

Life & Times

JULY 2019

5 POWERFUL REASONS TO OWN INSTEAD OF RENT

Owning a home has great financial benefits. In a recent research paper, Homeownership and the American Dream, Laurie S. Goodman and Christopher Mayer of the Urban Land Institute explained:

"Homeownership appears to help borrowers accumulate housing and nonhousing wealth in a variety of ways,

with tax advantages, greater financial flexibility due to secured borrowing, built-in 'default' savings with mortgage amortization and nominally fixed payments, and the potential to lower home maintenance costs through sweat equity."



margin!!

3. Owning is usually a form of "forced savings"

Studies have shown that homeowners have a net worth that is 44X greater than that of a renter. As a matter of fact, it was recently estimated that a family buying an average priced home this past January could build more than \$42,000 in family wealth over the next five years.

4. Owning is a hedge against inflation

House values and rents tend to go up at or higher than the rate of inflation. When you own, your home's value will protect you from that inflation.

5. There are still substantial tax benefits to owning

We know that the new tax reform bill puts limits on some deductions on certain homes. However, in the research paper referenced above, the authors explain: "...the mortgage interest deduction is not the main source of these gains; even if it were removed, homeowners would continue to benefit from a lack of taxation of imputed rent and capital gains."

Bottom Line

From a financial standpoint, owning a home has always been and will always be better than renting.

Source: Keeping Current Matters

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Let's breakdown 5 major financial benefits of homeownership:

1. Housing is typically the one leveraged investment available

Homeownership allows households to amplify any appreciation on the value of their homes by a leverage factor. A 20% down payment results in a leverage factor of five, meaning every percentage point rise in the value of your home is a 5% return on your equity. If you put down 10%, your leverage factor is 10.

Example: Let's assume you purchased a \$300,000 home and put down \$60,000 (20%). If the house appreciates by \$30,000, that is only a 10% increase in value but a 50% increase in equity.

2. You're paying for housing whether you own or rent

Some argue that renting eliminates the cost of property taxes and home repairs. Every potential renter must realize that all the expenses the landlord incurs (property taxes, repairs, insurance, etc.) are baked into the rent payment already – along with a profit

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REPAIR WOOD FLOORS & ERASE UGLY SCRATCHES

Repair wood floors and scratches that make rooms look worn out. We'll show you easy ways to put the luster back into your floors.

Camouflage scratches

Take some artistic license to hide minor scratches in wood floors by rubbing on stain-matching crayons and Sharpie pens. Wax sticks, such as Minwax Stain Markers, are great scratch busters because they include stain and urethane, which protects the floor's finish.

Don't be afraid to mix a couple of colors together to get a good match. And don't sweat if the color is a little off. Real hardwoods mix several hues and tones. So long as you cover the contrasting "white" scratches, color imperfections will match perfectly.

Homemade polish

Mix equal parts olive oil and vinegar, which work together to remove dirt, moisturize, and shine wood. Pour a little directly onto the scratch. Let the polish soak in for 24 hours, then wipe off. Repeat until the scratch



disappears.

Spot-sand deep scratches

It takes time to repair wood gouges: Sand, fill, sand again, stain, and seal. Here are some tips to make the job go faster.

- Sand with fine-gauge steel wool or lightweight sandpaper.
- Always sand with the grain.
- Use wood filler, which takes stain better than wood putty.
- Use a plastic putty knife to avoid more scratches.
- Seal the area with polyurethane, or whatever product was used on the floor originally.
- Apply the polyurethane coat with a lambs wool applicator, which avoids air bubbles in the finish.

Fix gaps in floor

Old floorboards can separate over time. Fill the gaps with colored wood putty. Or, if you have some leftover planks, rip a narrow band and glue it into the gap.

Source: Jane Hoback

CARING FOR CRYSTAL AND GLASSWARE

Glassware has been around since 3,500 B.C., captivating the people of ancient Egypt and Rome. Artisans across Europe refined the formula over many generations, but it wasn't until the 17th century that the English added lead oxide to the mix—giving crystal its characteristic sparkle and shine!

In other words, those wine glasses in your cupboard represent thousands of years of innovation... and the following tips can keep them pristine for years to come.

Lemon Peel Shine: When life gives you lemons, save the peels and drop them in the rinse water. The acid cuts through grease and gives it a clear shine.

Avoid Extreme Temperatures: Very cold and very hot water can compromise the underlying structure.

Twist to Dry: To dry a wine glass, wrap the towel gently around it, hold it at the stem, and twist the stem at the base until the towel has absorbed the moisture. Squeezing the top of a delicate glass can break it!

Polishing: Create a thin paste with water and baking soda, then rub the mixture on the glass or crystal in a small circular motion. Rinse thoroughly, and repeat if necessary.

Source: Old Republic Home Protection, Lisa Masterson



AMERICANS HAVE MORE EQUITY, LESS MORTGAGE DEBT

Equity levels double in last 7 years Americans now have nearly as much home equity as they did when levels peaked before the housing crisis, according to a recent study on the state of the nation's housing market from Harvard's Joint Center for Housing Studies.

Aggregate home equity jumped from \$7 trillion in 2011 to \$15.5 trillion in 2018, according to the study, a fact attributable to rising home prices coupled with only modest increases in mortgage debt.

"With this increase, home equity levels are approaching the pre-crisis peak of \$17 trillion while aggregate mortgage debt remains closer to the post-crisis low," the study stated.

In 2016, the median amount of homeowner equity was \$100,000, down from \$121,600 in 2007, the report revealed.

In 2016, 86% of homeowners had at least 20% of their home's value in equity, while 61% had at least

50%.

But while this sizable growth in home equity creates the potential for many to cash out some of their housing wealth, there is little evidence of risky equity extractions, the study stated.

Those who are tapping into their equity tend to be older homeowners with strong credit, the center noted, with the main reason cited as the need to pay down higher-cost debt.

Other top reasons for tapping equity were to finance home repairs and improvements, investing in a business, making a large purchase, or paying for college.

"Although the aggregate volume of cash-out refinances and home equity loans and lines of credit has risen slightly in recent years, withdrawals remain near their 2000 level and well below the peak during the housing boom," the study said.

Source: Jessica Guerin, Housing Wire



TOP 3 VA HOME LOAN TIPS

There are numerous advantages to a VA mortgage. A VA mortgage loan can be guaranteed with no money down, in some cases up to \$484,350 (up to \$552,000 in Sacramento, Placer and El Dorado Counties). There's also no private mortgage insurance requirement with a VA guaranteed loan, which could offer you substantial savings on your monthly payment. You can even use your VA Loan benefit to refinance an existing loan -- even if it is not a VA Loan.

Be sure to ask for information about the interest rate reduction loan. This program adjusts an adjustable-rate mortgage to a fixed-rate loan, which is part of the Streamline Refinancing Program, which allows you to refinance at little or no expense to them.

We've scoured the Internet to find useful tips for our members to help prepare to take advantage of this exclusive benefit. The following is a collection of useful, concise tips regarding the Veterans Administration Home Loan.

Tip #1: Check Your Credit First

Did you know that over 70 percent of all credit reports in the United States contain errors? Your lender will be looking at your credit report and making important decisions based on the information that is contained within -- decisions that could make a big difference in the bottom-line.

Because lenders use complicated scoring formulas to determine how much you can borrow and at what rate it would be a good idea for you to check your credit report for any inaccuracies. Make sure you obtain a report that gives you information from all three major credit bureaus, as each may be different.

What may seem minor to you might not to a lender. Contact the credit bureaus to correct any mistakes. This could result in substantial savings on the cost of your loan.

Tip #2: Get Pre-Approved

Before you start the hunt for a house, the best thing you can do is

to get pre-approved for your VA loan amount. The time you save quite literally will be your own. Once you have determined the loan amount you are approved for, you can start house hunting with confidence. In a tight housing market it will also give you a heads up with the seller, as other potential buyers may not have taken this important step.

Knowing in advance what you're able to afford offers a lot of security. That kind of security goes a long way as you search for the best value for your money. Having a VA mortgage is an excellent benefit, but finding the right home is just as important. With a pre-approval, you avoid wasting time with homes out of your price range or sellers who wonder if you are a serious buyer.

Tip #3: Choose Wisely - Fixed or Adjustable Rate Loan?

Chances are you will be looking for your VA guaranteed loan in the same places people go to get non-VA home loans or conventional loans. It always pays to shop around, and your realtor can likely recommend a trustworthy lender. You can choose to get a fixed rate loan, which you'll negotiate with the lender, but don't discount the possibility of a VA adjustable rate mortgage (ARM).

The interest on an ARM may be adjusted one percent annually, and up to five percent over the duration of the loan period. So should you go with a Fixed rate or adjustable? It really depends on the buyer: In a rising rate environment a fixed rate loan can offer some piece of mind but for those who might not be planning in staying in their home more than a few year, and ARM can offer significant savings now. The best advice is to do your homework, find the most competitive rate and don't take the first offer you get. That is a mistake often made by first time homebuyers who are excited getting into a house. The time you spend now will yield results for years to come.

Source: Military.com



FLAG ETIQUETTE DO'S AND DON'TS

The U.S. Flag Code formalizes and unifies the traditional ways in which we give respect to the flag, also contains specific instructions on how the flag is not to be used.

The following is a list of do's and don'ts associated with Old Glory, the U.S. Flag.

When displaying the flag, DO the following:

- Display the U.S. flag from sunrise to sunset on buildings and stationary flagstaffs in the open. When a patriotic effect is desired the flag may be displayed 24-hours a day if properly illuminated during the hours of darkness.
- When placed on a single staff or lanyard, place the U.S. Flag above all other flags.
- When flags are displayed in a row, the U.S. flag goes to the observer's left. Flags of other nations are flown at same height. State and local flags are traditionally flown lower.
- When used during a marching ceremony or parade with other flags, the U.S. Flag will be to the observer's left.
- On special days, the flag may be flown at half-staff. On Memorial Day it is flown at half-staff until noon and then raised.
- When flown at half-staff, should be first hoisted to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-staff position. The flag should be again raised to the peak before it is lowered for the day. By "half-staff" is meant lowering the flag to one-half the distance between the top and bottom of the staff.
- When the flag is displayed over the middle of the street, it should be suspended vertically with the union (blue field of stars) to the north in an east and west street or to the east in a north and south street.
- When placed on a Podium the flag should be placed on the speaker's right or the staging area. Other flags should be placed to the left.
- When displayed either horizontally or vertically against a wall (or other flat surface), the union (blue field of stars) should be uppermost and to the flag's own right, that is, to the observer's left.
- When displayed in a window it should be displayed in the same way -- with the union or blue field to the left of the observer in the street.
- When the flag is displayed on a car, the staff shall be fixed firmly to the chassis or clamped to the right fender.
- When the flag is used to cover a casket, it should be so placed that the union is at the head and over the left shoulder. The flag should not be lowered into the grave or allowed to touch the ground.

When saluting the flag DO the following:

- All persons present in uniform (military, police, fire, etc.) should render the military salute. Members of the armed forces and veterans who are present but not in uniform may render the military salute.
- All other persons present should face the flag and stand at attention with their right hand over the heart, or if applicable, remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart.

When stowing or disposing of the flag, DO the following:

- Fold in the traditional triangle for stowage, never wadded up.
- The VFW offers the following instructions for properly disposing of a worn flag:
 - * The flag should be folded in its customary manner.
 - * It is important that the fire be fairly large & sufficient intensity to ensure complete burning of the flag.
 - * Place the flag on the fire.
 - * The individual(s) can come to attention, salute the flag, recite the Pledge of Allegiance and have a brief period of silent reflection.
 - * After the flag is completely consumed, the fire should then be safely extinguished and the ashes buried.
 - * Please make sure you are conforming to local/state fire codes or ordinances.

Quick list of Flag Etiquette Don'ts:

- Don't dip the U.S. Flag for any person, flag, or vessel.
- Don't let the flag touch the ground.
- Don't fly flag upside down unless it's an emergency.
- Don't carry the flag flat, or carry things in it.
- Don't use the flag as clothing.
- Don't store the flag where it can get dirty.
- Don't use it as a cover.
- Don't fasten it or tie it back. Always allow it to fall free.
- Don't draw on, or otherwise mark the flag.
- Don't use the flag for decoration. Use bunting with the blue on top, then white, then red.

Source: Military.com



Clean with Lemons

Sanitize Your Garbage Disposal

Cut a lemon in quarters. With the water on and garbage disposal running, add the pieces, one at a time, to the disposal.

The fruit will help clean and deodorize your drain.

Source: auntfannies.com



Today's Laugh

The cops came to
my house and asked
where I was
between 5 and 6...

Apparently
"Kindergarten" was
NOT the right
answer!

Blueberry Pizza

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 c. flour
- 2 sticks margarine
- 2 tbsp. sugar
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese
- 1 c. sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 pkg. Dream Whip®
- 1 can blueberry pie mix



DIRECTIONS:

1. Blend the flour, oleo, sugar and salt. Press with fingers on a cookie sheet to 1/4 inch thick. Bake 15 min at 350° F. Cool.
2. Soften cream cheese and add 1 c. sugar and vanilla. Make Dream Whip according to instructions and add to cheese mixture and spread on cooled crust.
3. Let stand in refrigerator.
4. Put blueberry pie mix on top just before serving.

Source: CountryDoor, Elaine B., Pinellas Park, FL

Egg-streme Bugs

NEEDED

- 1 Egg Carton
- Paintbrushes
- Glue
- Pipe Cleaners
- Markers
- Tempera Paint (any colors)
- Googly Eyes
- Scissors
- Craft Needle or Push Pin
- Tissue Paper (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Bugs can be made from one egg cup or from several cups cut in a row. Cut off the top of the carton, leaving just the bottom. Separate individual egg cups or cut two or three egg cups in a row.
2. Paint the outside of the cups with solid colors. Paint a few individual egg cups red to create single lady bugs, paint two cups black to create beetles, or paint three cups green to make a caterpillar. Once the paint has dried, use markers to add details (such as dots and lines).
3. Glue two googly eyes to the front of an egg cup for the head, and cut different lengths of pipe cleaners to use for legs or antennae. Use a craft needle or a pushpin to punch holes in the cups where you want to insert the pipe cleaners. Thread the pipe cleaners and secure the ends by bending or twisting them inside the cup.
4. Optional-You can also cut wings out of tissue paper and hot-glue them to the finished bugs.

Source: Sarah Lipoff from Parents Magazine



THE FUTURE-PROOF KITCHEN

The median price of remodeling a kitchen is **\$60,000**. So how do you make sure the changes you make won't look dated in a few years? Here are some ideas to future-proof your kitchen.

STICK WITH WHITE

White has remained the top choice of the National Kitchen and Bath Association's annual survey for years. It's a bright color that reflects light and makes even small kitchens feel large.

CHOOSE SHAKER-STYLE CABINETS

These frame-and-panel design cabinets have a look that stands the test of time.

CHOOSE SUBWAY TILE BACKSPASHES

A neutral or white-colored subway tile used as a backsplash in the kitchen not only looks classy but also guards against moisture damage and is easy to clean.

PUT IN HARDWOOD FLOORING

Overall, **80%** of buyers say hardwood flooring is "somewhat" or "very important." Hardwood flooring can pair well with any kitchen style, from traditional to the most contemporary styles.

GO WITH CARRARA MARBLE COUNTERTOPS

This classic surface material has lacy graining and subtle white colors that pair well with any kitchen. It's also readily available and less expensive than higher-end alternatives, like quartz.

Source: HouseLogic and REALTOR® Magazine



CALIFORNIA HOME SALES FACTS: MAY 2019

| State/Region/County | May 2019 | April 2019 | MTM% Chg |
|----------------------|-----------|------------|----------|
| Calif. State Average | \$611,190 | \$602,920 | +1.4% |
| Calif. Condo Average | \$470,000 | \$470,000 | +0.0% |
| Sacramento | \$385,000 | \$385,000 | +0.0% |
| Placer | \$514,900 | \$498,500 | +3.3% |
| El Dorado | \$521,380 | \$524,000 | -0.5% |
| Yolo | \$469,500 | \$419,330 | +12.0% |
| Stanislaus | \$335,000 | \$319,500 | +4.9% |
| San Joaquin | \$380,000 | \$375,000 | +1.3% |
| Nevada | \$420,000 | \$397,000 | +5.8% |

| State/Region/County | May 2019 | April 2019 | MTM% Chg |
|---------------------|-------------|-------------|----------|
| Solano | \$446,000 | \$435,000 | +2.5% |
| Contra-Costa | \$700,355 | \$679,000 | +3.1% |
| San Francisco | \$1,697,500 | \$1,632,500 | +4.0% |
| Fresno | \$284,900 | \$271,250 | +5.0% |
| Santa Clara | \$1,335,000 | \$1,315,000 | +1.5% |
| Orange County | \$845,000 | \$825,000 | +2.4% |
| Los Angeles | \$539,480 | \$544,170 | -0.9% |
| San Diego | \$650,000 | \$649,000 | +0.2% |
| Butte | \$359,000 | \$360,000 | -0.3% |
| Yuba | \$311,000 | \$268,000 | +16.0% |

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FEATURED HOME FOR SALE

2174 Goodstone Way, Roseville, CA

Bedrooms: 3-4
 # Baths: 3
 Sq Ft: 2436
 MLS #19046150
 PRICE \$ 529,900

PRICE \$ 529,900



Beautiful and spacious OWNED SOLAR home on a pool-sized lot in West Roseville. Open concept with lots of room for entertaining. The chef's kitchen features granite counters, Whirlpool stainless steel gold-series appliances, 5 burner gas stove, and large walk-in pantry closet. The large master bedroom has a big walk-in closet and ensuite which includes dual sinks, a large soaking tub and separate shower. The roomy open loft is a builder option for a 4th bedroom. So many amazing features to include crown molding, oversized garage, dog run and large private backyard with stained concrete patio. The list of extras just go on and on. This quiet, family-friendly neighborhood is just 300 ft from Festersen Park that has a nice kids playground, soccer fields, volleyball sand courts, and bocce ball.

www.givingback4homes.com/featured-homes.html

JULY

WISHING A HAPPY BIRTHDAY & HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO THE FOLLOWING:



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 DEBI E.
 LARAE R.
 KRISTY N.
 MIKE S.

ZACK P.
 BECKY & JOE H.
 CLAYTON & MONICA N.
 RICK & MELANIE M.
 JASON & OLIVIA T.

STEVIE V.
 RONNIE C.
 LUIS A.
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 KATHY S.



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3rd Prize \$10 Amazon Gift Card

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2nd Prize \$25 Walmart Gift Card-Maria J.
3rd Prize \$10 Starbucks Gift Card-Tammy G.

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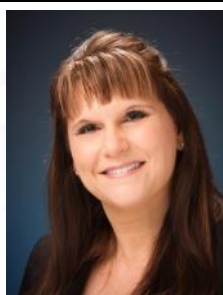
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