

5 Dos and Don'ts on Property Tours

Property tours are fun! You can imagine yourself living in new spaces and, perhaps, learn something new about your priorities and preferences.



It's also easy to make mistakes while touring properties that could anger the seller, hurt your negotiating position, or be illegal. For the best results, follow these tips:

DON'T bring an entourage.

Relatives and friends may enjoy tagging along or providing advice, but they're also a distraction, potentially shifting the focus away from YOUR priorities. Plus, they could say or do something detrimental. Discuss this with your buyer's rep if it's essential to include other decision-makers.

DO assume the owner is watching and listening.

Surveillance cameras are common and might be used to monitor buyers' behavior and comments on property tours. It's an easy and effective way for owners to safeguard their property and gauge a buyer's interest for negotiating purposes.

Comments and movements outside the home may also be scrutinized, with or without cameras. Owners have been known to watch from neighbors' windows or recruit neighbors to spy on their behalf.

DON'T take photos or videos or use live-streaming services.

People take photos wherever they go. However, when touring homes, remember you're on someone else's property. Unless the owner has granted permission, you may be violating state laws.

Even if you can take pictures, don't share them on social media. It's another way to hurt your negotiating position and invade the owner's privacy. Wait until it's YOUR house.

DO use your imagination.

Homeowners have different tastes. If a house doesn't reflect your style, can you make easy and relatively inexpensive changes, including fixtures, window treatments, and paint?

Augmented reality apps can help you view walls in different colors or see virtual furniture in a room. Use these tools to help envision your own style in a home.

DON'T help yourself to the bathroom.

Yes, it's fine to flush the toilets and test the water faucets. It's also okay to open cabinets and closet doors. But check with your buyer's rep before "using" a toilet. Better yet, schedule a pit stop before starting the tour.