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## Tips for Keeping Your Home Cool During Hot Summer Months



As temperatures rise, it's tempting to rely solely on air conditioning to stay comfortable—but it's not your only option. Whether you're trying to cut back on energy costs, reduce your environmental impact, or simply get more out of your cooling system, there are plenty of smart, AC-free ways to keep your home feeling comfortable. In fact, some of the most effective cooling methods don't involve air conditioning at all—and even if you do have AC, these tips can help it work more efficiently and keep your home cooler throughout the season.

### Optimize Your Ceiling Fan Direction

One of the most overlooked ways to cool your home is using your ceiling fan correctly. Many people don't realize that fans have a switch to change their rotation direction. In the summer, set the fan to spin counterclockwise. This pushes air downward and creates a cooling wind-chill effect.

When colder weather returns, switch the direction clockwise and run it on low to gently circulate warm air trapped near the ceiling.

### Keep Hot Air Out

When outdoor temperatures are higher than inside your home, keep windows and doors closed to prevent heat from seeping in. Open them only when the outside air is cooler, typically early in the morning or later at night.

To block out sunlight, close curtains or blinds during the hottest parts of the day. Blackout blinds are especially effective at reducing heat gain. Choose lighter colours like white or beige, which reflect rather than absorb sunlight.

### Keep Interior Doors Open

Good airflow is key to keeping your home cool. Leave interior doors open, especially if you're using fans or relying on natural air circulation to move cooler air through your space.

### Stay Cool While You Sleep

Getting a restful night's sleep during a heatwave can be a challenge.

Here are a few tips to keep you comfortable:

- Choose breathable bedding such as cotton sheets, which help wick moisture and promote airflow.
- Open windows at night if the temperature outside is lower than indoors.
- Chill a hot water bottle with cold water and place it at your feet for relief.
- Sleep on the lowest level of your home, since heat rises. A basement couch might be cooler than your upstairs bedroom during peak heat.
- Ditch the rugs
- Heavy rugs can trap heat. Roll them up and store them during the summer to help floors stay cooler, especially if you have hardwood, tile, or concrete surfaces.

## Signs of Growth Amid Ottawa's Steady Housing Market

Ottawa's housing market continues to demonstrate steady demand, moderate price growth, and a healthy level of supply—even as other markets experience increased volatility.

Nevertheless, it is important to keep an eye on what is happening across the province. Some markets in Ontario are encountering more pronounced slowdowns—with declining sales, price corrections, and rising inventory levels outpacing demand.

Historically, the perception is that Ottawa has been somewhat insulated from such extremes, due in part to its stable employment base and consistent population growth, but it is not entirely immune. Broader provincial or national trends have the potential to ripple through the local market over time.

### Residential Market Activity

In July 2025, a total of 1,318 homes were sold across the Ottawa Real Estate Board (OREB) region. While this is down from 1,602 units in June, it represents a 4.9% increase over July last year.

Looking at the bigger picture, there have been 8,704 home sales so far this year, which is 3.1% higher than at this time in 2024.

The average sale price for all sold listings in July was \$695,209, up 2.2% from last year.

This year, the average year-to-date price is \$702,840, a 3% increase over the first seven months of 2024.

Altogether, the total value of homes sold in July reached approximately \$920 million, up 7.2% year-over-year, representing a huge contribution to the overall Ottawa economy.

On the listing side, there were 2,549 new residential listings added in July, a solid 11.7% increase compared to last year, and 4,205 active listings on the market, up 14% from July 2024, and 23.6% above the five-year average for this time of year.

Finally, the months of inventory—a measure of supply—rose slightly to 3.2 months, up from 2.9 at this time last year and 2.7 months from last month. 3.2 months of inventory is typically understood to be an indicator of what is considered a balanced market.



Not intended to solicit properties currently listed for sale.

# Unlocking Your Home Equity in 2025:

## Smart Ways to Use the Value in Your Home

If you've owned your home for a few years, there's a good chance you're sitting on a valuable financial resource — and you might not even realize it.

Home prices in Ottawa have remained strong, and now that interest rates are starting to drop, many homeowners are asking:

*“How can I tap into my home equity — and what can I use it for?”*

Whether you're looking to consolidate debt, invest, renovate, or improve your cash flow, here's what you need to know about unlocking your home's value in 2025.

### What Is Home Equity, Really?

Home equity is the difference between:

What your home is worth

What you still owe on your mortgage

For example:

*If your home is worth \$650,000 and your remaining mortgage is \$350,000 — you have \$300,000 in equity.*

Many homeowners don't realize how much equity they've gained — especially if they bought before prices rose in the early 2020s.

### How Can You Access That Equity?

There are two main ways to access your home equity:

#### 1. Refinance Your Mortgage

This involves replacing your existing mortgage with a new one for a higher amount — giving you a lump sum of cash from your equity.

Best for:

- Debt consolidation
- Large expenses like home renovations or education
- Investing in property or other opportunities

#### 2. Home Equity Line of Credit (HELOC)

This gives you flexible, ongoing access to a portion of your home equity — similar to a credit card, but with a much lower interest rate.

Best for:

- Emergency funds
- Staged renovations
- Borrowing only what you need, when you need it



### Popular (and Smart) Ways to Use Your Equity in 2025

With interest rates starting to trend downward and home values holding steady, now is a strategic time to put your equity to work.

Here are some of the most popular, and financially smart, ways to use it:

#### 1. Consolidate High-Interest Debt

Paying off credit cards or personal loans with 20%+ interest using your mortgage (at a much lower rate) can save thousands in interest and improve monthly cash flow.

#### 2. Fund Renovations

Improve your home's comfort and value with upgrades, especially energy-efficient improvements that may qualify for rebates.

#### 3. Support a Down Payment for a Family Member

Many homeowners are helping adult children buy their first home by using a portion of their equity as a gifted or co-signed down payment.

#### 4. Invest in Real Estate or Other Ventures

Turn idle equity into an income-generating opportunity by purchasing a rental property or other long-term investment.

#### 5. Cover Life Transitions

Whether you're going through a separation, starting a business, or retiring soon, your equity can help bridge major life changes.

### What Do Lenders Look For in 2025?

The rules around equity lending are always evolving, but here's what most lenders are looking for this year:

- A strong credit profile
- Stable income or employment history
- Sufficient equity (typically 20% or more required for a HELOC)
- A reasonable debt-to-income ratio

Even if you've had a credit hiccup, there may still be options through alternative lenders — especially if you have strong equity. A broker can help you navigate these choices without judgment.