



LEIGHTONS
ESTATE AGENCY

A guide to selling your home in **autumn**

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Welcome,

My name is Michael Leighton, and I'm the founder and Managing Director here at Leightons Estate Agency.

Autumn can be a very good time to sell a home. The summer holidays are behind us, routines return to normal and buyers who may have put their plans on hold often come back to the market with renewed focus.

But selling successfully at this time of year isn't simply about putting a property on Rightmove and hoping the season does the work. Shorter days, changing weather and increased competition can all affect how a home is presented and how buyers respond to it. Good photography, sensible pricing and a well planned marketing strategy become particularly important.

For homeowners who have already been on the market through the summer, autumn is also a natural time to review how things are going. An unsold property doesn't necessarily mean something is wrong, but it is worth looking objectively at the level of interest, viewing feedback, price, presentation and how the property compares with others buyers can choose from.

Over the following pages, we'll share some practical advice for making the most of an autumn sale, what to consider if your property is already on the market, and some useful questions to ask any estate agent you are thinking of instructing. I hope you find the guide useful.

If you would like to talk through your own plans, please feel free to get in touch.



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*Disclaimer: The information in this guide does not constitute legal or financial advice.

Eight practical tips for selling in autumn

September to December is a time when the staging and presentation of a property can make a huge difference. Autumn isn't blessed with the freshness of spring or the warmth and light of summer, but don't let that stop you from showcasing your home to attract motivated buyers.

1. First impressions count

Autumn weather can quickly make the outside of a property look untidy. Clear fallen leaves, clean the windows and sills, tidy paths and driveways and make sure the front door and entrance look their best

2. Keep the entrance clear

The wetter weather in the autumn months can mean our hallways and entrance areas of our homes become cluttered with wellies, boots, jackets and umbrellas. If space allows, keep these out of sight or at least tidy.

3. Warmth

A warm home immediately feels more welcoming in colder weather. Aim for a comfortable temperature for viewings, without making the property feel overly warm.

4. Lighting

With natural light in shrinking supply during autumn, think about adding a couple of table lamps and brighter bulbs.



Eight practical tips for selling in autumn (continued)

5. Condensation

Colder weather can make condensation more noticeable. Ventilate the property regularly and avoid drying washing over radiators immediately before a viewing. It will help the property feel fresher and prevent moisture becoming a distraction.

7. Make the most of daylight

Where possible, arrange viewings while there is still natural light, particularly if the garden, outlook or views are important selling points. A good agent should also be flexible enough to accommodate buyers who need evening or weekend appointments

6. Make it feel comfortable, not staged

There is no need to completely restyle a home for autumn. Simple things such as good lighting, comfortable room temperatures and keeping rooms tidy will make far more difference than trying to create an artificial seasonal look.

8. Make sure the marketing reflects the season

If a property has already been on the market for several months, autumn is a good opportunity to review how it is being presented. Photography, the main image, description, asking price and overall marketing strategy should all be reconsidered if they are not generating the right response.



Four questions to ask an estate agent

The best agents realise selling a home in the different seasons of the year presents both challenges and opportunities.

Selling in autumn and winter often requires a focus on the home's interior comfort. In spring and summer, it's beneficial to showcase outdoor areas and a sense of light and space.

Below are four questions to ask any agent you're considering instructing to sell your home in autumn.

What do I get for the commission fee you have quoted?

The cheapest fee does not necessarily represent the best value. Ask exactly what is included, who will conduct viewings, how your property will be marketed, how buyers are qualified and who will negotiate and progress the sale

What is your plan if we do not receive an acceptable offer by the winter?

A good agent should regularly review the level of interest, viewing feedback, online performance, competing properties, price and presentation. If something is not working, they should be able to explain what they recommend changing and why.

Do you offer accompanied viewings?

Ask who will conduct the viewings, how well they will know your property and how quickly feedback will be followed up and reported back to you.

How will you present my property in its best light?

Photography is particularly important during autumn when natural light and weather conditions can be less predictable. Ask whether the agent is prepared to wait for suitable conditions and, where necessary, photograph different elevations or gardens at different times of day.



Changing seasons – Changing agents

It's not just the trees and the weather that change at this time of year.

Autumn is often when many people who have had their homes on sale through the summer without selling start thinking about changing their strategy.

This usually involves reviewing the performance of their current agent.

A property remaining unsold does not automatically mean the agent has done anything wrong. Market conditions, price, buyer demand, presentation and individual circumstances can all play a part.

This can be caused by other parties dropping out of the sale.

But if you have a home on the market and are considering changing agents, think about asking them these questions:

- What will you do differently to attract more interest as we enter the colder months?
- How can we refresh the marketing to appeal to more potential buyers?
- Why haven't we received an acceptable offer yet?

We regularly speak to sellers whose properties have been on the market for some time and help them take a fresh look at the price, presentation and marketing strategy.

If you find yourself in this situation, we would like to offer you a complimentary, no-obligation **Personalised Property Marketing Review**.

It's where we look at every aspect of your home's current marketing and selling strategy, and advise you on overcoming the barriers between where you are and where you want to be.

Remember to always check what your contract terms are with your current agent before making any changes.



Your moving checklist

Below is a helpful 11-point checklist to help you prepare for a sale.

- ☐ **Once you are sure you want to move, contact the estate agent for a valuation. Remember, seek evidence for any valuation they provide.**
- ☐ **Don't just choose the agent with the highest valuation or cheapest fee. This is often a false economy.**
- ☐ **Choose your conveyancing solicitor early and consider completing their initial paperwork while your property is being marketed. This can help avoid unnecessary delays once a buyer is found.**
- ☐ **So, you've instructed the agents you feel are most capable and who you are comfortable with. What next? Working through our staging tips on pages 4-5 is a good idea. Decluttering is an important step, and local charity shops, home clearance and auction houses can all be helpful when having a major clear-out.**
- ☐ **Get ahead with packing. Even though you may not have a move date yet, it's always worthwhile boxing up those items you don't use much. This will make your life a little more comfortable in the future.**
- ☐ **Research removal companies once your sale is progressing and obtain quotes in good time. Avoid making non-refundable arrangements until dates are confirmed**
- ☐ **Start finishing the food in your freezer ahead of moving day.**
- ☐ **Remember to let all your banks, utility companies and insurance providers know and arrange to have your mail redirected.**
- ☐ **Speak to your solicitor and insurer about when buildings insurance needs to begin on your new property.**
- ☐ **The day before the move, create an essentials box with any items you might need quickly when you move in. For example, kettles, cups, tea and coffee always come in handy.**
- ☐ **On the day of the move, take any essential items or documents with you, such as medicines, passports, wallets/purses, keys and glasses.**