

Columns

Halloween home sale?

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ZINA SELETSKAYA / DREAMSTIME.COM If you're selling your home this month, your best bet is to tone down Halloween displays and opt instead for tasteful fall colours.

If you're like many Winnipeggers, the crisp October air and smell of autumn leaves puts you in the Halloween spirit.

But, if you've listed your home in October, you may want to think twice before putting up zombies, cobwebs, spiders and ghouls in your yard.

For many of us, Halloween symbolizes fun for youngsters, wacky costumes and community participation. But the holiday isn't exactly known for its tasteful home trimmings. If the idea of suppressing your creepy creativity around the home gets you down, we've compiled some simple guidelines that can help you channel your festivity into buyer-friendly options.

1. Opt for autumn decor over spooky spangles — If you can't imagine approaching the season without a few trips to the craft store, decor aisles, or pumpkin patch, avoid any styling that evokes scary Halloween themes — you don't want to give your buyers any reason to associate your home with being frightened. Instead, get creative with harvest motifs that suggest coziness and bounty. The warm, rich colours of autumn leaves in wreaths or throw pillows will make your decor dazzle, and an arrangement or two of miniature pumpkins and decorative gourds can add charm to your front step.

2. Avoid adornments that obstruct your abode — Many house-hunters will scope out your home from the car before scheduling a showing, so it's important that your festive decorations don't steal the show. Stay away from ornamentation that becomes a focal point in your yard or blocks a clear view of your home, such as hay bales, cotton spider webbing, or anything inflatable. The same goes for the interior — decals on the windows tend to block out natural light, and space-stealing decorations can make your house feel cluttered.

3. Hints of Halloween can be a hit with buyers — When your home is picture-perfect but you're intent on having some fun this Halloween, give potential buyers a seasonal treat. Enhance open houses with a plate of cookies shaped like jack-o-lanterns or a dish of candy corn, and place little cards next to them inviting house-hunters to help themselves. Burning a pumpkin-spiced candle can also add a touch of seasonality to your home with minimal effort, and can add nostalgic charm to your ambience.

4. Decorating for the day — If you look forward to greeting little ghouls and goblins at the door on Halloween, there's no reason to skip putting out a grinning jack-o-lantern on the big night. Just ensure that what you choose to display is more friendly than frightening — you never know if the parents accompanying their kids are scouting out your property. It's also wise to steer clear of 'gag' decorations that move or make noise unexpectedly; if potential buyers do visit your home, an unpleasant shock could mean they won't be back. But, however you festoon your house, be sure to pack it away the following day to keep your curb appeal pristine.

Selling a home doesn't have to come between you and your enjoyment of Halloween. Simply keep in mind that you're in the business of selling a home-sweet-home, not a haunted house. The trick is simply to keep your decorations tasteful and minimal so that your home shows like a treat.

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