



A HOMEOWNER'S GUIDE TO THE SELLING PROCESS

Top 8 questions answered to help you navigate selling your home .

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Navigating the sale of your home

You might be thinking now is a good time to sell your home, but the process seems daunting. The typical homeowner lives in their home for approximately 15 years before deciding to sell. If you've been contemplating selling your home now over several months, it's good to know that it typically takes at least 6 months before homeowners come to the decision to sell.

Whatever reasons you are thinking to sell, it's critical to be prepared. Preparation helps to make your decisions less emotional and stressful. Understanding the basics will prepare you for a smoother process and add confidence each step of the way.

This guide answers the top 8 questions homeowners are presented with as they navigate through the real estate process:

1. When is the best time to sell in my area?
2. What is my representation strategy?
3. Do first impressions really matter?
4. How competitive should I price my home?
5. Is marketing my listing important?
6. What's a good negotiation strategy?
7. Are inspections and appraisals necessary?
8. What closing obligations will I need to fulfill?

When should I sell my home?

Timing can affect how quickly your home sells and the price you get. Consider these factors before listing:

- Market conditions: A seller's market, where demand exceeds supply, often means higher prices and faster sales. Check local real estate trends or consult a real estate agent for current insights.
- Personal circumstances: Life events like job relocation, family changes, or financial needs may dictate your timeline.
- Seasonal trends: Spring and early summer usually attract more buyers, but selling in off-peak seasons can reduce competition.

Knowing why and when to sell sets a strong foundation for the process ahead.



Before searching for an agent, prepare a checklist of questions and qualifications to help you determine who best meets your desired level of representation.

- ☐ Is the agent licensed in my state?
- ☐ Does the agent have additional training and/or certifications that could be beneficial for my circumstances?
- ☐ How many homes has the agent sold and did the agent receive 5-Star reviews?
- ☐ Am I comfortable with the agent's communication style?
- ☐ Does the agent appear to have integrity, professionalism, and overall friendliness?
- ☐ Are they familiar with my neighborhood and local community?
- ☐ Does the agent have experience with my specific selling circumstances and needs?
- ☐ Do they have a positive reputation in the community and online?
- ☐ Has the agent built a professional local network if we need contractors?
- ☐ Do they have proven and recent results? (sale-to-list price ratio and average days on market)
- ☐ Are they an experienced negotiator?
- ☐ Did the agent answer my questions clearly and to my satisfaction?
- ☐ Did the agent give me an up-front quote in writing?

Do first impressions matter?

Yes, first impressions matter. Preparing your home can increase its appeal and value:

- Declutter and clean: Remove personal items and excess furniture to make rooms look spacious.
- Repairs and upgrades: Fix leaks, squeaky doors, or chipped paint. Small upgrades like new light fixtures or fresh landscaping can boost curb appeal.
- Staging: Arrange furniture to highlight your home's best features. You can hire a professional or use online guides for DIY staging.

A well-presented home attracts more buyers and can lead to better offers. For more helpful tips, download my guide ["How To Make Your Home Market-Ready."](#)

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Pricing your home correctly is crucial. Overpricing can scare buyers away, while underpricing may leave money on the table.

- Research comparable sales: Look at recent sales of similar homes in your neighborhood.
- Get a professional appraisal: An appraiser provides an unbiased estimate based on market data.
- Consult a real estate agent: Agents have local market knowledge and can help set a competitive price.

A balanced price encourages interest and can lead to quicker negotiations.

How competitive should I price my home?

Is marketing important?

Effective marketing gets your home in front of the right buyers:

- Professional photos: High-quality images highlight your home's features online.
- Online listings: Use popular real estate websites, social media and ads to reach a wide audience.
- Open houses and showings: Allow potential buyers to tour your home in person.
- Print materials: Flyers or brochures can support local marketing efforts.

Good marketing increases visibility and attracts serious buyers.



What's a good negotiation strategy?

Once offers start coming in, it's time to evaluate and negotiate:

- Review each offer carefully: Look beyond price to terms like contingencies, closing timeline, and financing.
- Counteroffers: You can accept, reject, or propose changes to offers.
- Stay flexible: Negotiations may involve multiple rounds before reaching an agreement.

Clear communication and understanding your priorities help you get the best deal.



Are inspections and appraisals necessary?

After accepting an offer, buyers usually schedule inspections and appraisals:

- Home inspection: Buyers typically check for issues that might affect the home's value or safety, but it's not required.
- Appraisal: Lenders require an appraisal to confirm the home's worth before approving a mortgage.

Be prepared to address repair requests or renegotiate terms if problems arise.

What are my closing obligations?

The final step involves signing paperwork and transferring ownership:



- Review documents: Ensure all terms match the agreement.
- Pay closing costs: These may include agent fees, taxes, and other expenses.
- Hand over keys: Once everything is signed and funds transferred, the home officially changes hands.

Closing can take several weeks, so stay organized and responsive to avoid delays.



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