winters, owners will supplement using baseboard heaters. (See earlier note about sufficient outlets..)

[Questions to ask a Listing Agent at an Open House.](#)

Many people start their search for a new home by dropping in at Open Houses. While offering less pressure on the potential buyer, open houses can also be very busy. Home Buyers end up rushed or feeling crowded by other attendees.

My advice to prospective buyers: use the free tour of open houses just to see if the home feels right. ALWAYS book a private tour with your own agent afterwards.

During private tours you will have more time to discuss your thoughts and needs, and to look for any potential problems you might have overlooked during the quick Open House visit



**REAL ESTATE TIPS & ADVICE**  
**Closing Costs for Buyers**  
*Costs for buying a house or condo*

Originally Published at <https://blog.winnipeghomefinder.com>

**REAL ESTATE TIPS & ADVICE**  
**4 'Must-Have' Condo Features**  
*Make sure your condo has these (and more)*

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**REQUIRED CONDO DOCUMENTS IN WINNIPEG**

1. Statement about cooling off period
2. Statement about buyers rights to cancel
3. Disclosure Statement by current owner
4. Disclosure Statement by Condo Corp.
5. Budget for current fiscal period
6. Most recent financial statements
7. Auditors Report (if available)
8. Current By-Law and Rules
9. Proposed By-Law changes (if any)
10. Property Management Agreement
11. Reserve Fund Study
12. Condo Declaration & Amendments
13. Excerpts of the Condo Plan

These are the condo docs required for most Condo sales. If the condo is a new-construction additional documents may be needed. When in doubt..... check with your Real Estate Agent.

**Never buy a condo without a trained Real Estate Agent!**

Bo Kauffmann  
<https://blog.winnipeghomefinder.com>

## ABOUT BO KAUFFMANN, REMAX PERFORMANCE REALTY

After serving 24 yrs as a City of Winnipeg Police Officer, Bo Kauffman retired in 2005 and joined the largest REMAX office in Winnipeg. He started his career as a Lic/Asst. to another real estate agent, and spent the first 2 years learning the trade.

In 2006, Bo earned the designation of A.B.R. (Accredited Buyer Representation), additional training and certification in the field of home buyer representation. In 2007, he cast off the life-line and



became a full real estate agent. That first year he earned the REMAX 100% Club award and has not looked back since.

### HELPING HOME BUYERS

Bo enjoys working with house and condo buyers in nearly all price ranges in Winnipeg and close surrounding communities. Buyers find him to be very helpful and easily reachable, either via phone, text, email or numerous social media channels.

### HELPING HOME SELLERS

When representing house and condo sellers, Bo's clients enjoy the most extensive marketing plan in the industry. From taking professional photographs of the property, to superb and expansive marketing, Bo Kauffman leaves no stone unturned in his effort to advertise and market the sellers property.

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