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Tax Benefits For Homeowners

We all know the old adage about nothing being certain except death and taxes. However, on a more positive note, you can also be certain of tax benefits - if, that is, you are a homeowner.



Purchasing a home can provide valuable tax savings to home buyers. Mortgage interest, property tax, and other payments associated with financing a home can apply to your tax deductions. They may decrease the amount of income tax you must pay to the federal government.

Another financial advantage to owning a home is that as you begin to pay off your mortgage loan, you build equity in your property. In other words, the value of your home can increase as your total mortgage amount decreases over time.



For those who rent, the tax savings of ownership go to the landlord, not to the tenants. Wouldn't you rather build equity for yourself every month instead of paying someone else and giving away "your" tax savings?

Additional Advantages of Home Ownership

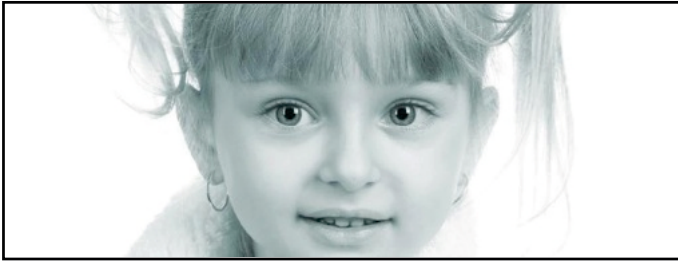
- **Scheduled Savings:** When you are a homeowner, your monthly mortgage payments serve as a type of savings plan. Over time you will accumulate what lenders call "equity," an ownership interest in your house that you may be able to borrow against or convert to cash by selling the house.
- **Stable Housing Costs:** While rents typically increase year after year, the principal and interest portion of most mortgage payments remains unchanged for the entire repayment period. Because of the effect of inflation, you pay the same amount with ever "cheaper" dollars.
- **Increased Value:** Houses typically increase in value over time. It's not unusual for a house that sold fifteen years ago to be valued at much more than its selling price today. This increased value is as good as money in the bank to the homeowner.

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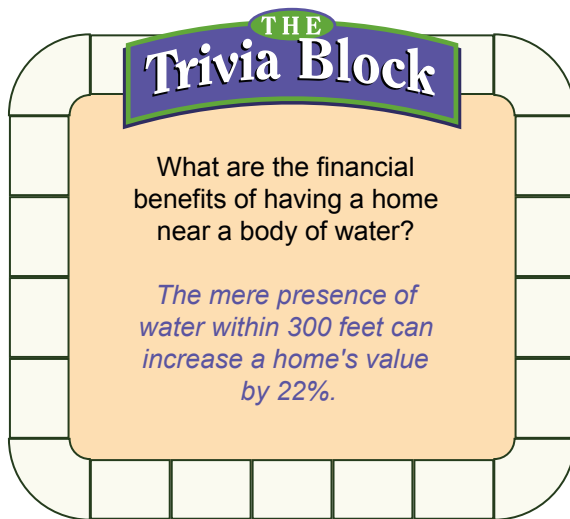
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Protect Your Children from Pesticide and Lead Poisonings

These simple steps can help you save children from environmental hazards around the home:

1. Always store pesticides and other household chemicals, including chlorine bleach, out of children's reach - preferably in a locked cabinet.
2. **Read the Label FIRST!** Pesticide products, household cleaning products, and pet products can be dangerous or ineffective if too much or too little is used.



3. Before applying pesticides or other household chemicals, remove children and their toys, as well as pets, from the area. Keep children and pets away until the pesticide has dried or as long as is recommended on the label.
4. If your use of a pesticide or other household chemical is interrupted (perhaps by a phone call), properly re-close the container and remove it from children's reach. Always use household products in child-resistant packaging.
5. Never transfer pesticides to other containers that children may associate with food or drink (like soda bottles), and never place rodent or insect baits where small children can get to them.
6. When applying insect repellents to children, read all directions first; do not apply over cuts, wounds, or irritated skin; do not apply to eyes, mouth, hands or directly on the face; and use just enough to cover exposed skin or clothing, but do not use under clothing.
7. Many homes built before 1978 have lead-based paint. If you plan to remodel or renovate, get your home tested. Don't try to remove lead paint yourself.
8. Ask about lead when buying or renting a home. Sellers and landlords must disclose known lead hazards in houses or apartments built before 1978.
9. Get your child tested for lead. There are no visible symptoms of lead poisoning, and children may suffer behavior or learning problems.
10. Wash children's hands, toys and bottles often. Regularly clean floors, window sills and other surfaces to reduce possible exposure to lead and pesticide residues.



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