

Be safe while selling your home



Normally, your aim is to keep strangers out of your home. But when you're selling a house, your job is to invite them in. So draft some security precautions to protect you and your family. A few suggestions:

1. Show by appointment only. Never just open the door to anyone who knocks. If the buyer calls and tries the "now or never" ploy, opt for never. Anyone really interested in buying will schedule an appointment.
2. Check out the prospect first. Get a name and a home phone number (not a cell phone). Test both before you show your home. Run it through the Google phone book, too. Get a work number to verify. It's also perfectly acceptable to have someone fax over a driver's license ahead of time and to check it again at the door.
3. Ask about financing. Limit appointments to buyers who already have financing. While you can't always verify their answer, you can ask which institution they are using and make sure it exists. And if you want to be really careful, you can ask for a faxed note from the financial institution.
4. Advertise your caution. If you have a security system, use it. But don't allow your guests the chance to see your codes.
5. Stick together. Never show your house alone. The more friends and family you have in the house with you, the better. If your prospect brings a friend or spouse, you can also make sure that neither one has a chance to wander around unescorted.