



SELLING YOUR HOME 101

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO A SUCCESSFUL HOME SALE

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Welcome! Whether you're a first-time seller or experienced, this guide walks you through every step. From preparation to closing, we've compiled expert advice to help you get the best possible outcome. Let's get started!

CHAPTER
1**Understanding the Home Selling Process**

Selling a home is one of the biggest financial transactions most people will ever make. Understanding the process helps you make informed decisions, avoid common pitfalls, and achieve the best outcome. The process typically takes a few weeks to several months, depending on market conditions, your home's condition, and your selling method.

- 1 Decide to Sell**
Evaluate your reasons, assess your finances, and determine your timeline. Consider your remaining mortgage balance and equity.
- 2 Choose Your Selling Method**
Work with an agent, sell by owner (FSBO), or sell to a cash home buyer. Each has distinct advantages.
- 3 Prepare Your Home**
Make repairs, declutter, deep clean, and stage to create the best first impression.
- 4 Set Your Price**
Research comparable sales and determine a competitive asking price. Overpricing is the most common mistake.
- 5 Market Your Property**
List on the MLS, take professional photos, create compelling descriptions, and promote across channels.
- 6 Review Offers & Negotiate**
Evaluate offers based on price, contingencies, timeline, and buyer qualifications.
- 7 Close the Sale**
Complete inspections, appraisals, and paperwork. Transfer title and receive your proceeds.

★ PRO TIP

Start early. Beginning preparation 3–6 months in advance gives you time for improvements that can significantly increase your home's value.

CHAPTER
2

Preparing Your Home for Sale

How you present your home can make or break a sale. Clean, well-maintained, and staged homes sell faster and for more money.

Declutter & Depersonalize

Remove personal photos, excess furniture, and knick-knacks. Clear closets and storage areas—buyers will look inside! A minimal space feels larger and more inviting.

Deep Clean Everything

Consider hiring professional cleaners. Focus on kitchens, bathrooms, windows, carpets, and baseboards. Pet smells and cooking odors can be deal-breakers.

Make Strategic Repairs

Focus on fixes buyers notice most and that raise inspection red flags:

- Fix leaky faucets and running toilets
- Repair cracked or damaged drywall
- Replace burned-out light bulbs and broken fixtures
- Fix squeaky doors and stuck windows
- Address visible water damage or stains
- Ensure all major systems (HVAC, electrical, plumbing) are functional

Boost Curb Appeal

The exterior is the first thing buyers see. Simple improvements have dramatic impact:

- Mow the lawn, trim hedges, and pull weeds
- Power wash driveway, walkways, and siding
- Paint or stain the front door
- Add fresh mulch and potted plants to the porch
- Ensure house numbers are visible and mailbox is in good condition

Stage to Sell

Arrange furniture to maximize space, add fresh flowers, use neutral linens and towels, and ensure every room has a clear purpose.

★ PRO TIP

The kitchen and master bathroom matter most. Even small updates—new hardware, fresh paint, modern fixtures—can transform these spaces on a limited budget.

**CHAPTER
3**

Pricing Your Home Right

Pricing is the most critical decision you'll make. Too high and it sits; too low and you leave money on the table. Find the sweet spot that attracts maximum interest while reflecting true market value.

How to Determine Your Home's Value

Look at comparable sales ("comps")—similar homes nearby that recently sold. Match on size, age, condition, and location. Focus on sales within the last 3–6 months.

Factors That Influence Value

Factor	Impact
Location & Neighborhood	Proximity to schools, amenities, desirable areas
Square Footage & Layout	Total living space and floor plan functionality
Age & Condition	Newer or renovated homes command higher prices
Bedrooms / Bathrooms	More beds and baths generally increase value
Lot Size	Larger lots add value, especially in suburban areas
Upgrades & Renovations	Modern kitchens, baths, and energy-efficient features
Market Conditions	Seller's vs. buyer's market affects pricing

Common Pricing Mistakes

- **Overpricing based on emotion:** Buyers compare to other options. Price on data, not feelings.
- **Ignoring market feedback:** Few showings after 2–3 weeks? The price is too high.
- **"Leaving room for negotiation":** Buyers skip overpriced homes. A well-priced home attracts multiple offers.
- **Not accounting for repairs:** Buyers factor in obvious repair costs when offering.

Did You Know? Homes priced correctly from day one sell for ~3% more than those requiring price reductions. Getting the price right immediately is crucial.

CHAPTER
4**Marketing Your Property**

Most buyers start online. How you present and promote your home directly impacts how many buyers see it, how fast it sells, and the final price.

Professional Photography Is Non-Negotiable

Professional photos get significantly more views and sell homes faster. A pro captures the best angles and lighting—phone photos won't cut it in a competitive market.

Write a Compelling Listing Description

Highlight what makes your home unique: updated features, neighborhood, natural light, outdoor space, energy efficiency. Be specific—"sun-filled open floor plan with vaulted ceilings" beats "beautiful home."

Leverage Multiple Channels

- **MLS Listing:** The primary database feeding Zillow, Realtor.com, and Redfin.
- **Social Media:** Facebook, Instagram, and neighborhood groups. Video walkthroughs perform well.
- **Virtual Tours:** 3D tours widen your buyer pool by reaching remote buyers.
- **Open Houses:** In-person and virtual events create urgency and multi-buyer interest.
- **Yard Signs & Flyers:** Many buyers find homes driving through target neighborhoods.

★ PRO TIP

List on a Thursday or Friday. Buyers search online during the week and schedule weekend showings. A Thursday launch maximizes first-weekend traffic.

CHAPTER
5

Navigating Offers & Negotiations

Don't let emotion drive decisions. Every offer deserves careful evaluation. Understanding the key components helps you negotiate from strength.

What to Look for in an Offer

- **Purchase Price:** At, above, or below asking? How does it compare to market value?
- **Financing Type:** Cash is strongest. Conventional loans beat FHA/VA for reliability.
- **Contingencies:** Fewer = smoother transaction. Common ones: inspection, appraisal, financing.
- **Closing Timeline:** Does the buyer's timeline align with yours?
- **Earnest Money:** Larger deposits signal serious buyers and provide more protection.

Your Three Options

- A Accept**
If it meets your needs, accept as-is. Once signed, you're under contract.
- B Counter**
If close but not right, submit a counteroffer—adjusted price, date, or contingencies.
- C Reject**
If too far off, decline. But always consider countering before rejecting outright.

Negotiation Tips

- Stay objective—don't take lowball offers personally
- Know your bottom line before negotiations begin
- Respond promptly—delays cause buyers to lose interest
- Consider the full package, not just price
- Offer small concessions to keep deals moving
- Multiple offers? Use them as leverage for better terms

CHAPTER
6

The Closing Process

After accepting an offer, closing typically takes 30–45 days for financed purchases and as few as 7–14 days for cash sales.

What Happens During Closing

- 1 Home Inspection**
The buyer hires a licensed inspector. They may request repairs or credits based on findings.
- 2 Appraisal**
The lender confirms the home’s value supports the loan. If low, you may renegotiate.
- 3 Title Search & Insurance**
A title company verifies clear ownership with no liens or disputes.
- 4 Final Walkthrough**
The buyer verifies condition and completed repairs 24–48 hours before closing.
- 5 Signing & Settlement**
Sign the deed and legal documents. Funds transfer and you receive proceeds via wire within 1–2 days.

Closing Costs for Sellers (typically 8–10% of sale price)

Cost Item	Typical Range
Agent Commissions	5–6% of sale price
Title Insurance & Fees	\$1,000–\$3,000
Transfer Taxes	Varies by state / locality
Attorney Fees	\$500–\$1,500 (if required)
Mortgage Payoff	Remaining balance
Prorated Property Taxes	Depends on closing date
Repairs / Credits to Buyer	Negotiated amount

CHAPTER
7

Traditional Sale vs. Cash Home Buyers

Listing with an agent works for many sellers, but selling to a cash buyer offers speed, convenience, and certainty. Here's how they compare:

Traditional Sale	Cash Home Buyer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes 3–6 months on average • Requires preparation & staging • Open houses and showings • Buyer financing may fall through • 5–6% agent commissions • Inspection & appraisal contingencies • Closing costs for sellers • Potential for higher sale price 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close in as few as 7–14 days • Sell as-is — no repairs needed • No showings or open houses • No financing risk • No agent commissions • Minimal or no contingencies • Often covers closing costs • Fair market-based offer

When a Cash Buyer Makes Sense

- **Need to sell quickly:** Job relocation, financial hardship, or life changes.
- **Home needs major repairs:** Cash buyers purchase as-is.
- **Facing foreclosure:** A fast sale can protect your credit.
- **Inherited property:** Quick, hassle-free solution for unwanted homes.
- **Want to avoid the hassle:** No showings, staging, or waiting.
- **Problem tenants or vacancies:** Get the property off your hands fast.

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CHAPTER
8**Your Home Selling Checklist**

Print this checklist and check off each item as you go!

Before Listing

- Determine your reason and timeline for selling
- Research your home's market value (review comps)
- Decide on a selling method (agent, FSBO, or cash buyer)
- Gather documents (deed, mortgage statement, tax records)
- Complete necessary repairs and maintenance
- Declutter, depersonalize, and deep clean
- Improve curb appeal / stage your home
- Hire a professional photographer

During the Listing Period

- Keep the home show-ready at all times
- Be flexible with showing schedules
- Review feedback and adjust price if needed
- Review all offers carefully with your agent or advisor

Under Contract

- Cooperate with the home inspection process
- Negotiate any repair requests
- Ensure the appraisal goes smoothly
- Begin packing and planning your move
- Complete agreed-upon repairs before closing
- Schedule utility transfers / disconnections

At Closing

- Review the settlement statement (Closing Disclosure)
- Bring valid government-issued ID
- Sign all required documents
- Hand over keys, garage remotes, and warranties
- Confirm receipt of proceeds



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