



Cathi Pospisil

Broker Associate

HomeSmart Fine Homes and Land

140 N Montezuma St

Ste 201

Prescott, AZ 86301

Phone: 928-273-0538

cathi@myrebroker.com

www.myrebroker.com

Shop Smart and Take Notes: Red Flags For New Home Buyers

by homewarranty.com

We like to think that home sellers are as forthcoming as we might be when disclosing the whole truth about a property's shortfalls. Consider these red flags that may mean trouble down the road for new home buyers. They are easy to spot and may help you narrow down your choices.

1. The Neighbors Are Moving Out: Make sure several nearby homes are not up for sale. Neighbors leaving the same area in large numbers may indicate a rising crime rate, a proposed development nearby, or other factors you are not aware of. Do your research.

2. Foundation Problems: Cracks and bulges in the foundation that are larger than 1/2 inch may indicate a structural problem, and repairing the structure can be pricey. Also, keep an eye out for recently patched large cracks. Hairline cracks are normal and occur naturally over time.

3. Locked Rooms: Nothing screams "Don't look!" like a locked door. Ask about any rooms that are made "off limits" by the homeowner, and make sure you arrange to tour again later.

4. Old or Faulty Wiring: Check light switches and circuits to know they work in the house. Beware of flickering lights, warm face plates, or outlets. Wiring problems can be a complicated and costly repair to make as you first move in, and electricity is something you don't want to wait on.

5. Windows or Doors That Won't Close: Windows and doors that won't close may be an indication of a shifting frame.

6. Weird Odors or Strong Air Fresheners: If the strong scent of air fresheners hits you

upon entering a home, consider what the potential seller is trying to hide. Some odors are caused by mold and mildew, pet urine, or old carpeting. The same goes for unexplained odors outside of the home.

7. Current Insect Infestation: Be on the lookout for signs of pest infestation, especially termites. According to BobVila.com, the telltale signs include "small piles of tiny brown droppings on a floor near a wall; a hollow sound when you knock on a wood surface and the presence of mud tubes on a foundation. Termites are subterranean, so they construct tiny tunnels of mud along the foundation and walls."

8. Water Stains: Water can rot wood over time, so water stains on the ceiling may indicate a larger problem. They may be evidence of a roof leak, or plumbing problem, which could mean costly repairs.

9. Saggy Ceilings: Even if the ceiling sag is slight, this is a red flag. Sagging ceilings indicate serious problems, such as structural movement, roof leaks, or termites – all of which can mean costly repairs.

10. Sloping Floors: Floors that noticeably slope can be an indication of several expensive issues. These include rotted support beams, broken joists, or a foundation problem.

11. Curling or Missing Shingles: Replacing a roof is another costly endeavor, so keep your eyes out for curling or missing shingles and exposed nail heads. These all indicate an aging roof that can cost tens of thousands to replace.

12. Aging HVAC Unit: The average lifespan of an AC is around 10-12 years. If the home you're touring has an old HVAC unit, you will more than likely be running it longer due to its inefficiency or soon be replacing it. Both are costly options.

August Calendar

August 7 - Purple Heart Day

August 7 - National Mustard Day

August 26 - National Dog Day

August is National Back to School Month

Homeowner Tip:



Time to Touch Up Exterior Paint

Take a walk around your house this month and look for chipped, blistering, cracking, and peeling paint on your home's exterior walls and trim. Touch up where needed.

This might mean scraping, sanding, priming, and even patching before you paint. Keeping your home's exterior paint intact will serve as a protectant all year long against water damage. Let's face it, it also improves your home's curb appeal.

August 7 is Purple Heart Day - Here are 8 Things to Know

1. Established in 1782, the **Purple Heart** is the oldest Military Award that is still presented to American Service Members.

2. The **Purple Heart** is presented to all ranks and was one of the first awards in military history to be given to lower-ranking and enlisted soldiers.

3. In 1942, President Roosevelt and the War Department expanded eligibility to include all military branches of service and the authorization for the **Purple Heart** to be awarded posthumously.

4. The first **Purple Heart** was awarded during the Revolutionary War.

5. Some famous **Purple Heart** recipients include James Arness, Lee Marvin, James Garner, Charles Bronson, Rod Serling, Kurt Vonnegut, Oliver Stone, and Pat Tillman.

6. The first woman to receive the **Purple Heart** was Army Lt. Annie Fox, for demonstrating bravery during the war in 1942.

7. John F. Kennedy is the only U.S. President awarded the **Purple Heart**.

8. Curry Haynes, who served in the Army during the Vietnam War, earned 10 **Purple Hearts** during his military career.



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Spicy Honey Mustard Chicken

August 7 is National Mustard Day, which makes it a perfect day to spice up your dinner with one of the world's oldest condiments.

Ingredients

- 1/4 cup of honey
- 1/3 cup of spicy brown mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon cayenne

- 1/2 teaspoon cumin
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken breast
- Chopped Italian parsley (optional)

Directions

Prepare the marinade by combining all the ingredients except for the chicken in a small mixing bowl.

Cover the chicken breasts with the marinade then let sit in the fridge for 1 to 2 hours or overnight.

Cook on medium-high in 1 tablespoon olive oil, flipping occasionally, until cooked through and golden brown on all sides. Garnish with parsley, if desired.



Photo & recipe courtesy of: TasteMade.com