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10 Tips for Pet-Owning Sellers

Pet-owning sellers may turn off potential buyers if they don't keep Fido or Fifi out-of-sight during showings.

"If a dog or cat is around during a showing, I've found that a buyer either freaks out because they're afraid of or allergic to animals, or they fall in love with the pet and don't pay attention to the house," says Maria Rovegno, a broker with Prudential Douglas Elliman in Port Washington on New York's Long Island.

Here is a list of advice for sellers when showing a house that has a pet:

1. Remove photos of pets from the walls, shelves, or refrigerators.
2. Clean food and water bowls regularly, and hide them when not in use.
3. Stash away pet toys, crates, carriers, and leashes.
4. Vacuum carpets, upholstery, and wood floors.
5. Keep litter boxes clean and out of sight, and remove signs of doggy potty pads.
6. Open windows to let in fresh air.
7. Neutralize odors with fresh-smelling candles and air sanitizers.
8. Hire professionals to remove unsightly pet stains.
9. Board or crate animals during open houses.
10. Repair visible signs of pet damage, such as scratched walls or floors.

Source: Newsday, Aimee Fitzpatrick Martin (12/29/06)

