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—property solutions—



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First impressions matter: How to stage an entryway

When presenting a home at an open for inspection you have just seven seconds to make a great first impression on potential buyers.

There are three vital, and often overlooked, entry points when presenting a home for sale. Each is equally important and has a unique purpose in helping buyers decide if a home is right for them. Each entry need to be presented for maximum impact.



Behavioural change from street to home

In the timeless series, A Pattern Language, Christopher Alexander describes how the experience of entering a building influences the way you feel once inside it. In architectural terms he explains how the gentler the transition between the home and the street, the more the inside of the home will feel like a safe “inner sanctum”

Sometimes the perfect transition from the street to front entry is not always achievable, but you can soften the journey for prospective home buyers by understanding the stages of the transition or the “three entrances”.

The ideal transition goes something like this:

- First entrance – the buyers first glimpse is viewing the home through “street” eyes as they approach by car
- Second entrance – as the buyer steps onto the property from street level and moves toward the front door, their street mood softens
- Third entrance – that private moment, as the buyer approaches the front door where they can no longer be seen from the street, completes the transition.



The significance of the transition – why is it important to buyers?

Studies show that a front garden or courtyard give home owners a sense of comfort and privacy. The three entrances reinforce the move from public domain to private space. By the time buyers have entered the front door, you want them to be relaxed enough to connect immediately with your home.

Jan Hogarth, Director of Placemate Architects in Brisbane agrees that entering a home is a journey into a private world, ‘When a home feels inviting & welcoming, it has this pattern of three entrances to change the scale with colour, texture, height, change of direction and focus. It slows the pace of your steps and creates a moment before you arrive at the door ... architects use it all the time,’ she says.

A warm welcome in seconds

The actual physical transition can be made in many ways or combinations and the benefits of each are far more complex than this brief list can convey. The transition includes:

- Change of enclosure ie gateway or fence
- Changing the light ie sensor light
- Introducing new sounds ie doorbell or knocker
- Changing the direction of the path ie curve or corner
- Change of ground surface ie step up or down and most of all
- Providing a glimpse of life ie a garden/view

It seems harder to create an attractive transition when the front door of your listing opens onto the street. The change can be abrupt without allowing time for buyers to transition from street to home mode, but it can be done.

While it lacks the elegance of the perfect transition, this simple entry door successfully moves us from street-scape to home mode in seconds. In the red door example, the entry cleverly delivers colour, light, life, a change of level and texture to quickly create a successful transition ... here’s how:

Colour – while the red door may not be everyone’s thing, it’s a very clever choice as a fast transition of colour. Why? In many cultures the red door symbolizes protection, positive energy & abundance

Light – The reflective glass in the front door captures light from the street and reflects it back to the viewer. It also creates space and suggests hidden depths within.

Life – the plants & trellises are a feel good feature that break up the harshness of the brick wall and say ‘welcome’



Level – a simple step up & you’ve arrived at the front door. As you wait for the door to open, you no longer feel the discomfort of being at street level, you are safely in a transition space.

Texture – a door mat changes the texture of the ground area as you leave the street and enter the home

The way in which we arrive at and leave a house is a significant & often overlooked factor in selling a home. The transition from street to home influences our psychological and general well-being and that of clients.

The three entrances signal the crucial moments of the first and last impression of your home on the potential buyer. For selling success, be thoughtful in the presentation of the main entry and exit points of the property.

Source: homely.com.au

Author: Tracey McLeod

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How to Survive in a Multi-Generational House

In Victorian times a multi-generational household was the norm. Grandparents lived in the same house as the parents with teenagers and young adult children. Now, as issues of housing affordability engulf an ageing society, multi-generational living is seeing a resurgence. In 2011, over four million Australians lived in multi-generational households where two or more generations lived under one roof – this accounts for one in five Australians.

What is driving this change?

Some of the factors influencing multi-generational living include:

- Decreasing housing affordability, meaning adult children are at home for longer whilst trying to save a house deposit
- A relationship breakdown, making it difficult for a single person to re-enter the property market alone
- Families that may suffer a job loss, reduced income or are forced to move for work and in need of accommodation
- The availability of family – there are more Baby Boomers currently financially secure and able to offer their parents a place to live in their old age while providing a home to their own children. The ‘sandwich generation’ are the ones caught in-between. They have teenagers or young adult children & ageing parents and are grappling between caring for those who need it and managing the various family relationships.

8 tips to keep sane in a multi-generational household

Whether you’re moving into the parental home, kids in tow, or accepting a parent back into your home, you’ll need to take on a certain set of values to make it work.

- 1. Communicate** – the crux of survival in a multi-generational household is communication, because what suits one family, won’t suit another. To iron out the particular needs of your unique family unit you need to talk with each other regularly. That could be a regular family dinner, house meeting or one-on-ones.
- 2. Establish expectations** – if the living situation does not involve an ageing or elderly parent, then you can look at it like a contract. If you’re sharing a house, you need to decide what the rules are. This should cover everything from upkeep, household duties, overnight visitors to bills and rent. If it does involve an ageing parent you still need to be wary of share care responsibilities and the associated financials.
- 3. Give and take** – respect for privacy goes both ways. Older children who have left home and then returned need to be aware that things aren’t going to be the same as it was before they left. Their parents have worked hard to become a couple again and they need to respect that. Similarly, parents need to be wary of defaulting back to parent-child mode ... it is now an adult-to-adult relationship.

4. Pick your battles – Focus on the big picture. Not everything needs to be reprimanded if no harm was meant and little is to be gained by bringing up.

5. Prepare the home – the home may be needed to be altered to accommodate the extra family members and their needs. Fortunately councils have many subsidised offers on items such as recliner chairs, disabled handles & shower seats for ageing in place.



6. Accept & ask for help – If someone asks if you need help, say yes. Don’t get caught in the middle trying to care for younger and older generations ... you won’t be able to do either if you’re running on empty. Make sure the responsibilities are shared. That could mean asking sibling or other family members to shoulder some of the care of your elderly relative, so that you and your family can go on holiday. Local councils and aged care providers also have some great, affordable options for nursing services and respite care, which can give you a break from care or minimize stress.

7. Be sensitive – If a situation has made you upset, you need to talk about it, but you must be kind. You can’t make someone responsible for your emotional response, you have to own your emotions. Don’t point the finger and say, “you made me angry. Instead, say “I don’t like the way that situation made me feel”.

8. Be open to ideas – when it comes to parenting styles, everyone is different. At the end of the day, as long as the child is safe and loved, that’s all that’s important. If your grandparent has a different approach to you, that’s not necessarily a bad thing. In fact, you’re going to get more from your grandparent or in-law if you ask for their help from time to time. If you include them regularly they are going to feel a bit more valued, and are more likely to wait until you ask to share their advice.

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Author: Alice Bradley

Author: Wally David

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Trish Breen
Property Solutions

RE/MAX Advantage

Trish

Trish Breen
0419 647 799

