



Ten Steps to Selling Your Home For-Sale-By-Owner

- 1. Define your goals, wants, needs and expectations.** A good place to begin is by exploring your short and long term goals in life and how selling your home fits in.
- 2. Determine the best price for what's going on in the market right now.** Assess the current state of the market and what comparable homes are actually selling for In your neighborhood. That way, you can objectively determine its *fair market value* and price it right.
- 3. Prepare your property so that it is in top-selling condition.** Most of us don't keep our homes in top-selling condition. Think about your home from a buyer's point of view. Repair, replace or remove items in your home so that it makes a GREAT first impression.
- 4. Implement time-proven, research-based marketing strategies.** Market your home to as many people as possible using for sale signs, flyer boxes, open houses, feedback tracking and web listings.
- 5. Show your property.** Ensure that your home is always in top-selling condition. When you leave for work, make sure that your home remains in top-selling condition. You know what they say about first impressions!
- 6. Receive an offer.** When a buyer decides to buy your home, an offer will be presented. Consult with legal counsel. Don't forget to open an escrow account and order title insurance once you accept an offer. You will also deposit the earnest money funds received from the buyer into your escrow account.
- 7. Negotiate to sell.** Most offers require some level of negotiation. Decide your parameters and be prepared to negotiate towards a win-win situation.
- 8. Have your home appraised and inspected.** Once you have accepted an offer, work with the buyer or buyer's agent to coordinate an appraisal and all requested inspections. If the buyer requires that certain repairs be made on your home, negotiate or make them to move successfully from contract to closing.
- 9. Prepare for closing.** A few days before closing, contact the title and escrow company and the buyer or buyer's agent to ensure that all the necessary forms and documents have been prepared. Consult with legal counsel.
- 10. Close!** At the signing, ownership of your property is legally transferred to the buyer. Closing will occur within the next 3 business days and the escrow officer will disburse the check for your net proceeds. Keys will be turned over to the buyers as per agreement, typically once the new deed is recorded.

Getting Your Home in Top Selling Condition

Curb Appeal

- Drive up to your home and look at it from afar. Look at it through the eyes of buyers.
- Check the shingles - repair or replace damaged shingles.
- Clean and repair the gutters.
- Clean and repair the HVAC units.
- Repair broken windows and shutters. Replace torn screens. Make sure frames and seams have solid caulking.
- Repair or replace door knobs, doorbell and light fixtures if necessary.
- Remove all toys, equipment and litter.
- Remove cobwebs and nests.
- Remove mildew, moss and stains from the side of your home - use bleach. Remove stains from the walkways and driveway - use concrete cleanser and/or kitty litter.
- Repair and clean patio furniture and deck area. Remove anything that can't be repaired.
- Make sure the spa and pool sparkle.
- Go around and touch up the exterior of your home with putty and paint.
- Clean or paint the front door and mailbox.
- Hose off the exterior of your home, especially around entrances. Use siding cleanser.
- Wash the windows.
- Wash your garbage can and put it in a place where it's not the first thing potential buyers see when they drive up.
- Mow the lawn.
- Trim the trees and shrubs.
- Weed the gardens.
- Add colorful plants or foliage to fill in bare spots.
- Edge the gardens and walkways.
- Sweep the walkways and driveway.
- Replace doormats that are worn and torn.
- Shine brass hardware on the doors and light fixtures. Polish stained wood doors and trim.
- Drive up to your home again and look at it from the eyes of a potential buyer. Walk into your home as a potential buyer. Determine what kind of impression the walkways and entrances now make.

Overall Interior

- Walk through your home. Store, give away, throw, or donate anything that you won't need until after the move; e.g. furniture, knick-knacks, clothing, toys, equipment, appliances, worn rugs, papers, books, cosmetics, jewelry, games, CDs, etc.
- Walk through your home again, this time with some tools. Fix loose door knobs, cracked molding, leaky faucets. Remove cob webs.
- Replace worn or broken door knobs, cabinet fixtures, light fixtures, light switches, outlet plates, faucets and vent covers.
- Clean the fireplace.
- Clean the vents.
- Clean and organize your closets. Add extra space by storing or giving away items.
- Add a fresh coat of paint in light, neutral colors.
- Shampoo the carpet. Replace if necessary. Clean and wax the floors.
- Vacuum the window blinds, shades and drapes. Wash or dry clean curtains. Wash all the windows, frames and sills.
- Add dishes of potpourri.
- Remove all valuables, such as jewelry, artwork, knick-knacks, medications, cash, coin collections and so on.
- Open all the window shades to create a spacious and bright look.
- Put pet supplies and dishes in a place where they are not the first thing potential buyers see or smell when they walk into a room.

Living Room and Family Room

- Make these rooms spacious and inviting.
- Discard or repair chipped furniture. Replace worn rugs and pillows.
- Remove magazines, games, toys and so on.
- Make sure the entertainment center sparkles.
- Vacuum upholstery, drapes, pillows, etc.

Dining Room

- Clean out your china cabinet. Polish any visible silver.
- Put a lovely centerpiece on the table - treat yourself to fresh flowers. Set the table for a formal dinner to help potential buyers imagine entertaining there.

Bedrooms

- Arrange furniture to create a spacious look.
- Remove games, toys, magazines, cosmetics, jewelry - especially on the nightstands.
- Replace bedspreads, quilts and pillow shams if they are worn or faded.

Bathrooms

- Remove rust and mildew stains.
- Wash or replace shower curtains.
- Make sure everything sparkles - including grout.
- Replace worn rugs and towels.

Kitchen

- Make sure all appliances work.
- Clean the inside of the refrigerator, stove and cabinets. Make sure everything is organized to create a spacious look.
- If your stove has electric burners, purchase new drip pans for each burner. Wash removable knobs in your dishwasher.
- Polish the cabinets with furniture oil.
- Make sure appliances, countertops and the sink sparkle. Install new faucets if necessary.

Attic, Basement and Garage

- Get rid of unnecessary items. Store or pack items you won't need until after the move.
- Organize everything to create more floor space and make inspections easy. Put things on shelves or in matching boxes.
- Provide bright lighting.
- Clean all equipment and vents. Replace filters. Fix any insulation that might be showing.
- Take care of stale or musty odors. Open the windows, dust and wash the walls and floors, purchase room deodorizers.

When It's Time to Show

- Make sure your property folder is out in the open. It should contain utility bills, an MLS profile, your Seller's Disclosure, extra property flyers and extra business cards.
- Do a quick clean and vacuum. Air out your house. Dispose all trash.
- Put pets outside if it's safe to do so.
- Turn on a radio with peaceful music.

