

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO SELLING A HOME

How to Put Your
Home on the Market
and Attract Buyers



SO YOU'RE INTERESTED IN SELLING?

Aside from buying the home of their dreams, selling a property is one of the biggest tasks many people will undertake in their lifetimes.

There are numerous intricacies that go into the process of not only putting a house on the market, but also properly and effectively preparing, packaging, presenting and promoting it — and attracting the right kinds of buyers!

In this detailed guide, I provide a thorough breakdown of everything that goes into the selling process — and how a real estate agent can ensure that process goes quickly and smoothly.



DO I REALLY NEED A REALTOR®?

With the advent and continual evolution of the Internet, you can access significant amounts of information online within seconds. What the Internet doesn't offer, though, is detailed knowledge of the countless intricacies that go along with selling a house. Nearly 9 in 10 sellers use a real estate agent or broker to help them sell their properties — and you'd be wise to hire one as well to ensure the process goes smoothly.

DO I REALLY NEED A REALTOR?



Market Expertise

From understanding the local school system and jobs market to researching community home values and past sales history, real estate agents stay on top of all of the essential details they need to know to move your property quickly — and for the right amount of money.

Sure, you can research your neighborhood and general area to discover what your neighbors have sold their homes for as well as see how much properties in your town have appreciated in value over time. But given that real estate agents are already embedded into the community in which they work, they've already done that work for you.

DO I REALLY NEED A REALTOR?



Negotiation Skills

You may know how to make your home look appealing and pitch its best features to prospective buyers, but a real estate agent has a thorough understanding of the average buyer's mindset — meaning, they know the 'tricks of the trade' that can secure plenty of buyers to show up at your open houses, call to set up personal home tours, and check out your listing online.

Add in the fact that real estate agents have skin in the game regarding the sale price (hint: commission), and it's evident they have the knowledge and motivation to ensure you get the best price possible for your home and in the shortest amount of time possible.

DO I REALLY NEED A REALTOR?



Law and Contract Knowledge

The amount of laws, rules, and regulations that have to be dealt with throughout the course of selling a house are seemingly innumerable. No home seller should have to deal with complicated legalese and documents while trying to stage and promote their property and find a new home to purchase. Instead, they should leave all of that in the hands of their real estate agent.

The right real estate agent knows how to structure Purchase and Sale Agreements so they're not only correct, but lead to speedy and efficient closings or settlements.

DO I REALLY NEED A REALTOR?



Professional Network

The best of the best real estate agents are not only knowledgeable and accomplished, but are also well-connected. Expert real estate agents spend much of their time building their networks and gaining new relationships with fellow agents and home vendors — everyone from plumbers, electricians, and contractors to appraisers, inspectors, and attorneys.

So, when you sign on with an experienced real estate agent, you get much more than their sales and marketing expertise. You also get a comprehensive network of professionals who can help move a sale along speedily.

DO I REALLY NEED A REALTOR?



Time

The internet offers a wealth of information for home sellers, but with much of their time dedicated to their daily activities — working a 9-to-5 job, picking up the kids at school, etc. — it can be difficult for them to find a few hours each week to research real estate agents who can help them put their property on the market.

That's why hiring a real estate agent is essential: They're completely dedicated to spending countless hours combing over data on local home sales, identifying buyer leads, and performing a variety of other sales and marketing tasks (both online and offline) to broaden awareness of your listing.

DO YOU NEED A GOOD REALTOR?

Are you thinking of selling your home soon?

In a sea of real estate agents, it can be difficult at best to know which ones will not only help you sell your home, but will also help you get it ready for the market and price it right so that you can realize maximum results from its sale.

I know some really good real estate agents who will help you get the most from the sale your house.

Let me help you [find the right agent!](#)

IMPORTANT FACTORS FOR BUYERS



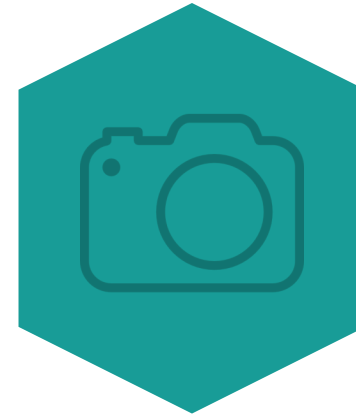
PRICE

Setting the right price for your listing off the bat is vital to selling it in the time frame and for the price you desire.



CONDITION

Making updates, additions, and alterations to your residence can provide a big boost in your sales efforts.



PRESENTATION

The aesthetics of your property play a major role in how many buyers it attracts to showings and how quickly it sells.



LOCATION

Though you have no control over this particular factor, you can leverage your community's best attributes to help market your home.



PRICE

Assuming you price your property appropriately for the market, your house for sale should start to gain awareness and leads within hours. But what exactly goes into setting a list price? Let's delve into the primary factors that affect the specific dollar amount you ask for your house.

PRICE



Market Analysis

As previously noted, your real estate agent has considerable intelligence about the market in which they work, so leave it to them to source data and create reports that will paint an accurate picture of what others have done with their listings price-wise. In turn, this information can provide information on how best to set your own listing price in today's market.

In addition to what others listed and sold their homes for, though, you need to take into account other factors such as home style / type, square footage, age, appearance, and how long their homes sat on the market.

PRICE



Professional Appraisal

Hiring a professional appraiser, which can run several hundred dollars, can tell you about the condition of every last detail of your house. These certified and licensed professionals conduct thorough searches of other homes that have recently sold to gauge the value of your house in today's real estate market. And, as with a market analysis your agent performs, they will compare your house to other nearby recently sold houses in terms of quality, newness, and amenities.

PRICE



Online Valuation Tools

Search for “home valuation tool” in Google and you’ll get quite a few — er, millions — of results, so there’s no shortage of online resources that can give you a rough estimate of your home’s value.

Also, remember this: These will be rough estimates of value. For instance, Zillow’s “Zestimate” tool is arguably the most popular home value calculator available, but it’s flawed and doesn’t always provide accurate data.

PRICE



Being Realistic

What your list price ultimately comes down to is figuring out what home buyers are spending on similar houses at any given moment in your neck of the woods, and what you're comfortable with putting your house on the market for.

There is no one perfect price. Rather, you simply need to take some time to evaluate all of these aforementioned factors and consult with your real estate agent to find the ideal middle zone.



CONDITION

Should a home inspector pinpoint any parts of your house that need attention before allowing your real estate agent to list your property, you can either take care of the problem areas yourself or hire a professional to take care of the repairs for you.

Specifically, there are three types of repairs, improvements or upgrades home sellers generally have to make to their properties before putting them on the market.

CONDITION



Refresh

Minor projects such as painting, spackling, and caulking don't require hiring a professional to take care of (unless, of course, you don't mind shelling out several hundred bucks or more for them to do so). These types of small-scale tasks can be taken care of with a little bit of research and buying the right tools at your local hardware store.

Specific things to look for in your home include holes where you've hung paintings and pictures that need to be filled, toning down the color scheme of certain rooms, and the cleanliness of your attic and basement. Curb appeal upgrades like these can go a long way in getting positive feedback from potential buyers.

CONDITION



Repair

Once you've taken care of some slight refreshing of certain corners of your property, you can turn your attention to more substantial improvement projects.

Inspect your kitchen and bathroom for broken cabinetry and handles. Look for cracks in your walls, ceiling, and floor. Determine if you need to re-tile your roof or install new siding.

There are often dozens of small components of your house that needs to be addressed, so carefully investigate the interior and exterior of your house for things in need of repair.

CONDITION



Replace

There may be a few aspects of your house that need to be overhauled and replaced entirely. Items such as tub liners and certain types of wood floors don't age gracefully and get scuffed and scratched with regularity. Moreover, pet owners can attest to their friendly feline and canine pals ruining things such as the carpet. Most real estate agents likely know one or more reputable home improvement professionals who can repair these areas as needed.

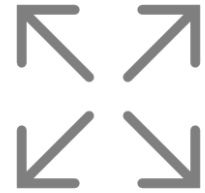
Should you make major replacements such as new flooring, ensure you select high-quality, visually appealing material. When in doubt, go with a popular paint color, floor material, countertop surface, etc.



PRESENTATION

You've made updates to the interior and exterior of your house, and you've settled on a solid list price. Now, it's on to staging. Making your house look both functional and beautiful and marketing your revamped home to the right buyers takes some skill. Luckily, your real estate agent can help you find the right home stagers and photographers to help ensure your property looks its best for the market.

PRESENTATION



Marketing Basics

Head online to promote.

First and foremost, develop a presence online with your real estate agent by posting your listing on their website, the MLS, and other real estate portals.

Assuming your real estate agent has a modern, mobile-optimized real estate website, you're in good hands. Also, use social media to alert friends, colleagues, and other connections about your new listing.

Create print material, too.

Despite the growing preference of home buyers to search for properties online, it's worthwhile to have offline marketing tactics in play. Yard signs, open houses, and flyers can help spread word that your house is on the market. It's harder to measure the effectiveness of offline marketing, but it can still help with word-of-mouth promotion.

PRESENTATION



Staging

Keep your home clean & organized.

Home buyers want to be able to envision themselves living in a home they tour, so keep everything neat and tidy. Set the scene for them: Put nice magazines and candles on your coffee table, bring out the nice china for the dining room table, and ensure your home is dust- and clutter-free. Seeing a messy living space is a turnoff for many prospective buyers, so stay on top of keeping your home in tip-top shape while showing it off.

Work with a professional stager.

If you feel your home lacks the requisite pizzazz to impress buyers, considering working with a home staging professional who can either give you tips on how to dress up your house or actually do it for you. Either option will likely run you several hundred dollars or more, but if their advice helps you sell your house faster and for more money, you'll be glad you made the minor investment.

PRESENTATION



Staging Cont'd

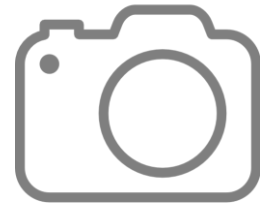
Set the mood with pleasant scents.

Open house visitors won't stick around for long if they can't bear the smells of your house. Light a few candles in the living areas and use scented cleaning sprays in bathrooms, bedrooms, and the kitchen. Also, consider steam-cleaning any carpeted floors in your house to remove stains and get them smelling like roses.

Don't forget about the exterior.

Once you've made the inside of your house look stunning, it's time to head outside to examine your property's exterior. Assuming you're selling your house in a relatively warm climate, ensure the lawn is mowed, the plants are pruned, and there's no unsightly messes anywhere to be found. Kids' and pets' toys should be put away in a shed or garage, while the siding should be blemish-free.

PRESENTATION



Photography

Work with a professional.

You may have a friend or family member who's pretty good behind the lens, but a home sale is too important to leave in the hands of amateur photographers. Hire a pro with a well-documented history of snapping and editing beautiful shots of listings for real estate clients. Ask to see portfolios, and get contact information of past clients to see what they have to say about potential candidates.

Get plenty of beautiful shots!

It should go without saying that your photographer should take hundreds (if not thousands) of photos of the interior and exterior of your house, and the surrounding property. Just to be sure you're on the same page, though, speak at length with the pro you employ to let them know what you'd like to showcase in the photos (e.g. certain areas of the home, shots at certain angles). They certainly know how to get the right pictures, but giving them some guidance isn't out of the norm.



LOCATION

Highlighting the best qualities of your location can help you convince possible home buyers that your community — and even your particular neighborhood — is one in which they should lay their foundation. All it takes to persuade potential buyers is a carefully thought-out pitch using powerful language.

LOCATION



Power of Persuasion

When it comes to marketing your location, you can never be too specific. Honing in on the nitty-gritty details of your community and neighborhood — like noting how many grocery stores are located in the town and relaying the best places to get a burger — helps home buyers visualize themselves living in your house and surrounding area.

Your agent can write plenty of marketing copy to promote your community, but if you know of any good selling points, let them know so they can spotlight them accordingly.

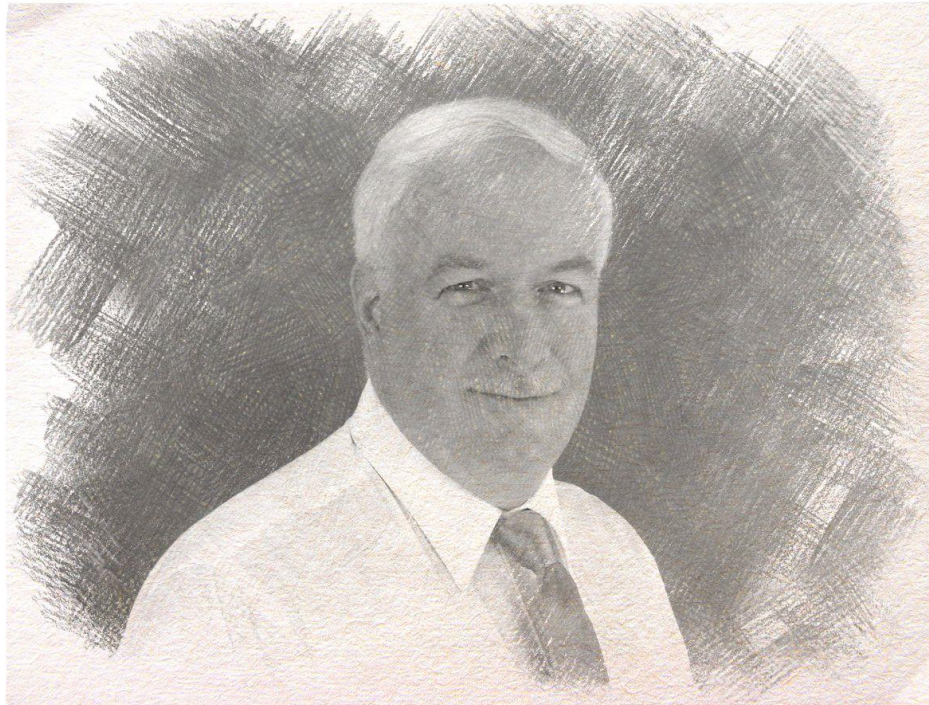
THE BOTTOM LINE

Conducting all of these tasks and working with various professionals, including your real estate agent, is all a part of the home selling process. But at the end of the day, the best way to help sell your house is to be proactive.

If your real estate agent wants to show your house early in the morning to a possible buyer, let them come over to give them a tour. If you think a more neutral living room wall color would be more appealing to buyers, set time aside to re-paint them.

In other words, be ready at all times to help your real estate agent market your property and, in turn, close a deal on your terms.

ABOUT ME



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Real Estate Staging Association (RESA)

No, I'm not a real estate agent. But I do know what it takes to sell a house for top dollar and in the shortest amount of time possible. I'm here to help make the process of selling your home as easy and enjoyable as possible.

I'm the founder and owner of Scena Home Staging and Decora Photography. As your professional home stager and photographer, I will work with both you and your real estate agent to help ensure that your house sells quickly and at the price you deserve.

So, before you put your house on the market, contact me for a pre-listing consultation so that it will be ready for homebuyers when you're ready to sell it!

I look forward to meeting you.