



OC Housing Newsletter



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- JULY 1ST: CANADA DAY
JULY 2ND: WORLD UFO DAY
JULY 4TH: INDEPENDENCE DAY
JULY 7TH: CHOCOLATE DAY
JULY 11TH: WORLD POPULATION DAY
JULY 13TH: LAILAT AL-QADR
JULY 23RD: NATIONAL HOT DOG DAY
JULY 24TH: PIONEER DAY UTAH
JULY 26TH: PARENTS DAY
JULY 26TH: TISHA B'AV



BIGGER IS NOT ALWAYS BETTER

As prices climb, so does the expected market time it would take to sell a home.

Three Distinct Price Ranges: For homes priced above \$750,000, homes are simply not flying off of the market.

It is amazing how everybody reads how the housing market is so incredibly hot and they think that it automatically applies to their home. If your home is priced below \$750,000, you are in luck. That range comprises 48% of the active inventory and 71% of demand.

For those homes priced below \$750,000, there are many housing pockets and neighborhoods that are starting to cool because of too many homes coming on the market in a short period of time.

Regardless of the lag, as we move into the Summer Market, officially starting now, sellers better be pricing their homes extremely carefully. Pricing is quickly becoming the determining factor in successfully selling a home.

In taking a closer look at the three distinct price ranges, homes priced below \$750,000 may still be enjoying a really hot seller's market, but even that market is slowing down.

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JULY IS SMART IRRIGATION MONTH



Smart Irrigation Month is a public awareness campaign to promote efficient water use. Using water wisely:

- Saves money on your utility bill.

- Nurtures green spaces that deliver real environmental benefits.
Protects your community's water supply for generations to come.
Minimizes needed investments in infrastructure to store and carry water, which must be paid for by property taxes or municipal bonds.

Automatic watering or sprinkler systems - known in the trade as irrigation systems

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REAL ESTATE CORNER

Q. How do I select the right contractor for work at my home?



A. Hiring a bad contractor to work on your home could cost you thousands, so here's a handy checklist to make sure someone is the best person for the job:

- Get a written estimate of the exact charges for labor and materials.
Verify with the State License Board that they are a licensed and insured contractor.
Ask if they carry workers compensation insurance, in case anyone gets hurt on your property.
Ask the contractor for their building material suppliers and verify their account

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grown by over 12%, a trend that is not about to let up. It is a matter of time before more homes come on grossly overpriced, meaning that they will sit and not sell regardless of just how incredibly hot the housing market is within the lower ranges.

32% of the active listing inventory and 14% of demand are comprised of homes priced between \$750,000 and \$1.5 million. This price range has increased by 23% in the past

Times	Current	Pending	Market
	Actives 6/18/2015	Last 30 Days	(In Months) 6/18/2015
O.C. \$0-\$750k	3164	2199	1.44
O.C. \$750k-\$1.5m	2061	736	2.80
O.C. \$1.5m+	1338	187	7.16

couple of months. The expected market time is inching towards the three month mark, a balanced market. A balanced market occurs when the expected market time is between three and four months.

For homes priced above \$1.5 million, the expected market time is over seven months. That's more than a half of a year. While it may represent 20% of the active inventory, one in five of all homes listed, it only represents 6% of demand. Many of these homeowners may hear how the housing market is on fire and homes are obtaining multiple offers and selling above the asking prices in just moments after the For Sale sign is pounded into the ground. There is no fine print that informs them that it does not apply to luxury homes. Instead, family, friends, and neighbors help them mistakenly come to the conclusion that the market is so hot that if they stretch the price, they will most likely get it. There are currently 1,338 homes on the market above \$1.5 million. In the prior month, there were only 187 pending sales. Given last month's demand, there were 187 happy, successful homeowners and 1,251 unsuccessful homeowners who continue to compete against each other. As they continue to keep their home in showing condition day in and day out, they are all hoping to become one of the lucky 187 who are priced right and have the exact right mix of location, upgrades, amenities, and condition. The number one, most important ingredient today is price.

As we move deeper into the Summer Market, every price range is going to slow down considerably and move towards a balanced market, one that does not favor a buyer or seller. It has already happened in the luxury price range, homes priced above \$1.5 million. It is about to happen for homes priced between \$750,000 and \$1.5 million. And, even if you are in the red hot lower ranges, they are not immune to the seasons. They too will be burdened with a multitude of overpriced homes and a growing inventory. By the time we reach the Autumn Market, all ranges will be looking squarely in the eyes of a balanced market. As soon as school starts, demand drops as we transition to the slower season, the last four months of the year.

Active Inventory: The inventory increased by 4%, the second highest increase in 2015.

The active inventory increased by 258 homes in the past two weeks and now totals 6,534, a 4% gain. Since the end of March, the inventory has continued to increase without pause. In the past six weeks, there have been plenty of reports about the sizzling housing market, but nobody has really highlighted that in the past couple of months, the inventory has increased by 15%, or 841 homes. The current expected market time is 2.11 months, or 63 days, for all of Orange County.

Last year the inventory totaled 7,363 homes, 829 more than today, with an expected market time of 2.67 months, or 80 days. Two weeks ago the difference was 906. The gap between last year and this year is beginning to close because homes are coming on the market at a swifter pace compared to one year ago. It looks as if the inventory is going to continue to blossom throughout the summer.

Demand: Demand increased by 2% in the last couple of weeks.

Demand, the number of new pending sales over the prior month, decreased by 60 homes in the past two weeks and now totals 3,094 homes. We can expect demand to drop a bit as we quickly approach the 4th of July and the rest of summer's distractions. With an increasing supply of homes and decreasing demand, the expected market time will begin to edge closer towards a balanced market, not favoring sellers or buyers.

Last year at this time there were 341 fewer pending sales, totaling 2,753.

Distressed Breakdown: The distressed inventory increased by 11% in the past two weeks.

The distressed inventory, foreclosures and short sales combined, increased by 21 homes, or 11%, in the last two weeks and now totals 212, nearly matching the 213 mark reached just two months ago. Year over year, there are 14% fewer distressed homes today. The distressed market makes up less than 5% of all closed sales and is quickly becoming an asterisk in today's market, almost not worth mentioning. Its impact on the overall marketplace is insignificant.

In the past two weeks, the foreclosure inventory increased by 19 homes and now totals 73, its highest level since the first couple of weeks of this year. Only 1% of the inventory is a foreclosure. The expected market time for foreclosures is 47 days. The short sale inventory increased by 2 homes in the past two weeks and now totals 139. The expected market time is 42 days. Short sales represent just 2% of the total active inventory.

Steven Thomas
Quantitative Economics and Decision Sciences

DIY & REPAIR CENTER



Home for Sale? Stage It Right

For a homeowner wanting to sell a home, it means staging it right with fall in mind to make it more appealing to buyers. From interior decorator Irene Silas, here are seven ways to bump up your home's seasonal appeal:

Start with curb appeal

Keep the lawn free of falling leaves and debris and cut back dead or dying perennials. Replace them with fall blooms, like mums, and/or add a few fall blooms in pots to the front porch.

Add fall décor

Use neutral fall décor outside, such as pumpkins, leafy wreaths or small hay bales that appeal to adult sensibilities. But keep it to a tasteful minimum. The idea is to add a few homey touches but keep the focus on the home itself.

Use seasonal scents

Nothing conjures up warm memories more than the sweet, spicy scents of fall. Bring them to mind with a pot of simmering cider on the stove or the aroma of freshly baked bread or cookies. But try to keep it natural. Scented candles or aerosol sprays can irritate some buyers.

Make the kitchen sparkle

Keep it very clean and remove all cleaning supplies from view. Take the notes and photos off the refrigerator and keep the counters clear except, perhaps, for an attractive cookbook and a bottle of wine or olive oil, or a handsome arrangement of fall produce in a pretty bowl or basket.

Let the light in

Keep drapes and blinds open during the day, and turn on the lights if your home is dark or the weather outside is gray.

Make the fi replace a focal point

Can you make it seem cozier with an armchair or rocking chair facing it, draped with a shawl or afghan? Will a few small pumpkins or gourds add a homey touch to the mantel? Can you rearrange the furniture to make the fireplace the focus of the room?

Set the dining room table

Using fall foliage and candles as a centerpiece set the table with your best cloth, glassware and china or dramatizes a polished wood table with a showy bowl or basket full of autumn's finest fruits and foliage.

By Barbara Pronin Reprinted with permission from RISMedia.
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TRIVIA CENTER!

What do you know about July 4th.



What day did most signers of the Declaration of Independence actually sign the document? *Aug. 2, 1776.*

- How many people signed the Declaration of Independence on July Fourth? *Two*
- Which three of the first five presidents died on the Fourth of July: *John Adams, Thomas Jefferson and James Monroe.*
- Which president was born on the Fourth of July? *Calvin Coolidge, the 30th president, in 1872.*
- What other countries celebrate the Fourth of July? *Denmark, England, Norway, Portugal and Sweden. Denmark Danes and Norwegians celebrate American Independence Day because thousands emigrated to the U.S. in the early 1900s.*
- How did the Nathan's Fourth of July Hot Dog Contest begin? *It apparently started after a disagreement among four immigrants over who was the most patriotic.*
- John Adams would think the country is celebrating Independence Day on the wrong date: *Adams wrote that July 2nd, the date the Second Continental Congress voted in Philadelphia to declare independence from Britain, not July 4, would be the day patriots celebrated their freedom. "The Second Day of July 1776, will be the most memorable Epoch, in the History of America," Adams wrote on July 3. "It ought to be solemnized with Pomp and Parade, with Shews, Games, Sports, Guns, Bells, Bonfires and Illuminations from one End of this Continent to the other from this Time forward forever more."*
- When did the Fourth of July become a legal federal holiday? *1938*
- Is there something written on the back of the Declaration of Independence? *Yes. It might not be a treasure map as Nicholas Cage's character claims in "National Treasure," but there is apparently a message written upside down at the bottom of the signed document: "Original Declaration of Independence dated 4th July 1776." It's not known who wrote it or when. Since parchment was usually rolled up during the Revolutionary War years, it's thought this memo served as a label.*

By Maria Vultaggio

MAINTAINING YOUR AIR CONDITIONER

It's easy to take your air conditioner for granted...until it stops working on a miserably hot day. Regular maintenance will not only help spot potential problems, but will also increase the life and energy efficiency of your unit.

• Change your air filter regularly. Check your unit's air filter once a month and clean or replace filters as necessary. Keeping the filter clean can lower your air conditioner's energy consumption by 5% to 15%. Ask your service contractor to show you how to do this, if you aren't familiar with the process. Maintaining Your Air Conditioner



What you can do

• Clean up around your air conditioner. Outdoor condenser coils can become dirty and blocked, which makes your unit work harder and increases your cooling bill. Your dryer vents, falling leaves, and lawn mower are all potential sources of dirt and debris. Allow for adequate air flow to your unit by cleaning the area around the condenser coil, removing any debris, and trimming foliage back at least 2 feet.

• Keep your condensation line clear. Condensate lines drain away the moisture your air conditioning unit creates. A plugged condensate drain can cause water damage in the house and affect indoor humidity levels. You can help keep the line clear of mold and mildew by pouring in a small amount of household bleach. Ask your service contractor to show you how.

10 QUICK WAYS TO BOOST YOUR ENERGY LEVEL!

One of the great secrets to boosting your energy is taking action. Just by simply changing something in your life and doing something different you'll increase your energy flow. Action gives you energy!

your desk and keep it organized. When you clear out clutter you are creating space for new things to enter your life and by doing this you'll increase your energy and prosperity.

Sometimes we get bogged down with situations, habits, or people that drain our energy. What can you do? Begin by committing to spend time doing things that support your goals. Surround yourself with people who believe in you, and avoid situations and people who drain you. In addition, here are 10 quick steps you can take today to boost your energy:



4. Eat Healthy Meals and Take Vitamins. Eat a balanced diet and take vitamins with minerals to ensure you're getting all the nutrients your body needs. Also, make sure you're getting enough magnesium (300 milligrams) by eating almonds, cashews, whole grains, bran, and fish - particularly halibut.

5. Turn Off The Negative News. Reduce your daily diet of negative news (TV, newspaper, radio, the Internet), which can cause additional stress and fatigue. Focus your attention on the positive things happening in our world, and in your life.

1. Write Down 10 Things That You Like Doing. You can ramp-up your personal and professional energy level by focusing your attention on what you like doing. Motivation increases energy.

6. Explore Your Creative Side. Do you like to play a musical instrument? Do you like to paint? Is there a hobby you thought you might like to try? Exploring your creative side stimulates your mind and can increase your energy by releasing endorphins (the feel good proteins occurring in the brain).

2. Take A Walk. Taking a 10-minute brisk walk will increase your energy level up to two hours, reported California State University researchers. Experts say increasing your physical activity whether it's swimming, running, dancing, or biking will boost your energy level.

7. Watch A Funny Movie. Think about how you feel after you've watched a really funny movie, or had

3. Organize Your Space. Clear out the clutter in your workspace. Clear off

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a big laugh. Laughing is good for your heart, reduces stress, and increases your energy.

8. **Take A Power Nap.** Taking a short 20-minute nap when you're feeling tired can give your brain a rest and invigorate you...and a short power nap won't keep you up late at night.
9. **Pump Up Your Fluids.** Even a little dehydration can leave you feeling tired and lethargic. Pour yourself a tall, cool glass of water.
10. **Get a Good Night Sleep.** Make sure you get sufficient rest, which, for the average person, is eight hours. Keep your sleep area dark to reduce any disruptions. A good night sleep goes a long way to keeping your energy level high.

BBQ TIPS: GETTING YOUR GRILL READY

Most barbecue manufacturers recommend that your BBQ be cleaned thoroughly at

least once a year. This is on top of your usual cleaning after every use.

- Remove the grates and wash with hot soapy water.
- Wipe down the connections, lines and lid (inside and out) with hot soapy water.
- Remove old or dirty lava rocks and replace with new ones.
- Check the burner. If it looks good visually, light the BBQ and make sure it is supplying an even flame. If not, then replace it. Most burners only last about 2 seasons, depending on how often you use your BBQ.
- While the grates and lava rocks are out, clean up any grease or ash that may have accumulated on the bottom of the barbecue.
- Clean the venturi tubes that supply gas to the burner. Bugs, dirt and grease can clog them over the winter and prevent full gas supply from coming through. Check your owner's manual for the recommended cleaning technique for your grill.

<http://www.kraftrecipes.com/recipes/holidays-and-entertaining/entertaining/summer/bbq-recipes/bbq-tips/main.aspx>

CREAMY PRAWN, GARLIC & LIME PASTA



Treat your friends to this garlic and lime-infused prawn pasta.

Serves: 4

Preparation Time: 15 mins

Cooking Time: 25 mins

Ingredients

- 1 box Knorr Tuna Mate - Lotsa Garlic & Herbs
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- The zest of 1 lime
- 800 ml hot water
- 15 ml oil
- 200 g prawns, shelled and deveined
- 1 red onion, chopped
- 250 ml cold milk
- Black pepper

Instructions

1. Heat oil in a large, non-stick saucepan
2. Add onions and garlic and sauté until soft
3. Stir in sachet of seasoning spice blend, milk and water and mix together well
4. Add prawns, lime zest and the uncooked pasta and bring to the boil, stirring occasionally
5. Reduce the heat and allow to simmer uncovered for 15-20 min until the pasta is cooked
6. Season with black pepper, serve and enjoy

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- deliver exactly the right amount of water at the right time. Efficient irrigation systems:

- Minimize over watering while keeping your lawn and garden beautiful and healthy.
- Adjust watering automatically to account for rain and other conditions.
- Put every drop of water to work by minimizing evaporation and waste.
- Make maintaining your yard easy and convenient.

With just a few simple strategies, it's easy to save water, save money and see better results.

www.irrigation.org

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is up to date to see if they are financially responsible.

Ask for and check their list of references. Ask their references a few clarifying questions, such as: "Would you hire them again?" "Were you satisfied with the quality of work performed?" and "Did they clean up each day?"

If You Enjoy This Newsletter, Why Not Share It With People You Know?

THANK YOU for reading my OC Housing personal newsletter. I wanted to produce a newsletter that has great content and is fun and valuable to you. Your constructive feedback is always welcome.

I love helping people, and I hope you enjoy reading my newsletter each month. If you'd like your friends, co-workers, relatives, business-acquaintances, etc. to receive a FREE subscription, just call or email me or fill out the information request form on my website and I'll make sure they receive a free subscription.

I'll also send them a note with their first issue letting them know that you were the thoughtful person who suggested they receive this newsletter. It's that easy!

Smita Ana Bhula

FirstTeam Realtor
BRE# 01390628



Direct: **949-929-8387**
Fax: **949-837-3481**
anabhula@msn.com

FirstTeam Real Estate
27451 Los Altos, Suite 100
Mission Viejo, CA 92691



SUDOKU

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