



GUIDE

to **SELLING YOUR HOME**

Real Estate 101

Real Estate Transaction Refresher

This may be the first time you've ever sold a real estate property. Or, it may have been some time since you've been involved in a real estate transaction. Here's a quick refresher on some of the real estate specific terms you'll want to review.

Real Estate Brokers and Real Estate Agents

Listing agreements are made between Real Estate Brokers and Sellers. A Real Estate Agent or Sales Person works for the licensed real estate broker. The commission for the sale of your home will be paid to the real estate broker. The real estate broker will pay a split of that commission to me, the real estate agent.

The Fair Housing Act

The Fair Housing Act, originally passed in 1968 and amended in 1988 is a federal law in the United States that prohibits discrimination in housing.

Seven "classes" are protected under the Fair Housing Act. They are:

- Race
- Color
- Religion
- National Origin
- Sex
- Handicap
- Familial Status

As I market and sell your property, it illegal for me to use any words or phrases that would be deemed discriminatory to these groups. You can learn more about The Fair Housing Act at www.HUD.gov.

YOUR REAL ESTATE BROKER IS:

Bill Rapp
(281) 222-0433
BillRappRE@Gmail.com

YOUR PROPERTY LISTING WILL BE SYNDICATED IN THE FOLLOWING ONLINE SERVICES:

www.HAR.com
www.trulia.com
www.HoustonRealEstateSoldbyBill.com

The Multiple Listing Service (MLS)

The Multiple Listing Service is a proprietary database of all properties currently under an active listing contract in a given area.

All active agents and brokers who belong to this MLS will have access to information about your property listing. Buyer's agents searching for a new home for their clients will learn about your property listing through this online database.

Appraisal

Before you signed your listing contract with me, I offered you a competitive market analysis of your home's value. We will set the final asking price on your property based on this market value estimate.

When you receive an offer on your home, the buyer's lender will require an official appraisal of the property from a licensed appraiser. This valuation helps assure the lender that they would own a marketable property if the buyer (or the borrower in the lender's eyes) should default on their mortgage. The buyer will pay for the house appraisal, but you should know that it may be different than the market analysis that I provided you.

Inspection

In addition to an official appraisal, most interested buyers will request a home inspection before final sale. The goal of a home inspection is to give the buyer an objective, independent and comprehensive analysis of the physical condition of your property and check for any safety issues that might otherwise be unknowable.

A professional inspector will check on the structure, construction and mechanical systems of the house. This usually includes checking:

- Electrical systems
- Plumbing and waste disposal
- Water heater
- Insulation
- Ventilation
- HVAC system
- Water source and quality
- Waste disposal
- Pests
- Foundation
- Doors
- Windows
- Ceilings
- Walls
- Floors
- Roof
- Radon gas
- Asbestos
- Lead paint

I would advise you to order an inspection of your home before we place your house on the market. Not knowing the full extent of potential problems until an offer is made by a buyer is a recipe for an ugly negotiation process.



Showing Appointments / Open Houses

Buyers in the market for a new home will arrange showing appointments to see your property through their buyer's agent or through me. When an interested buyer is scheduled to see your property, it's best if you, your family and any pets you may own are not at home.

Buying a new home is a very emotional process, and it's sometimes hard for prospective home owners to imagine themselves living in a particular place when the current resident is still inside. I will work with you and the other real estate professionals who will be showing your home to schedule and supervise the many listing appointments that will be made when your house goes on the market.

Additionally, I may ask that we have an Open House at your property. Open Houses are usually most effective on the weekends during several hours in the afternoon.

These home showings will most likely be an inconvenience for you and your family during the home selling process. I will do everything I can to work with you to minimize the impact, but I believe that an aggressive showing schedule will help us sell your property quickly, which is our ultimate goal.

Home Staging

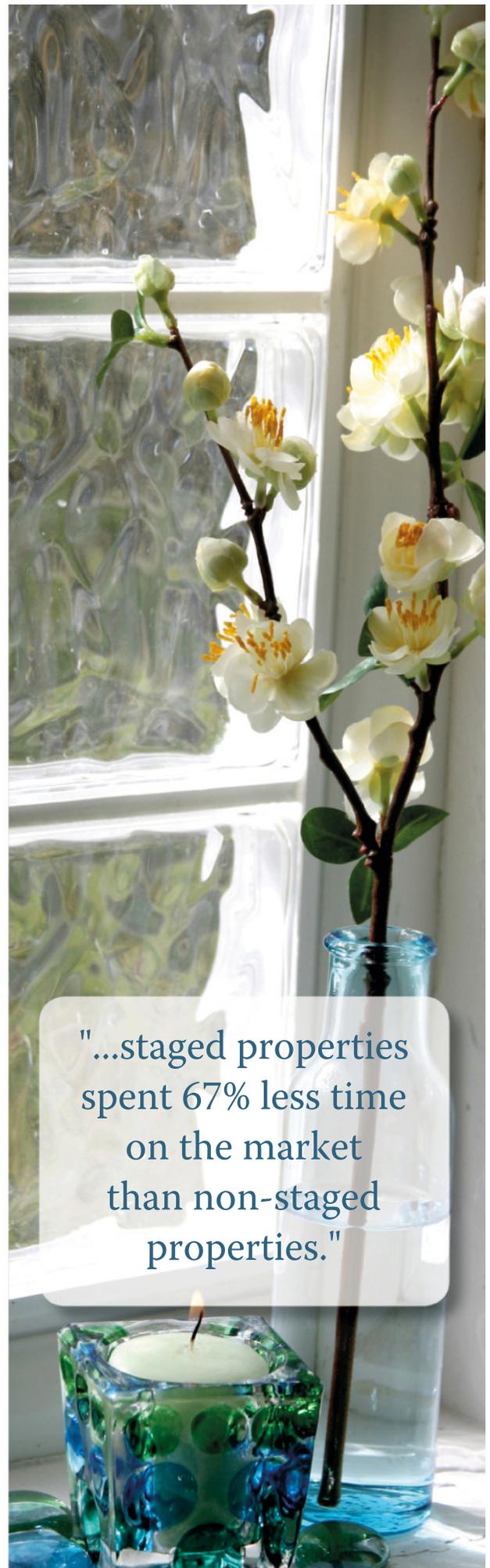
According to the Real Estate Staging Association, a properly staged home can:

- Increase a property's perceived value
- Help a listing's competitiveness in a down real estate market
- Drastically reduce the Days on Market (DOM) of a property

In fact, their 2010 study on both vacant and occupied homes showed that staged properties spent 67% less time on the market than non-staged properties.

Home staging is designed to ***market and sell your home in a way that's appealing to the largest buyer audience possible.*** Staging uses simple design principles, and may radically alter the way that your home is arranged and decorated.

It is possible to stage both a vacant and owner-occupied property. Before activating your listing, we should discuss the benefits and requirements of professionally staging your home for sale.



"...staged properties spent 67% less time on the market than non-staged properties."



Selling Shape

From the day that your house goes on the market to the day it closes, your property needs to be in "Selling Shape". It may take a little getting use-to, but you and your family will have to make the transition to thinking about your house as a property and not a home. This is certainly an inconvenience if you're still living in your house, but the effort is well worth it.

So how can we work together to get your property into selling shape? Let's just follow some simple rules.

First. Fix it.

Anything that is in your house that is in disrepair and can be easily fixed should be addressed before the home goes up for sale. We'll want to pay particular attention to the front exterior and the most important rooms in the house: The master bedroom, the kitchen, and the living room.

Next. Clean it.

Clean, clean and more clean. From the inside out, a clean listing is a happy listing. And remember, it's not good enough to just put things away. Potential buyers will and do open closets and drawers throughout the house when they're looking at your listing. Be sure to keep personal items that you do not want on display in drawers that are clearly your personal furniture.

The more organized you can be, the better.

Last. Open it.

Making your house appear as attractive as possible is largely about allowing potential buyers the opportunity to imagine their lives in your property. As mentioned earlier in this guide, professional staging services can help in selling your listing by using design principles and tricks that emphasize space. Creating the appearance of openness and





space is key to getting your property sold. Remember, you're not selling your stuff!

Whether we choose to professionally stage your house or not, here are some simple practices that will help us keep your home looking open and appealing:

1. If it's smaller than a grapefruit, it needs to be put away. Get rid of or pack away anything that isn't essential. Everything else that is small but cannot be packed should be put away in a drawer or cabinet during showing appointments.
2. Limit the number of items on top of any surface to 3.
3. Beware of odors: Bad ones and strong ones.

It's not just the stinky stuff you need to pay attention to. There are obvious problem points that can produce bad smells like the garbage cans and the disposal, but you should consider any strong smell a bad one. Don't rely on potpourri or air fresheners to mask unpleasant odors. These can be just as offensive to some buyers. Instead, be sure to open your windows when possible to keep fresh air circulating in the house.

The only exception to the strong smells rule is chocolate. Baking sweet chocolate treats before showing appointments or open houses can help potential buyers feel at home when viewing your house.



The Offer is Accepted.

Now Let's Get to Sold.

Once we've received an acceptable offer and have entered into a buying contract, there are several steps that will need to be completed before the transaction and transfer of your property is complete.

On a typical home sale, here's how things will run:

1. The buyer submits "earnest money" that is deposited into your real estate broker's account.
2. A title policy will be ordered on your property.
3. We will set a closing date with the buyer.
4. The buyer will order an appraisal and in most cases, an independent home inspection.
5. The buyer will remove the "conditions of sale" after the appraisal and home inspection, try and renegotiate their initial offer, or remove their offer entirely.
6. You will need to complete any agreed upon requests for repair that were submitted by the buyer before the closing date.
7. The buyer will most likely schedule a walk through to verify the condition of the property and see any repairs that were made right before your closing appointment.
8. After the final offer is finalized we will submit the final legal disclosures and other material facts relevant to your property.
9. Closing is scheduled and completed. Your house is sold!

What will happen at the closing meeting?

Closing is the legal transfer of ownership of the home from seller to buyer. It is a formal meeting that most parties involved in the transaction will attend. Closing procedures are usually held at the title company or lawyer's office. Your closing officer will coordinate the signing of documents and the collection of and disbursement of funds.

In order to ensure a smooth closing you will need to:

Review the Settlement Statement or HUD-1 that the buyer's lender or closing agent will provide you 1 to 2 days before closing. These documents will contain a detailed description of all costs associated with the transaction, including the exact dollar amount the buyer will need to bring to closing.

Verify with your closing agent any other items that you need to bring with you such as a valid driver's license or other form of identification.

You'll also want to submit a formal pre-payment notice to your lender.



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"Your dedicated, preferred, and referred Real Estate professional"

Let me put over 10 year of industry experience to work for you!

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