

12 things to look for at an open home

Usually, you only have a very small window of opportunity to view an open house and in a hot market you are doing that with many other potential buyers.

What should you be thinking about:

1. Does the house smell musty or mouldy? Check for any water damage or staining. If the house has a subfloor (an area under the house), open the subfloor door and see if it smells musty or another obvious sign is when scented candles or air fresheners are being used. The problem may be right under your nose.
2. A well-furnished property with stylish furniture presents well. Will it look the same with your furniture?.
3. Has the property been freshly painted or touched up? Are the sellers hiding any problems?
4. Check that power lines, water tanks or poles haven't been photoshopped out of the marketing material.
5. Arrange a private viewing of the property at a different time of the day preferably in the morning and then again in the afternoon. You will see how much sun enters the property. Different light will show different problems.
6. If the lights are on when you arrive, discreetly turn them off to see how much natural light the property enjoys.
7. Take a look behind the blinds and curtains for any water staining on window sills. Or for any unsightly buildings or structures hiding behind the furnishings
8. Take note on how many contracts of sale are being requested, this will give you an indication of interest and ultimate competition
9. Ask the agents as many questions as possible, don't be shy as they are obliged to answer honestly. So don't hold back
10. Ask your Solicitor or Conveyancer to review the contract to ensure everything is in order
11. Go for a walk around the suburb and neighbourhood to get a good feel if this is an area you can live and feels right
12. Do your own research about the suburb and ask friends, work colleagues and family about particular suburbs. Does it have quality schools, shops and public transport which will help increase the value in the future.

However closely you look at the property and think it has been well maintained; don't ignore building, pest, building compliance and/or strata assessments. Assessments form part of your due diligence. It's not worth saving **\$800** on property reports to find when you have moved in that your **\$600,000** purchase has **\$100,000** worth of termite damage. The house has now **COST** you **\$700,000**.



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