

# Moves: A few concepts can make your house 'model home' ready

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sellers are looking for a leg up when it comes to the competition. A pre-inspection is not only a good marketing move, but it can save money, stress and time in the long run."

## Be proactive

So what makes your place stand out from other, similar listings? Consider the power of staging. Whether your home is vacant or occupied, a few concepts can help your home look "model home" ready — which can encourage a quicker, more lucrative sale.

When it comes to staging, less is more. By eliminating distractions, you let the house stand out. A good rule of thumb is to pack one-third to one-half of your personal effects — books, accessories and closet contents. Pack up family photos, clear clutter and eliminate large collections.

Calm down paint to neutral colors that reflect the New Mexico landscape. And try to highlight the architectural details of a room, not your decorating scheme.

"Simplicity is a gratifying result, yet extremely difficult to achieve," says Realtor Jim Weyhrauch of Santa Fe Properties. "Personal belongings come with a lot of emotions attached to them. It is very helpful to have a professional with a sensitive yet objective eye guide you through the process," he adds.

Eve Sandoval, a loan officer with Home Buyers Mortgage, attends many open houses and Realtor tours. "It never ceases to amaze me," she says, "how many homes are so cluttered it's hard to evaluate their good features. Most people get so used to seeing stuff around the house it becomes invisible to them."

Sandoval agrees that a home stager can be helpful because he or she can arrange home furnishings so the home shows at its best. "It looks cleaner and less cluttered, enabling potential buyers to more easily picture themselves

in the home," she says.

If you plan to stage your home, do it before your Realtor takes marketing photos for the Multiple Listing Service — or have the company retake photos and update flyers, etc., if you stage after that work has been done. With more potential buyers previewing homes online, your photos should reflect your property at its best.

## First impressions

Often ignored, curb appeal is essential. It's the first glance buyers and Realtors get of your property "in the flesh" — and these days, lackluster just won't cut it.

A corner lot full of weeds? Peeling paint? Bird droppings near the front door light fixture? Forget it.

"Between the time the buyer and I pull in the driveway and the moment we cross the threshold, the decision has been made" says Joshua Maes of Santa Fe Properties. "People would like to think that they would never make a decision based on first appearance, but the fact is they do it all the time."

Roll up your sleeves and make sure that landscaping is well manicured. Keep on top of weeds and debris that blow in on gusty winds. Grace your front entry with attractive pots full of flowers and be sure that your welcome mat is fresh and inviting. The sassy "Get Lost" and "Leave" doormats that are all the rage are sure to turn a buyer off.

When you set the tone outside, both buyers and Realtors will be excited to find out what's behind the front door.

## Get creative

Most buyers visit multiple for-sale homes in a few hours of "showings" with their Realtor, leaving their minds swimming. Think of creative ways to plant your listing in the minds of those who see it.

If you live on a street like Chocolate Flower, consider keeping a bowl of



Joshua Maes of Santa Fe Properties is a believer in first impressions. "Between the time the buyer and I pull in the driveway and the moment we cross the threshold, the decision has been made," he says.

Jane Phillips  
The New Mexican

foil-wrapped chocolates in the shape of a flower by the flyer for the house. Selling on Star Vista? Why not offer a photo album of the beautiful night skies, and the house lit up at night, for buyers to flip through.

Really motivated? Offer incentives for things like carpet/flooring replacements, paint allowances and the like.

Buyers also appreciate viewing scrapbooks that detail the improvements of a property, especially if they are significant. It's an opportunity to show off your hard work and investment.

If you're selling a historical property, dig up some interesting tidbits to include in your marketing effort. Things like "original Stamm house" or "built in 1912" or "double-adobe walls" give cachet and relevance to your asking price.

## Spread the word

Don't leave all the marketing responsibilities to your Realtor. Send an

e-mail, postcards, or flyers with pictures and pertinent information — such as asking price, square footage, number of bedrooms and special amenities — to all your contacts. Include friends, family, neighbors and colleagues in Santa Fe and beyond. You never know who knows whom and who might be thinking of buying in the area.

To build your base, let the same group know about upcoming open houses. Word-of-mouth marketing is key in the Santa Fe area, and you never know who might "tell a friend of a friend."

## Be realistic

By the time most homeowners decide to sell, they are reluctant to put more time, energy or elbow grease into a home.

But they should remember that a home, once listed, is a commodity in the real-estate market, competing against thousands of others. What can you do to increase the likelihood of

a good, timely offer? Perhaps \$10,000 in new carpet now is better than a \$50,000 price reduction down the line. Maybe five grand in landscaping will help your property compete with that of your next-door neighbors, who, like you, have decided to sell.

Remember that you are merchandising your home, and the goal is to attract a buyer quickly and for a good offer. Be willing to rethink your original asking price if necessary, and commit to the process. A well-presented home with a reasonable asking price rarely languishes on the market.

Candy Brenton, marketing director for Santa Fe Properties says, "In a market where there is a lot of inventory, pay attention to what your broker recommends about pricing — rely on their expertise. It's really important for a property to be priced appropriately from the beginning."

"Homes are very personal," Brenton says, and "your Realtor gives you a non-personal value on your home. Properties that are priced well are selling."

## HANDS-ON WORKSHOP

# Learn about earthen finishes, mud plasters

The New Mexican

On Saturday, Aug. 4, the Historic Santa Fe Foundation will offer a hands-on workshop on traditional mud plasters and earthen finishes. The workshop will be held at the historic James L. Johnson House — better known as El Zaguán — at 545 Canyon Road. Earthen materials, formulas, tools and techniques will all be addressed in the six-hour program.

Owner of eight historic properties in Santa Fe, including El Zaguán, the Historic Santa Fe Foundation was established in 1961 to preserve and protect historic properties in Santa Fe and the region, and to offer historic resource education to the

community. The foundation's long-term goal is to restore the entire Canyon Road property to an earthen finish — an ongoing process the public is invited to watch through the end of this month.

Mud plaster and earthen finish workshop instructors will be Ian Daitz — who is restoring the earthen finish of the interior *zaguán*, or vestibule, at the Johnson House — and Mac Watson — a licensed contractor who specializes in the preservation of historic buildings.

The workshop runs from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and costs \$10, including lunch and materials. Space is limited. For more information or to register for this event, call (505) 983-2567.



Ian Daitz, one of the workshop instructors, throws mud and works with lime plaster at El Zaguán on Canyon Road.

Photo by Hope Curtis



Courtesy photo

The historic charm of a four-poster bed is at home in modern and traditional bedrooms.

# Travis: Canopy beds great for setting moods

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contemporary mood even more, while continuing to hark back to another era, which is always an exciting design trick.

With a canopy bed, you can develop a specific mood or atmosphere simply with the choice of fabric and the method of hanging or draping the material over and around the bed. If you're looking for drama and a little mystery in the bedroom, fashion a swagged canopy in saturated tones of velvet and satin. Add fringe and tassels on tiebacks and trim with gold or sequins. The play of dim light on the sheen of these materials is mesmerizing. A white or pastel canopy and

simple linen or cotton curtain panels hung at the sides and back, in place of a headboard, will create a tranquil mood. Natural materials and shades of water and earth are calming and restful.

For a masculine, tailored effect, try a fitted canopy in gray, black or even plaid flannel or wool. Leave the sides open or continue with the straight lines, using piping as trim.

Sheers, muslin and mosquito netting are summery favorites and can be gathered, swagged, draped and easily held back to suit the situation.

Contact Debbie Travis at [house2home@debbietravis.com](mailto:house2home@debbietravis.com).

## THE NEW MEXICAN'S LOCAL HOME RATES

LENDER	30-YEAR RATE+PTS/APR	15-YEAR RATE+PTS/APR	ARMs RATE+PTS/APR	30-YR FHA/VA RATE+PTS/APR	15-YR FHA/VA RATE+PTS/APR	30-YR JBO RATE+PTS/APR	15-YR JBO RATE+PTS/APR	ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS
Admiral Mortgage, LLC	6.375+0+0	6.25+0+0	6.375+0+0	5.75+0+0	6.0+0+0	6.5+0+0	6.25+0+0	Call for immediate quote.
505-983-4512	6.25+0+5	6.125+0+5	(20 year fixed)	(1/1ARM)	(3/1ARM)	6.375+0+5	6.125+0+5	Ask about construction programs!
Home Buyers Mtg Co.	6.125+1+1	5.75+1+1	4.75+1+1(1Y)	6.125+1+1	5.75+1+1	6.375+1+1	6.0+1+1	CALL now for current rates..
505-986-9080	6.5+0+0	6.125+0+0		6.5+0+0	6.125+0+0	6.75+0+0	6.375+0+0	
Quest Mortgage Corp.	6.125+0+2	5.75+0+2	6.00+0+1	6.25+0+2	5.875+0+2	6.375+0+2	6.00+0+2	Great service and great rates, call now.
505-984-8855	6.50+0+0	6.25+0+0	(5/1 ARM)	6.625+0+0	6.625+0+0	7.00+0+0	6.75+0+0	

## Weekly Mortgage News

McLean, VA — Freddie Mac (NYSE:FRE) today released the results of its Primary Mortgage Market Survey (PMMS) in which the 30-year fixed-rate mortgage (FRM) averaged 6.69 percent with an average 0.4 point for the week ending July 26, 2007, down from last week when it averaged 6.73. Last year at this time, the 30-year FRM averaged 6.72 percent. The 15-year FRM this week averaged 6.37 percent with an average 0.4 point, down slightly from last week when it averaged 6.38 percent. A year ago, the 15-year FRM averaged 6.34 percent. Five-year Treasury-indexed hybrid adjustable-rate mortgages (ARMs) averaged 6.30 percent this week, with an

average 0.4 point, down from last week when it averaged 6.35 percent. A year ago, the 5-year ARM averaged 6.35 percent. One-year Treasury-indexed ARMs averaged 5.69 percent this week with an average 0.5 point, down from last week when it averaged 5.72 percent. At this time last year, the 1-year ARM averaged 5.78 percent. (Average commitment rates should be reported along with average fees and points to reflect the total cost of obtaining the mortgage.) "Mortgage rates eased this week on market concerns that a further weakening of housing demand this spring will delay any recovery in the sector," said Frank Nothaft,

Freddie Mac vice president and chief economist. "For example, building permits fell last month to the slowest pace in a decade, and more recent data on June sales of existing homes showed a fourth consecutive monthly decline. "Several factors contributed to the softening in housing markets this spring. In addition to the tightening of lending standards earlier this year, especially on subprime loans, the 40 basis point jump in rates on 30-year fixed-rate mortgages in June may have deterred potential buyers. For the year-to-date, sales of single-family homes were down about 9 percent from the first half of 2007."

**Lenders and Consumers Visit:** [www.iMortgageGuide.com](http://www.iMortgageGuide.com)

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**30-year mortgage**  
National Average: 6.69%

**15-year mortgage**  
National Average: 6.37%

**1-year ARM mortgage**  
National Average: 5.69%

Source: www.iMortgageGuide.com