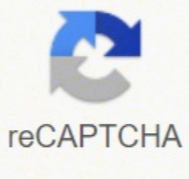




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## How to win a free tiny house

IKEA If you’ve ever considered swapping your home for something a bit more, err, tiny, now might be your chance to join the (ironically large) tiny home movement (that is, if you’re good at puzzles). Starting today, IKEA U.S. is launching a nationwide scavenger hunt for a chance to win your very own IKEA tiny home. But don’t expect it to be easy—participants will be asked to solve puzzles, unlock codes, and even write a short (or should I say, tiny) essay in order to win. Between April 30th and May 12th, the Swedish retail-giant will be sharing six different puzzles on its Instagram page. Each puzzle will reveal six letters, which will then be used to unlock a secret password. Once you’ve figured out the password, you can visit the contest homepage, where you’ll be asked to write a small essay about why sustainable living is important to you. (You’ll want to be sure to write a good essay, since a panel of judges will be evaluating each individual essay based on several criteria.) Only those who make it to this point will be entered in the giveaway. The idea behind the giveaway was to showcase how to create a small space that’s not only stylish and affordable, but also sustainable and convenient. Though tiny, the 187-square-foot home includes a fully functional kitchen, bathroom, bedroom and living space as well as smart storage solutions to make all your tiny home dreams come true. And of course, the tiny home is decked out with some especially chic IKEA finds. In a press release, the retailer says, “The IKEA tiny scavenger hunt is a way to prolong the life of the IKEA tiny home and allow one lucky customer the opportunity to cherish it forever.” IKEA In order to be eligible to win the tiny home, participants must be an IKEA Family Member (you can sign up for free!). The total prize package includes the tiny home as well as an extra non-transferable \$20,000 to cover estimated taxes for a total prize package worth \$95,000. Interested in living your best tiny life? Check out IKEA’s Instagram page to start the scavenger hunt. Love knowing all the latest design trends? We’ve got you covered. This content is created and maintained by a third party, and imported onto this page to help users provide their email addresses. You may be able to find more information about this and similar content at piano.io Copyright AFP 2017-2022. All rights reserved. A Facebook page called “Your New Home” has been running several online promotions, claiming to give away free tiny houses and motorhomes. On February 10, 2021, the page published a post featuring an image of a tiny house. “This February - We are giving away three beautiful Tiny Houses for three families,” reads one of the posts, which has been shared more than 105,000 times since February 10, 2021. It then instructs people to share the post, comment with the word “WIN” and like the page. Screenshot of the Facebook post, taken on March 16, 2021 The page running the promotion does not list any website, and a web search came up empty. A reverse image search of the image used in the post shows that it is a home design by Build Tiny, a company in New Zealand that specialises in building mobile houses. A screenshot of the Tiny Camper House, taken from the Build Tiny website on March 16, 2021 Build Tiny told AFP Fact Check in an email that the Facebook account was using its photos against its wishes and that the promotion is a scam. “We are aware of these posts, there have been many similar posts all using images of our Camper tiny house. It is a SCAM and we are in no way affiliated with the page, the post, or the competition,” said Gina Stevens, the design director at Build Tiny. “We are powerless to have the images removed, [and] have reported the post and the page as a scam to Facebook, but new pages keep popping up.” On February 15, 2021, Build Tiny posted a warning on Facebook, explaining that images of its camper were being used to “promote a scam competition” on a similar Facebook page. Screenshot of a post by Build Tiny warning the public about scam promotions Images from various sources The page has also used four different posts (here, here, here and here). One of the posts, published on March 12, 2021, also asks Facebook users to share, comment, and like the page. The post has been shared more than 1,900 times and people have commented on the post with the word “ME”, as instructed. A screenshot of the post taken on March 16, 2021 A reverse image search shows that the photo was lifted from the website of a Canadian company called Summit Tiny Homes. In a message sent to AFP Fact Check through its official Facebook page, a representative for the company said that they were aware that some Facebook pages have been using their photos in fraudulent online promotions. “We have received reports about people using our housing designs in online scams and have reported to Facebook,” they said. A screenshot of the original photo on the Summit Tiny Homes website, taken on March 16, 2021 On February 6, 2021, the page posted a video clip of a motorhome. Once again, the post once again asks people to comment on it to stand a chance of winning. “This February - We are giving away three beautiful mobile homes for three families. To participate: Simply share this post and comment ‘me’ to WIN (sic),” reads the post. Screenshot of the Facebook post, taken on March 16, 2021 AFP Fact Checked traced the video clip to an auto garage in Switzerland called Autocenter Rickenbach Glanzmann. The video was lifted from their YouTube post advertising a Fiat Dethleff motorhome. A screenshot of the original Fiat Dethleff motorhome taken on March 17, 2021 The Facebook page used another mobile home photo in a post published on February 2, 2021, once again with the same instructions. Screenshot of the post, taken on March 16, 2021 AFP Fact Check traced the photo to the website of a US company called New Frontier Tiny Homes. It was also featured in a 2017 article about the company. A screenshot of the camper house as featured on the New Frontier Tiny Homes website, taken on March 17, 2021 New Frontier Tiny Homes told AFP Fact Check in an email that the company has not authorised anyone to use their photos in promotions. “Over the years, we have received reports that scammers are using some of our photos to popularize social media pages. We have reported some, but they keep on re-inventing themselves, making it difficult for us to keep track,” said David Latimer, the company’s founder and CEO. Yet another post, published on the page on January 16, 2021, reads: “Unfortunately, the Christmas winner (Samantha B. - Nottingham) of our competition was under the age of 16 and unable to accept their prize. Therefore, we will be giving out this stunning Mobile Home (sic).” A screenshot of the post, taken on March 16, 2021 Maldita.es, a Spanish fact-checking organisation, flagged a post that was using the same photo in a similar online scam back in 2019. Scam to grow page The page uses fake giveaways to gain followers and reach. This sort of online scam is popular; it is used to attract followers to Facebook accounts or pages, which can then be sold on and renamed. The scammers may also mine people’s data, including names, phone numbers, email addresses and other personal information. AFP Fact Check has previously debunked numerous online giveaway scams. Read more about some of the most common types of Facebook scams in Africa. Photo Courtesy: Public Domain/PxHere Whether you’re looking to buy your first house or moving into your dream home, buying a house always seems to take longer than expected. While it might not be so bad if the wait only meant delaying moving into your new home, the drawn-out process can cause all sorts of other complications, from finding temporary housing to the ever-present possibility that the seller will back out at the last minute. It usually takes a few weeks just to look at prospective properties, followed by negotiations with the current owners that aren’t guaranteed to succeed. From that point, it still takes an average of 50 days to close on the new home. If all of that sounds like too much, however, there are a few things you can do to increase the odds of making a quick purchase.Buy the Home With CashThe fastest way to buy a home is to pay all cash for the property. Assuming that everything works out logistically, it’s possible to buy a home in a couple of weeks when paying cash. There are a few reasons why an all-cash transaction expedites the homebuying process. Photo Courtesy: Alex Wong/Getty Images The reason why buying a home with cash is faster is that it eliminates the need to take out a home loan, since the process of applying and receiving approval from the bank can take a few weeks. If the lender is dealing with many homebuyers, this process can take even longer. An all-cash transaction eliminates these steps.A cash offer is also attractive to sellers since they know that you won’t have to worry about securing a mortgage. Financing issues are one reason why many real estate transactions fall through, so if a seller receives both a cash offer and another that’s dependent on the buyer’s ability to procure financing, the cash offer will usually win out.Get Pre-Approved for a Home Loan Before You Start ShoppingEven though cash is king when you want to purchase a house quickly, most people don’t have hundreds of thousands of dollars available to purchase a home outright. If you need to obtain a mortgage to buy your new home, you can expedite the process by getting pre-approved for a home loan (not to be confused with pre-qualifying, which has fewer requirements) before you start touring properties. Photo Courtesy: Scott Barbour/Getty Images To do this, you provide a bank with all the information and documents needed to approve a loan, such as proof of income, bank statements and access to your credit history. They then determine how much you can borrow and provide you with a letter that states the amount you’re pre-approved for. This document shows sellers that you’ll be able back up an offer you make on the house, while the bank having your information can speed up the loan approval process. Some banks may also be willing to provide you with a letter that states you’re pre-approved for less than you really are. This can be helpful if you’re worried about the seller thinking they should ask for a bigger offer in response to your high pre-approval amount.Work With a Real Estate Agent to Find a HomeRegardless of whether you plan to pay cash for your home or need to take out a mortgage, a real estate agent can help you find a house you love as quickly as possible. Your real estate agent will ask what criteria you desire in a home, taking into account your ideal size, preferred location and must-have features. They’ll then find properties that meet your needs and set up times for you to view the homes that you’re interested in. Photo Courtesy: Joe Raelle/Getty Images When you find a property you love, your agent will assist you with preparing an offer for the home and negotiating the details of the deal with the seller. They can expedite the offer process and any subsequent negotiations by providing guidance as to whether the seller is likely to accept your deal. For example, if you’re purchasing a home in a market with limited inventory, your real estate agent will likely encourage you to come in strong with your first offer.Your agent can continue to be a valuable resource even after you’re under contract on a house by assisting you with scheduling inspections and an appraisal. They will also try to handle any issues that arise that may delay your closing date. And best of all? The seller usually pays the buyer’s agent through a commission on the sale. While that commission is usually anticipated in the price of the house, you’ll nevertheless save not only time, but also money by going with a real estate agent.Sell Your Home Before You Start Shopping for a New HomeIf you currently own a home and can afford to do so, consider selling your current house before you start searching for a new one. Otherwise, you run the risk of your old home slowing down the purchase of your new house. Photo Courtesy: Joe Raelle/Getty Images For example, you might decide to include a contingency that states your offer is dependent on your ability to sell your existing home. While this contingency gives you financial protection, it can slow down the homebuying process, as some sellers may skip over offers with this type of requirement. That in turn can increase the length of time it takes for you to find a willing seller. MORE FROM ASKMONEY.COM