Want a good deal on a home? Buy in December

The day after Christmas is the best day to buy a home if you're looking for a discount, according to a new study from Attom Data Solutions. Overall December is the best month to buy a home if you're looking for a deal, the study found.

"People closing on a home purchase Dec. 26 were submitting offers around Thanksgiving and starting their home search around Halloween — likely not a common path to home purchase for most buyers and exactly why it's the best time to buy," Daren Blomquist, Attom's senior vice president said.

"Buyers and investors willing to start their home search right about when stores are setting up Christmas decorations will face less competition and likely be dealing with more motivated sellers, giving them the upper hand in price negotiations," he added.

Only 10 days of the year actually offer discounts below estimated market value — and no months do overall — according to the analysis. Seven of the days are in December, with one each in October,

November and February.

Attom's data, which covers the last five years of sales, said the lack of market discounts can be attributed to the hot seller's market of the past few years.

On Dec. 26, buyers, on average, can save an estimated $2,500 by purchasing their home the day after Christmas. On Dec. 7, they can save $2,000.

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By the same metric, the end of May is the worst time to buy a home. Buyers can expect to pay, according to the past five years of data, more than 9 percent over the estimated value on May 28, 29 and 30.

"The prevalence of December in the best days to buy is really all about the holidays," Blomquist said. "Very few buyers are looking for homes to buy around the holidays, which means less competition for the few contrarians out there who are buying."

"The days in October, November and February, are also likely related to down times when it comes to buyers making offers," Blomquist added. "Keep in mind the dates we list here are going to be roughly one month after an offer is accepted."

Blomquist explained that on Oct. 12 — where buyers can get, on average, a $1,000 discount — those offers were probably accepted over Labor Day. And on February 12 — when buyers can get a

$500 — discount, the offers were likely accepted around the New Year.

Overall, buyers can expect to pay just 0.5 percent over the estimated value, on average, in the month of December. Prices are the highest above estimated value in June, where buyers can expect to pay 7.3 percent above the estimated value.

The best month to buy a home changes depending on the region too, according to the data. But Attom's study found that cold-weather seasons — or just fall and winter in some places — tended to offer the best discounts. Every state, other than Hawaii, had the best discounts in either October, November, December, January or February.

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