

Study: Your Listing's Words Carry Weight

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A new study finds that properties that contain certain words in their listing comments tend to sell for higher prices.

Watch Your Words: [Up Your Blurb Appeal](#)

CoreLogic researchers analyzed more than 1 million single-family transactions that closed in the first half of 2017. Every property analyzed had public remarks and comments from which researchers extracted word pairs. Prices can vary geographically on how much weight certain words may have.

But one house feature that stood out was “pane windows,” which could represent dual-pane windows or energy-efficient windows, CoreLogic researchers found. The use of “pane windows” in listing comments tended to equate to higher home prices, researchers found. Other words that tended to carry the most weight are “new construction,” “remodeled kitchen,” and several paint references, whether for the interior or exterior.

The following words were found to have a positive impact on the closing price, according to CoreLogic researchers:

- **Pane windows**
- **New construction**
- **Remodeled kitchen**
- **Single-level**
- **Outdoor living**
- **Exterior paint**
- **Fully fenced**

- RV parking
- In the kitchen: granite, range, oven
- Updated kitchen
- Quiet street
- Interior paint
- Light, bright
- Hardwood floors
- Award-winning
- Gas fireplace
- Natural light
- Fruit trees
- New paint
- Stainless appliances
- Gas range
- Front yard
- Walking distance (note: the appropriateness of this term is [up for debate](#))
- Fireplace
- Fully fenced
- Large backyard
- Easy access
- Vaulted ceilings
- Perfect for entertaining

“Anyone selling a home that has any of the features listed ... should make sure to ask their listing agent to include these words and phrases in the public comments,” CoreLogic notes at its Insights blog. “

Source: “[Public Listing Comments Can Have an Impact on Closing Price,](#)”
CoreLogic Insights Blog (Oct. 13, 2017)

5 Housing Trends to Watch for 2018

DAILY REAL ESTATE NEWS | WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2017

Home shoppers may have it easier in 2018. Inventory constraints of for-sale homes and rising home prices may finally start to ease next year, according to realtor.com®'s 2018 National Housing Forecast.

“Next year will set the stage for a significant inflection point in the housing shortage,” says Javier Vivas, director of economic research for realtor.com®. “Inventory increases will be felt in higher priced segments after spring home buying season, which we expect to take hold and begin to provide relief for buyers and drive sales growth in 2019 and beyond.”

But the big wild card for 2018 will be any impact from the proposed tax reform legislation, which is currently being debated by Congress, realtor.com® adds.

Realtor.com® Forecast for Key Housing Indicators

Housing Indicator	Realtor.com® 2018 Forecast
Home price appreciation	3.2% increase, enabling a sales pickup
Mortgage rate	Average 4.6% throughout the year and reach 5.0% (30 year fixed) by the end
Existing home sales	2.5% growth, low inventory trend starts to reverse
Housing starts	3% growth in home starts; 7% growth in single family home starts
New home sales	Increase 7%
Home ownership rate	Stabilize at 63.9% after bottom in Q2-2016

Here's a closer look at realtor.com®'s five housing prediction trends for 2018:

1. Inventory to start increasing: Realtor.com® projects positive year-over-year inventory growth by the fall of 2018—which will be the first time since 2015. “Inventory declines are expected to decelerate slowly

throughout the year, reaching a 4 percent year-over-year decline in March before increasing in early fall, after the peak home-buying months,” realtor.com® notes in its report. The cities expected to see inventory levels recover first are Boston; Detroit; Kansas City, Mo.; Nashville; and Philadelphia. The majority of this growth will be in the mid- to upper-tier price points (which includes homes priced above \$350,000). On the other hand, recovery in the starter home market likely will linger since levels are “significantly depleted by first time buyers,” realtor.com® notes.

2. Price appreciation to slow: Home buyers likely will see home prices moderate in the new year. Realtor.com® forecasts home prices to slow to a 3.2 percent growth year over year nationwide. For comparison, home prices in 2017 posted a 5.5 percent increase. The majority of the slowing price appreciation will be centered in the higher-priced ranges as more inventory becomes available. Entry-level homes, on the other hand, likely will continue to see price gains due to a larger potential buyer pool as well as a more limited number of homes available for sale in this price range.

3. Millennials to gain market share: Finally, the long-held predictions may hold true. Millennials may reach 43 percent of home buyers taking out a mortgage by the end of 2018, up from an estimated 40 percent in 2017, realtor.com® projects. The largest cohort of millennials are expected to turn 30 in 2020. "Millennials are a driving force in today's housing market," Vivas says. "They already dominate lower price home mortgage and are getting close to overtaking older generations for mid- and upper-tier mortgages. While financially secure in general, their debt to income ratios have started to increase as they compete for higher priced homes."

4. The South to lead in sales growth: Realtor.com® forecasts that Southern cities will top national averages in home sales growth in 2018. Markets like Tulsa, Okla.; Little Rock, Ark.; Dallas; and Charlotte, N.C., are expected to be the highest performers. Sales in these markets are

predicted to increase by 6 percent or more. Nationally, sales growths are predicted to grow by 2.5 percent. “The majority of this growth can be attributed to healthy building levels combating the housing shortage,” realtor.com® notes in its report. “With inventory growth just around the corner, these areas are primed for sales gains in years to come.”

5. Tax reform wild card: Tax reform could dampen 2018 sales and price forecasts, realtor.com® reports. The [U.S. House has passed a tax bill](#), and the Senate likely will vote on one soon. “While the ultimate impact of tax reform will depend on the details of the plan that is finally adopted, both versions include provisions that are likely to decrease incentives for mobility and reduce ownership tax benefits,” realtor.com® reports. “On the flip side, some taxpayers, including renters, are likely to see tax cuts. While more disposable income for buyers is positive for housing, the loss of tax benefits for owners could lead to fewer sales and impact prices negatively over time with the largest impact on markets with higher prices and incomes.” Read more: [Tax Reform Proposals Threaten Homeowners](#) and [REALTORS® Square Up After House Passes Tax Bill](#)

Source: [realtor.com®](#)

How to Choose the Right Stain for Hardwood Floors

Posted in [Remodeling Adviser](#), by [Blog Contributor](#) on October 23, 2017

By Glenn Griffin, guest contributor

One of the most commonly asked questions people have when restoring their hardwood floors is: “Should I stain my floor?” That question is closely followed by: “What color stain should I choose?”



Photo by Delaware Valley Hardwoods

Staining your floors is a major decision for three reasons: 1) Your choice will have a substantial impact on the overall look of your home, 2) You will be living with your color choice for a very long time and 3) Once the stain is applied, it's expensive and time consuming to redo it.

On top of that, there is literally hundreds of colors, shades, and combinations to choose between. Choices, choices, choices!

That's a lot of pressure.

Thankfully, choosing the perfect color for your wood floors isn't too difficult. You just need to know the right questions to ask. Below we'll go through some questions that will get you on the right track of deciding whether you should even stain in the first place, and if so, how to choose the perfect stain color for your home.



Photo by Advantage Hardwood Refinishing

STEP 1: Can I and Should I Stain My Floors?

You have a choice of staining your floors or keeping them in their natural state. Some floors are perfect for staining, others not so much. Which way you decide will depend on your answers to the following 2 questions...

What type of wood floors do I have?

If you are fortunate enough to have an exotic or unique wood floor such as mahogany, cherry, walnut, or maple then most likely they shouldn't be stained.

First, these types of wood already look beautiful in their natural state. Often, when homeowners stain their floors, they are trying to imitate these types of wood floors. Second, many of these exotic floors also don't take being stained well due to the oils or tight grain in the wood. There's a high chance you won't be happy with the result. It's much better to keep them unstained and enjoy their natural beauty.



Photo by Tadas Wood Flooring Inc

On the other hand, you may have a more common type of hardwood floor like red or white oak.

Over time, some finishes — especially oil based finishes — turn oak a yellowish-orange look that often gets associated with your grandparent’s floors from the 1960s. Other newer water based finishes can have a washed-out look if applied to a natural unstained oak floor. If this is not the look you’re going for, or you want to completely transform how they look, then staining is a great option.

Luckily, oak floors are perfect candidates for being stained and take stain application extremely well when the proper techniques are used.

Is there any water or pet damage?

If you have previous damage on your floors due to an overzealous pot plant waterer or the last owner’s bladder-challenged pets, then you have a couple of options: 1) Replace the damaged areas, or 2) Stain the floors a darker color than the damage so it’s not as obvious.

If the water damage covers a large portion of the floor but it's only surface damage and can be muted with a darker color, then staining is well worth considering. It will save you a lot of money compared to the alternative of replacing the floors.



Photo by Advantage Hardwood Refinishing

STEP 2: What Color Should I Choose?

Because there are so many color choices, this step can get a bit overwhelming. There are many different suppliers and they all have different shades and colors. Some manufacturers, especially with hardwax oils, have pre-treatment colors that can be layered on top of stain, or under it, to provide an unlimited color palette. You will want to get some color samples from your flooring professional to see the range you can choose from.

Our suggestion in choosing a color would be to first ask yourself...

What decorating style do you have or want?

Having a specific taste in furniture or an interior design style in mind will be a huge help in deciding on a stain color. Will you be buying new furniture? If so,

you will have some more leeway. If you are keeping your existing furniture, then you will need to find a color that works with what you have.

If you love rustic farmhouse style interiors, you wouldn't stain your floors dark ebony or grey. It would completely clash with your rustic furniture. Mid-toned brown shades would be a better fit.

For a modern, bold sleek contemporary design style, rich red hues would be very out of place. Ebony, white, or one of the various grey shades would be much better suited.



Photo by Tadas Wood Flooring Inc

The key is to find a color that highlights and sets the groundwork for the interior decorating style you're aiming for. Remember, your floors make up a large area of your home and will have a significant impact on the overall design. You want something that not only grounds your room, but also blends your decorating style cohesively together.

Because many of us find it difficult to visualize these images in our heads, a great idea is to grab some home decorating, architecture, and interior design magazines for inspiration. There are lots of online resources for photos too, like Pinterest and Houzz.

Flip through them and find all the photos with your ideal interior design style. What have others, especially professional designers, done in similar situations to what you envision? What catches your eye? What can you see yourself living with long-term? Do you like the light, airy look and feel more drawn to a lighter colored shade? Or do you prefer the deep, bold look of a darker floor? Maybe something in-between?

When you find a color you love, save the photo and show it to your wood floor professional. They'll be able to help you find out how to replicate it.

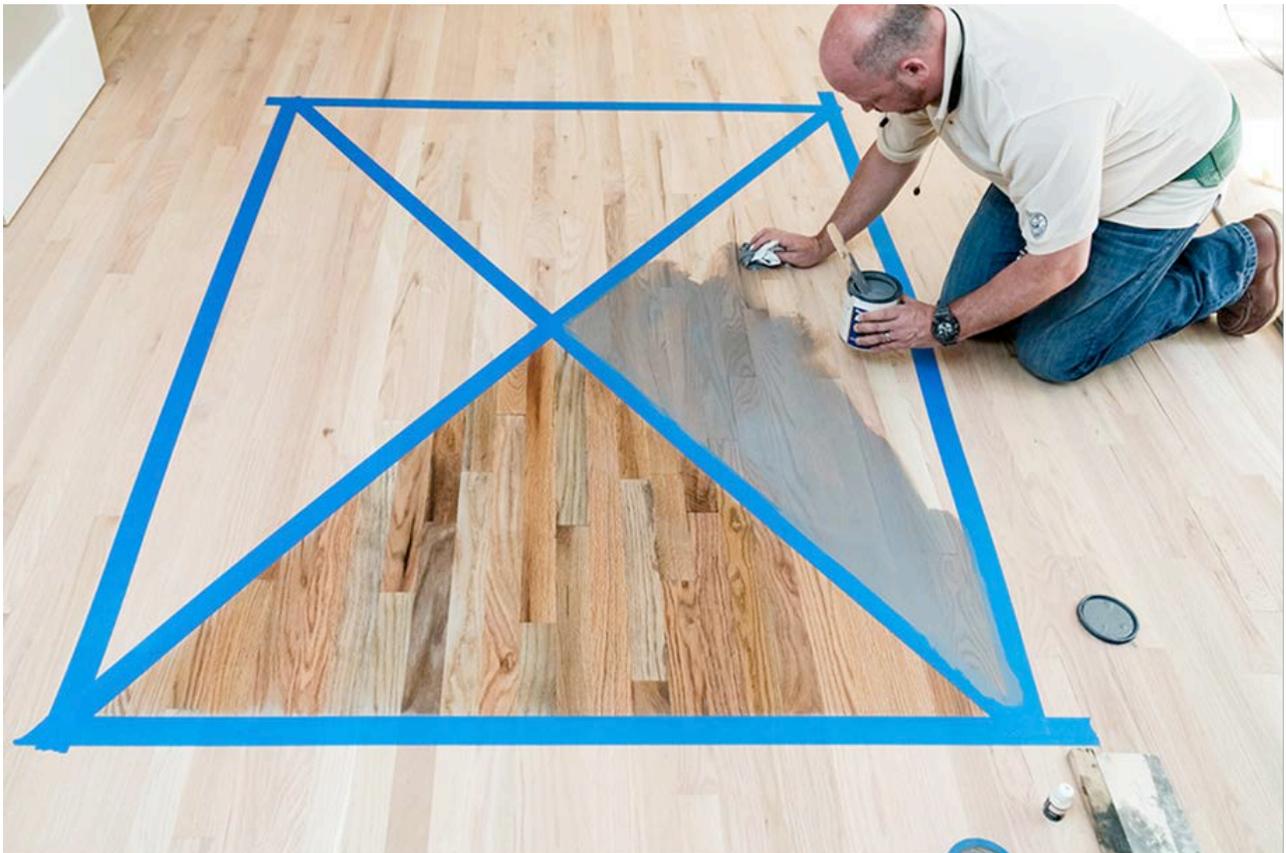


Photo by Delaware Valley Hardwoods

What if I can't decide between 2 or 3 colors?

If you've narrowed your choices down to 2 or 3 colors then you're well on your way to getting the perfect stain for your hardwood floors.

The next step is to have your floor professional provide some larger samples. He'll be able to offer two choices: either put the stain samples directly on your floor (after sanding a section), or make you some large portable sample panels.



Photo by Tadas Wood Flooring Inc

The benefit of putting stain samples directly on your floor is that you can see exactly how the final color will look.

The beauty of sample panels also is you can move them around the house and see what the color looks like in various areas of your home, around your furniture, against the kitchen cabinets, etc. Try to get your floor professional to coat them with the same finish system you will use so that the color isn't distorted.

With either type of sample, you will be able to observe what they look like during various times of the day and in different lighting conditions.

Once you live with your samples for a few days, you'll know exactly what color will be perfect for your home.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Glenn Griffin helps service based businesses attract and convert high quality leads with content and marketing. As an expert in hardwood flooring, he writes content for various flooring websites including [Tadas Wood Flooring](#), [Advantage Hardwood Refinishing](#) and [Delaware Valley Hardwoods](#) You can see their work in the photos above.