

# Help...no one wants to sell their house

Lea Jacobs •



**Stock shortages are common in high demand markets. Here's how to find your dream home in spite of tough competition.**

Ask any woman and she'll tell you that while she can always find the right pair of shoes when she doesn't have the money to pay for them, she can find absolutely nothing suitable when she's flush with cash. Situations such as these are commonly referred to as Murphy's Law and it doesn't just strike when shopping for footwear, it also occurs when shopping for a home.

There are certain suburbs across South Africa that have a stock shortage – in other words very few people with property there are selling. Various factors have been linked to this trend and these range from demand, when there simply aren't enough properties to go around, to homeowners choosing to remain in their current homes because of the cost associated with selling up and moving on. Whatever the reason, it can prove incredibly frustrating for those who have their hearts set on moving into a specific area.

**So what should you do if you're struggling to find a home?**

**Firstly, never panic buy.** It doesn't matter that the agent has other buyers lined up to see home – if you are uncertain about a particular property, don't be goaded into making a snap decision.

**Be realistic.** Demand drives property prices and you are going to pay more for a home in a popular area. This doesn't mean that you should overspend and pay more than a property is actually worth, but it does mean that you should do your homework before the time in order to understand what you should reasonably be expecting to pay.

**Be flexible and look at other areas,** if you can't find a suitable home in the area of your choice. Chat to your agent about other suburbs that may appeal. Better still, go on a road trip and take a look around at up and coming suburbs.

**Think about renting first in your chosen area.** This has a number of benefits, including really getting to know a neighbourhood before you commit to buying. While renting, become a show day junkie and visit as many properties in the suburb as possible.

**Form relationships with local estate agents.** Good agents never give up and will actively approach those who don't have their homes on the market if they have a seller who is qualified to buy and who is very interested in the home. Likewise, if you fall in love with a particular property, don't be shy about asking your agent to investigate further to see if the owner would be willing to sell.

**Look online.** Keep a close eye out for new listings and sign up with property portals that notify you every time a property becomes available in your chosen area. Private Property has an instant alerts service that notifies you by email or SMS as soon as a property becomes available in your area.

Overall, be patient and keep a cool head, the right property will come along...eventually.