

Get the latest in news, tips, & inspiration delivered right to your inbox.

Subscribe

# Expert advice from Bob Vila, the most trusted name in home improvement, home remodeling, home repair, and DIY. Tried, True, Trustworthy Home Advice

[Newsletters](#)

[Find a Pro](#)

[Bob Vila Academy](#)

- [How-To Center](#)
- [Get Ideas](#)
- [Find Info](#)
- [Discuss It](#)
- [Watch Bob Vila TV](#)

- [Buying & Selling Homes](#) >
- [How To: \(Really\) Win a Bidding War](#)

## How To: (Really) Win a Bidding War

[REAL ESTATE](#)

By [Joanne Y. Cleaver](#)[BUYING](#)



**MONEY MATTERS MONDAY**

Real Estate and Home Finance

[More](#) ▶

## Related



[The Cheapest Ways to Boost Your Home's Value](#)



[9 Age-Old Real Estate Tips to Ignore Completely](#)



[Worth It: 8 Renovations That Pay](#)

It's a realty agent's dream: bidding wars are back! At least, that's the hyperventilation du jour. From [Boston](#) to [Los Angeles](#), the news from the front lines is that house-hungry buyers can't wait to get their hands on the few move-in-ready properties popping onto the market. While obsolete, dingy properties linger on and on, houses that are [well priced and in great shape](#) supposedly are sparking frenzied price competition.

Is this true or just the result of fevered agent PR?



Photo: shutterstock.com

Probably, it's both. Bidding wars do seem to be occurring a bit more often (though there is only anecdotal evidence, so it's impossible to know for sure). But don't confuse a small wave of bidding wars with a shift in the deep currents of this no-growth real estate market. With over 3 million properties still in the foreclosure pipeline, there will be drag on prices for years to come.

Meanwhile, don't let a bidding war distract you from getting a fair price on a good house, one that includes the amenities most important to you. Here's how to stay above the fray:

- Top off your down payment. You can't negotiate effectively for any house if you can't slap down a contract for the agreed price. Nail down your financing early, putting down as much as you can to show your lender you are serious.
- Track the property value trends for the neighborhoods you are considering. Don't rely on agents' data, which may not include foreclosures. Instead, use the [House Price Index](#) at the Federal Housing Finance Agency. This data tracks long-term trends and is widely considered one of the most reliable measures of home values.
- Build a case for the likely market value of the house. Does the new bathroom justify an asking price \$40,000 above similar neighboring houses, when it probably cost about \$17,000?
- Know your limits and stick with them. Agents love the 'bidding war' news story, because it stirs up the fear of losing a competition. Detach yourself from the hysteries and recall those millions of houses either in foreclosure or being held from the market while owners wait for prices to firm up. Currently, [11% of all homeowners would like to sell](#)—if the market was better. Chances are good that an equally good house will come on the market soon.

For more on buying and selling homes, consider:

[Fee for All: How to Keep More Equity](#)

[Senior Moment: Boost Home Value by Enabling Independent Living](#)

[No Vacation: Tax Rules Tighten on Getaway Homes](#)

## Related Products

[Prev](#) [Next](#)



[Black & Decker  
LDX120C 20-Volt MAX  
Lithium-Ion Co...](#)

[\\$44.99](#)  
[BUY](#)



[Gorilla Carts Heavy-Duty  
Poly Yard Dump Cart  
with...](#)

[\\$134.00](#)  
[BUY](#)



[Vornado VFAN Vintage  
Whole Room Air  
Circulator, G...](#)

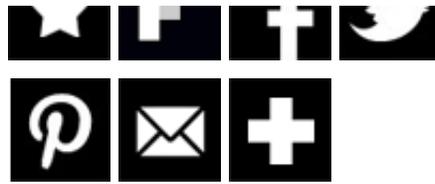
[\\$99.99](#)  
[BUY](#)



[GreenWorks 25022 12  
Amp Corded 20-Inch  
Lawn Mower](#)

[\\$164.48](#)  
[BUY](#)





## WHAT DO YOU NEED HELP WITH?

SEE MORE IN  
Buying & Selling Homes



[Find the Right Realtor: 9 Tips from Happy Hom...](#)

It's quite the challenge to find the qualified candidate to lead you into the world of real estate, no matter whether you're lo...





### [The Cheapest Ways to Boost Your Home's Value](#)

Let's face it: For homeowners in most cities, the real estate boom is far, far behind us. Most folks need to squeeze every last...



### [9 Age-Old Real Estate Tips to Ignore Completely](#)

Not all advice is good advice. When it comes to the real estate market, friends and family may offer their unsolicited opinions...



### [Worth It: 8 Renovations That Pay You Back](#)

Conventional wisdom holds that upgrades and improvements will enhance a home's value. But some improvements are better —

and more...

## Popular Right Now

-  [15 Old House Features We Were Wrong to Abandon](#)
-  [13 Home Improvements That Are Illegal to DIY](#)
-  [20 Sneaky Storage Ideas](#)
-  [20 Insanely Easy 60-Minute Home Improvements](#)

## YOU MIGHT ALSO LIKE:

The Cheapest Ways to Boost Your Home's Value



1 of 14  
| Photo: [shutterstock.com](https://www.shutterstock.com)

**Deep Clean**

## Bob Vila 2X PER Week

The latest in news, tips, & inspiration delivered right to your inbox.

Enter your email address

SUBSCRIBE TO NEWSLETTER

**Thanks!**

**Don't Miss**

Comments for this thread are now closed.



1 Comment **Bob Vila**

Login ▾

Recommend Share

Sort by Best ▾



Groperty · 4 years ago

Large down payments are definitely favoured by financial institutions and benefit your pocket in the long-run. There is a clear bidding war in contemporary real estate purchasing, be sure to know what tactics you will be using during the process.

3 ^ | v · Share ›

#### ALSO ON BOB VILA

### How To: Install a Toilet Seat

1 comment • 2 months ago

**CrapCon** — 1. BV site, you should have contact info. 2. Why close comments on How To articles? 3. When you scrape off excess ...

### All You Need to Know About... Painting Appliances

1 comment • 2 months ago

**Same Day Pros** — Was just wondering about the part... how will paint stick to the glossy surface? This detail has always stopped me ...

### How To: Make Your Own Carpet Cleaner

1 comment • 2 months ago

**Kevin Conrad** — I am a Master Cleaner and Senior Inspector in the cleaning industry and i would never recommend any one to use ...

### Quick Fixes for Drafty Windows

2 comments • 2 months ago

**Anita Alvarez** — Drafty windows aren't the only energy efficiency problem. Don't forget about insulation. A good thermal barrier in the walls ...

Subscribe

Add Disqus to your site [Add Disqus](#) [Add](#)

Privacy

## Explore

- [How To Center](#)
- [Get Ideas](#)
- [Find Info](#)
- [Discuss It](#)
- [Watch Bob Vila TV](#)
- [Shop](#)
- [Mobile](#)

## Connect

- [Bob Vila - Flipboard](#)
- [Bob Vila on Facebook](#)
- [Bob Vila on Twitter](#)
- [Bob Vila on Pinterest](#)
- [Subscribe](#)

**Sign Up Now to Receive Bob Vila's Newsletter**

**SIGN UP ▶**

## Get Help from Bob Vila

- Give-Aways & Offers
- Monthly Must Do's
  
- DIY Project Ideas
- Step-by-Step Guides
- Inspirational Photo Galleries

## Thanks!