

Successful Home Selling Guide

When your goal is to sell your home hassle-free, there is one sure way to make that happen. Believe it or not, the only thing that you need to do is to understand how the selling process works. When you have this information, you know what to expect and when to expect it! There's nothing worse than being surprised by part of the home-selling process while you're mid-stream. Making a mistake along the way could cost you a lot! Here you'll learn about the step-by-step journey through the home-selling process.

The Decision



You will face several decisions during the sale process. However, there is one critical decision upon which everything else depends. That decision is whether to sell in the first place. Often home owners have no other option when faced with a cross-country relocation due to a career change or a new addition to the family. However, unless you are facing one of these situations, the choice to sell your home is generally just that – a choice.

Think carefully about selling your home before making a final decision. Do you have a clear idea of where you will live once the home sells? Perhaps your children have grown and you no longer need a large home. Or perhaps you have decided to marry your long-time sweetheart and you can no longer stay in that tiny bungalow. Either way, there will be many things to consider before you can be sure that selling your home is the best solution.

Once you have made the decision to sell, it's time to move to the next step in the process.

Preparation

Long before the “for sale” sign is erected on your lawn, you will need to begin preparing your home for sale. Start with a complete top-to-bottom inspection of the home. Remove any unnecessary clutter from the home, so that you are able to see what has been behind those piles for so many years! Of course, disposing of unnecessary items will make the moving process much easier on everyone. Once you have cleared out those items that you do not intend to keep, it's time to start looking over what is left.

In general, potential buyers are more attracted to homes that allow them to visualize. Specifically, they want to visualize their family sitting around the dinner table, and they want to visualize their belongings where yours are now. The less cluttered your home is, the easier it will be for buyers to do this sort of visualization.

You've probably come to the realization that you will need to remove even some of the things that you want to keep. You can move extra furniture into the garage, or consider temporarily renting a storage space while your home is for sale.

You will probably be overwhelmed by how spacious your home has suddenly become, and you will probably also begin to notice its signs of age. A fresh coat of paint and professional carpet cleaning will

definitely improve the look of your home. Since the rooms are now much less crowded, now is the perfect time!

Finally, remove as much of your home's personalization as possible. For example, replace your family photo over the mantle with a large mirror or painting. Take down your gallery of family photos, leaving this area open for the potential buyers' imagination.



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Once you've finished with the interior of your home, move to the exterior and focus on curb-appeal! You need to make sure that the photos appearing in real estate listings make your home look as appealing as possible. Make sure that your lawn is in good condition, free from bare or brown spots. Planting grass seed is simple and can make a huge difference in the appearance of your lawn. Next, make sure that your shrubs are neatly trimmed to show potential buyers that you have cared for your landscape. Keep the lawn free of toys, bikes and other items that can make it appear cluttered. Finally, make your porches, decks and patios inviting! Consider buying new cushions for your patio furniture. Add a few large flowerpots filled with bright, seasonal flowers and make sure that the surfaces are clean and clear of clutter.

Once you have prepared your home for sale, you are ready to begin speaking with listing agents.

The Realtor

There is a saying among real estate agents that being number three is lucky. The truth in this statement applies when you are interviewing potential agents to sell your home. Although you may actually end up working with the first agent you speak with, you should definitely speak with more than one candidate.

When you speak with a potential real estate agent, ask him or her about the type of listing contract that you will be expected to sign, the agent's philosophy on listing prices, and how your home will be marketed to other agents and potential buyers. These three pieces of information are all critical. If an agent is unwilling to discuss these topics, then he or she probably isn't your best partner in the sale process.

Avoid selecting an agent based up his or her estimate of your home's value. Going with the agent who will list your home at the highest possible price may seem like an attractive strategy, but later you may come to learn that your home is overpriced and that no one is looking at it.

Once you have selected an agent with whom you are comfortable working, it's time to set the price!

The Price

As mentioned earlier, it is wise to work with an agent who wants to list your home according to its market value, rather than with one who wants to put the highest price tag on the home. While the allure of extra profit may be enticing, keep in mind that overpriced homes stay on the market longer and their ongoing selling costs end up eating away at your profits.

Overpricing and under-pricing can be avoided when you have done your research and made it clear to the listing agent that you have a good estimate of what the home is truly worth. So how do you go about determining that price?

Ask the agents whom you are interviewing for a CMA (competitive market analysis), which will allow you to see the listing and selling prices of recently sold homes in your area, as well as the listing prices and length of time for sale of other homes in the area. If you find that homes with a similar size and features are selling for \$500,000 in your neighborhood, a price of \$490,000 will get the home sold in a hurry and a price of \$550,000 will definitely draw potential buyers. However, a listing price of \$800,000 will aggravate buyers' agents and discourage people from looking at your home at all.

Now you have a good idea of how price affects the length of time for sale and why correct pricing is critical.

Overview

Not paying attention to these four areas of home spelling can be a recipe for disaster. In order to successfully sell your home, you definitely need to be prepared with a ready-for-sale home, a great realtor, a good idea of your home's value, and the right price. If all of these factors receive adequate consideration, it is almost guaranteed that your home will sell quickly and with as little hassle as possible.