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REAL BROKER ONTARIO LTD.

HAMILTON, ONTARIO

Hamilton Home Seller's Guide

A practical guide to selling a home in Hamilton, Ontario.

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WELCOME

Selling a home is more than putting a property on the market. It's understanding your home's position, making informed decisions and moving confidently from the first conversation to closing day.

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01

PART 01

Before You List

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CHAPTER 01

The Home-Selling Journey

Selling a home is a series of decisions.

Knowing what happens — and when — makes the process easier to manage and helps you decide well at each stage.

1

STEP 1

Decide If It's Time to Sell

Consider why you're selling, where you're going next and what the move needs to accomplish.

You don't need every answer before starting the conversation.

2

STEP 2

Choose Your REALTOR®

The REALTOR® you choose shapes your strategy, from preparation and pricing to marketing, negotiation and closing.

Choose someone whose approach, experience and communication style fit what you need.

3

STEP 3

Prepare Your Home

Decide what to repair, update, declutter, clean, stage — or leave alone.

The goal isn't to spend money for its own sake. It's to put money and effort where they improve how your home shows and sells.

4

STEP 4

Set Your Pricing Strategy

Your asking price should reflect the current market, your home's characteristics and the strategy you choose — not simply what you paid or what you believe it's worth.

CHAPTER 01 • THE HOME-SELLING JOURNEY

5

STEP 5

Launch the Marketing

With the home ready and the strategy set, it goes to market through professional photography, a strong listing, online exposure and the marketing that suits the property.

6

STEP 6

Manage Showings & Buyer Interest

Buyers and their agents begin evaluating your home.

Showings, feedback and questions tell you how the market is responding.

7

STEP 7

Evaluate & Negotiate Offers

The best offer isn't always the highest number. Price, deposit, conditions and closing date all affect an offer's strength.

Understand the trade-offs before you respond.

8

STEP 8

Close the Sale

After you accept an offer, conditions are dealt with, deadlines met, documents completed and closing coordinated with your lawyer and the buyer's side.

The goal is a smooth path from accepted offer to completed sale.

THE BIG PICTURE

DECIDE → CHOOSE → PREPARE → PRICE → MARKET → SHOW → NEGOTIATE → CLOSE

Selling well isn't about putting a house on the market.

It's about making good decisions at each stage.

CHAPTER 02

Before You Sell

Before you list, a few decisions shape everything that follows.

The more you understand about your situation, the more deliberately you can approach the sale.

Understand Why You're Selling

Ask yourself:

- Why am I selling?
- Where am I going next?
- What does the move need to accomplish?
- Is there a particular timeframe?
- Do I need to buy another home before selling?
- What financial considerations matter most?

Your answers shape timing, preparation and pricing.

Think About Your Financial Picture

Consider:

- Mortgage balance and discharge costs
- Real estate commission
- Legal fees
- Preparation and repairs
- Cleaning and staging
- Moving costs

Knowing your approximate net proceeds matters most when you're planning your next move.

Understand Your Home's Position

Consider:

- Recent sales of comparable homes
- Current competing listings
- Your home's condition
- Location and neighbourhood
- Features that set the property apart
- Current buyer demand
- How quickly similar homes are selling

This gives context to every decision that follows.

Think About Timing

The best time to sell isn't set by the calendar. Your circumstances, your property, the local market and your next move all matter.

Sometimes it makes sense to prepare now and sell later. Sometimes circumstances call for moving quickly.

What matters is understanding the trade-offs.

CHAPTER 02 • BEFORE YOU SELL

Situations to Raise Early

Some circumstances add steps to a sale. Raise them before you list, so they don't surprise you later.

Selling a Matrimonial Home

If you're married and the home is your matrimonial home, your spouse generally has to consent to the sale — even if their name isn't on title.

Selling an Estate

An estate trustee may need a Certificate of Appointment (probate) before the sale can close. Talk to the estate lawyer before setting a closing date.

Selling as a Non-Resident

If you're not a resident of Canada for tax purposes, part of the sale proceeds is generally held back until the Canada Revenue Agency issues a clearance certificate. Get tax advice early.

Buying and Selling at the Same Time

Decide whether you need to sell before you buy, and plan your two closing dates together so your move and your financing line up.

You don't need to list just because you're thinking about selling. Planning can begin well before listing.

CHAPTER 03

Choosing Your REALTOR®

Selling a home is more than putting a property on MLS®.

Your REALTOR® influences how your home is prepared, priced, presented, marketed and negotiated — and how the deal is managed after you accept an offer.

Look Beyond the Listing

Ask how the REALTOR® approaches:

- Market positioning
- Preparation
- What is worth doing — and what isn't
- Pricing
- Professional presentation
- Marketing
- Showings and feedback
- Offers and negotiation
- Managing the deal through closing

Questions Worth Asking

Before choosing a REALTOR®, ask:

- How will you determine my asking price?
- What would you recommend before listing?
- What would you not recommend doing?
- How will you market my home?
- How will you know if the market is responding?
- How will offers be handled?
- What happens after an offer is accepted?
- How will you keep me informed?

CHAPTER 03 • CHOOSING YOUR REALTOR®

Understand the Relationship

Make sure you understand:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| — The services the brokerage provides | — The terms and length of the agreement |
| — The nature of the relationship | — How the agreement can be ended |
| — The commission | — Your responsibilities as a seller |

Know what you're agreeing to before you sign.

Your brokerage must give you RECO's Information Guide before you sign a listing agreement. You can read it now: [RECO Information Guide](#).

Experience Matters. So Does Approach.

Experience counts. So does a willingness to tell you what you need to hear — about preparation, about price and about timing.

The best REALTOR® isn't the one who tells you what you want to hear. It's the one who helps you make better decisions.

CHAPTER 04

Understanding Your Home's Value

Most sellers start with one question:

“What is my home worth?”

The answer isn't set by what you paid, what you've invested or what your neighbour's house sold for.

Market value is what buyers will pay for a home like yours in today's market.

What Influences Value?

— Location	— Features and updates	— Current market conditions
— Size and layout	— Lot	— Buyer demand
— Condition	— Parking	— Comparable properties

Comparable Sales

A USEFUL COMPARISON ISN'T SIMPLY:

“What did that house sell for?”

THE BETTER QUESTION IS:

“How does that house compare with mine?”

Location, size, condition, layout, lot, parking and renovations all change the comparison.

CHAPTER 04 • UNDERSTANDING YOUR HOME'S VALUE

IN HAMILTON, LOCATION IS SPECIFIC

Comparable sales don't cross Hamilton's neighbourhoods cleanly. A home on the Mountain competes in a different market than one in the Lower City, Dundas, Ancaster, Waterdown or Stoney Creek — and values can shift street by street.

Good comparables come from the same area, the same type of home and the same point in the market.

Don't Let Emotion Set the Price

What you paid matters to you. So does what you've put into the home.

But buyers compare your home with the alternatives available to them today — not with your investment or your attachment to it.

Market Value and Asking Price

They don't have to be the same number. Your asking price is a strategy, covered in Chapter 08.

The goal isn't the highest imaginable number. It's the strategy that gives you the best chance of the result you want.



02

PART 02

Preparing & Pricing

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CHAPTER 05

Preparing Your Home for Sale

How your home looks and feels shapes how buyers see it.

That doesn't mean renovating everything. The goal is to find the preparation that makes the right difference.

Start With the Big Picture

Look for:

- Deferred repairs
- Visible wear or damage
- Clutter and excess belongings
- Crowded rooms
- Highly personal items
- Unused or inefficient areas
- Exterior maintenance issues
- Anything likely to worry a buyer

Sometimes the best preparation is simply removing things.

Declutter & Pre-Pack

Consider:

- Removing excess furniture
- Clearing countertops
- Organizing closets and storage
- Packing nonessential items
- Removing highly personal items
- Simplifying crowded rooms

Pre-packing also gives you a head start on the move.

Complete Necessary Repairs

Focus first on issues that are:

- Noticeable
- Relatively inexpensive to fix
- Likely to raise buyer questions
- Important to the home's condition
- Likely to come up in a home inspection

Your REALTOR® should help you prioritize, not hand you a long renovation list.

CHAPTER 05 • PREPARING YOUR HOME FOR SALE

OLDER HAMILTON HOMES

Much of Hamilton's housing is decades old, and buyers' inspectors know where to look. Expect questions about:

- Older wiring, including knob-and-tube or aluminum
- Older plumbing and water service lines
- Roof age and condition
- Foundations, grading and basement moisture
- Heating systems, and any current or former oil tank
- Renovations done without permits

Some of these can affect a buyer's insurance or financing. It's better to know about them before a buyer does.

Consider a Pre-Listing Inspection

A pre-listing inspection finds issues before buyers do. You can then repair them, price for them or disclose them on your terms — and buyers may feel comfortable offering with fewer conditions.

Whether it makes sense comes down to your home's age and condition and the market. Decide case by case.

Don't Automatically Renovate

Not every improvement is recovered through the sale. Weigh:

- The cost
- The likely buyer appeal
- The condition of competing homes
- The current market
- Whether the money is better spent elsewhere

Sometimes the best recommendation is not to do the work.

CHAPTER 05 • PREPARING YOUR HOME FOR SALE

Paint & Touch-Ups

Depending on the home:

- Touch up scuffs
- Repaint strong or highly personal colours
- Address visible wear
- Create a more consistent look

The goal isn't perfection. It's removing distractions.

Clean & Organize

Pay particular attention to:

- Kitchens
- Bathrooms
- Floors and carpets
- Windows
- Closets
- Storage areas
- Appliances
- Exterior areas

Professional cleaning is often worth it before photography and showings.

Preparing your home isn't about making it perfect. It's about informed decisions that help buyers see its potential.

CHAPTER 06

Home Staging

Staging isn't about making your home look like a showroom.

It's about helping buyers understand the space, see how it could work for them and notice the home's best features.

A professional stager brings an objective eye to decisions that are hard to make about your own home.

What Good Staging Does

Effective staging can:

- Make rooms feel more spacious
- Improve flow through the home
- Highlight desirable features
- Minimize distractions
- Create a more neutral environment
- Help buyers picture themselves living there

Start With What You Already Have

Staging doesn't always mean bringing in new furniture. It can mean:

- Removing furniture
- Rearranging rooms
- Editing accessories and décor
- Removing personal photographs
- Simplifying colour and visual distractions
- Adding or repositioning lighting
- Creating a better sense of space and flow

Sometimes less is more.

CHAPTER 06 • HOME STAGING

EVERY ROOM HAS A JOB

Ask what each room is telling a buyer.

A room that has become storage may need to be cleared. A dining room that has become an office may need to be reconsidered. A basement full of boxes may need to show how the space could actually be used.

The objective is to make the home's potential easy to understand.

Don't Overstage

The home still needs to feel authentic. Buyers should be able to picture living there without feeling they're walking through a temporary set.

The best staging supports the home rather than distracting from it.

Why a Professional Stager Helps

A trained stager notices what you stopped seeing years ago, and assesses:

- Furniture placement
- Room function
- Colour and lighting
- Décor and scale
- Flow
- What to remove, store or add

The purpose of staging isn't to make your home look expensive. It's to make it easier for the right buyer to see themselves living there.

RELATED RESOURCE

Home Staging Guide



CHAPTER 07

Disclosure & Documents

Being upfront about your home protects you and keeps a deal together.

Problems that surface late — during a buyer's inspection, or after closing — cost more to deal with than problems handled early.

What You Must Disclose

In Ontario, sellers must disclose latent defects: hidden problems a reasonably careful buyer wouldn't notice that make a home dangerous, potentially dangerous or unfit to live in.

You can't avoid this by choosing not to look. Concealing a defect, or ignoring obvious warning signs, can leave you liable after closing.

If you're unsure whether something must be disclosed, get legal advice.

The Seller Property Information Statement

Some sellers complete a Seller Property Information Statement (SPIS), a questionnaire about the property's history and condition. It isn't mandatory.

Your answers become statements a buyer relies on. Complete it carefully and accurately — or discuss with your REALTOR® and lawyer whether to use it at all.

Secondary Units & Renovations

If your home has a basement apartment or other secondary unit, confirm it has the required City of Hamilton permits and approvals before it's marketed as a legal unit.

The same applies to additions, major renovations and finished basements. Buyers, lenders and insurers will ask.

CHAPTER 07 • DISCLOSURE & DOCUMENTS

Documents to Gather

Having these ready before you list saves time once buyers start asking questions:

- Mortgage statement and lender contact
- Property tax bill
- Typical utility costs
- Survey, if you have one
- Permits for renovations and additions
- Warranties and records for the roof, windows and mechanical systems
- Records of major repairs and upgrades, with dates
- Rental or lease agreements, if the home is tenanted
- For condos: the status certificate, ordered from the condominium corporation

SELLING A TENANTED HOME

A tenancy affects your timing, your showings and what a buyer can do after closing. Get advice before you list, not after you've accepted an offer.

Disclosure isn't a weakness in your listing. It's what lets a buyer commit with confidence.

CHAPTER 08

Pricing Your Home

Choosing an asking price is one of the most important decisions you'll make.

TOO HIGH

Price too high and you may discourage buyers, generate little activity and end up reducing the price.

TOO LOW

Price too low and you may leave money on the table.

Your pricing strategy should rest on the market, your property and your goals.

Start With the Evidence

A proper pricing analysis considers:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| — Recent comparable sales | — Renovations and upgrades |
| — Current competing listings | — Lot and outdoor features |
| — Properties that failed to sell | — Parking |
| — Location | — Current buyer demand |
| — Size and layout | — How quickly comparable homes are selling |
| — Condition | |

No single comparable tells the whole story.

Sold Properties Matter Most

CURRENT LISTINGS

Current listings tell you what your competition is asking.

SOLD PROPERTIES

Sold properties tell you what buyers actually paid.

That's why recent comparable sales carry the most weight — and why the real work is finding genuinely comparable homes and understanding the differences between them.

CHAPTER 08 • PRICING YOUR HOME

Your Home Isn't Worth What You Spent on It

Renovations, maintenance and improvements may have made your home better for you.

But buyers don't value every improvement dollar-for-dollar. The market decides what those improvements add.

Asking Price Is a Strategy

Market value and asking price don't have to match. Depending on the home and the market, a strategy might aim to:

- Price close to market value
- Price competitively to draw more attention
- Encourage several buyers to compete
- Target a particular group of buyers
- Leave room for negotiation

WHEN THE MARKET DOESN'T RESPOND

Buyer activity is information. Strong interest tells you something. Few showings, little interest or consistent comments about price tell you something too.

The answer isn't always an immediate price cut. Look at the evidence and decide whether the issue is:

- | | | |
|----------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| — Price | — Marketing | — Market conditions |
| — Presentation | — Property condition | — A combination of these |

Pricing isn't about predicting the exact number a buyer will pay. It's about positioning your home so the market has a reason to engage with it.



03

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On the Market

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CHAPTER 09

Marketing & Online Presentation

Once your home is prepared and priced, the job is to make sure the right buyers see it — and understand why it deserves a closer look.

For most buyers, the online listing is their first look at your home. Many decide right there whether to book a showing or move on.

Photograph the Home at Its Best

Professional photography should show your home accurately, make rooms feel inviting and capture good light. Before the photographer arrives:

- Declutter
- Clean
- Finish recommended repairs
- Complete the staging
- Open blinds and curtains
- Turn on the right lights
- Put away personal items
- Tidy the exterior

Good photography can't make up for a home that wasn't prepared.

Beyond Photography

Other visual content helps buyers understand the home:

- Video
- Aerial photography or video, where it suits the property
- Floor plans
- Virtual tours

Not every property needs every format. The marketing should fit the home and the buyers it's likely to attract.

CHAPTER 09 • MARKETING & ONLINE PRESENTATION

Tell the Story of the Property

A listing description should do more than repeat the specifications. It should show buyers the home's strengths and why they matter:

- | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| — Layout and functionality | — Parking | — Entertaining space |
| — Recent improvements | — Location | — Work-from-home potential |
| — Outdoor space | — Schools and amenities | — Low-maintenance features |

It should be informative without overstating what the home offers.

Make It Easy to Evaluate

A strong listing answers buyers' questions before they book a showing:

- Measurements and floor plans
- Room descriptions
- Property features
- Improvements and approximate dates
- Relevant documents
- Clear inclusions and exclusions

The easier a home is to evaluate, the more productive the showings.

Where Buyers Will See It

MLS® and REALTOR.ca are the foundation. The rest of the mix can include:

- Social media
- Targeted digital advertising
- Email marketing
- Online video
- A dedicated property website
- Your REALTOR®'s and brokerage's networks

The property should decide the mix, not a generic checklist.

CHAPTER 09 • MARKETING & ONLINE PRESENTATION

Accuracy Matters

Marketing should make your home appealing without creating unrealistic expectations.

Over-edited photos, exaggerated descriptions or inaccurate details disappoint buyers before they even arrive.

The goal is to get buyers through the door — and then have the home deliver on the promise.

Marketing Has a Job to Do

The purpose of marketing isn't to make your home famous. It's to generate qualified buyer interest.

That means the right people noticing the property, understanding its value and booking a showing.

Good marketing doesn't replace good pricing or preparation. It brings them together.

The online listing isn't the sale. It's the invitation to take a closer look.

CHAPTER 10

Showings & Open Houses

Once your home is on the market, buyer activity becomes your best source of information.

Showings let buyers experience the property in person — and let you and your REALTOR® see how the market is responding.

Make the Home Easy to Show

The harder a showing is to arrange, the easier it is for buyers to move on. Where you can:

- Keep the home clean and tidy
- Make beds and clear surfaces
- Make arrangements for pets
- Leave the home during showings
- Allow flexibility with showing times

Your REALTOR® can set showing instructions that balance buyer access with your needs.

What Buyers Are Looking For

Buyers aren't just looking at finishes. They're asking:

- Does the layout work for us?
- Is there enough space?
- What condition is the home in?
- What would we need to change?
- How much work would be involved?
- How does it compare with others we've seen?
- Does the price make sense for what we're seeing?

That's why preparation and presentation matter.

CHAPTER 10 • SHOWINGS & OPEN HOUSES**Feedback Can Be Useful**

Not every buyer gives detailed feedback, and one comment isn't a verdict. But patterns matter.

If several buyers independently raise the same concern — about price, condition, layout, presentation or a particular feature — it's worth discussing what that tells you.

Your REALTOR® should help you interpret the market's message, not just pass along every comment.

Open Houses

An open house lets buyers see the property without booking an appointment.

Whether one makes sense depends on the property, the market and the overall strategy. It's one part of the marketing plan, not a substitute for good pricing, presentation and exposure.

Protect Your Home

You're opening your home to people you don't know.

Before showings start, secure valuables, confidential documents, financial information and prescription medications.

Your REALTOR® should also set appropriate showing procedures.

The goal of showings isn't simply to get people through the door. It's to create the conditions for the right buyer to recognize the value of your home.



04

— PART 04

Making the Deal

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CHAPTER 11

Your Offer Strategy

Before your home goes live, decide how you'll handle offers.

The approach you choose affects how buyers behave, how much competition develops and how much time you'll have to decide.

HOLDING OFFERS TO A SET DATE

Showings run for a set period — often a few days to a week — and all offers are reviewed together on one evening.

This can concentrate competition. But some buyers won't wait, and if no offers arrive the home has to be repositioned.

TAKING OFFERS ANYTIME

Buyers can make an offer whenever they're ready, and you respond to each as it comes in.

This suits balanced or slower markets and buyers who want an answer quickly, though competition is less concentrated.

Pre-Emptive Offers

When you're holding offers, a buyer may submit one before the offer date — often with a short deadline — hoping to buy before competition builds.

You don't have to consider it. Decide with your REALTOR®, before you list, how you'll respond if one arrives.

Competing Offers & Disclosure

When there are several offers, each buyer can be told how many competing offers there are.

Since December 2023, Ontario sellers can also choose to share details of competing offers — the highest price, the conditions or the full terms — or to share nothing. It's your decision. Make it deliberately.

There's no single right way to handle offers. The right approach fits your home, the market and what matters most to you.

CHAPTER 12

Evaluating & Negotiating Offers

An offer is more than a price.

The strongest offer isn't always the highest number. Terms, conditions, timing and certainty all matter.

Look at the Whole Offer

When an offer arrives, consider:

- Purchase price
- Deposit
- Financing conditions
- Home inspection conditions
- Other conditions
- Closing date
- Inclusions and exclusions
- Buyer requests
- Any other terms that affect the deal

A higher price with significant conditions may be weaker than a slightly lower offer with stronger terms and more certainty.

The Deposit

The deposit is usually due within 24 hours of acceptance and is held in trust, typically by the buyer's brokerage, until closing.

A larger deposit signals commitment, but certainty comes from the overall terms.

Understand the Conditions

Conditions give a buyer time for due diligence before committing firmly. Common conditions relate to:

- Financing
- Home inspection
- The sale of the buyer's own home
- Other circumstances specific to the buyer

Understand what each condition means for you before you respond.

Once It's Firm, It's Binding

Ontario has no cooling-off period for resale homes. Once the agreement is signed and its conditions are satisfied or waived, you and the buyer are both committed.

Read every term before you sign.

CHAPTER 12 • EVALUATING & NEGOTIATING OFFERS

Negotiation Is About Trade-Offs

A negotiation doesn't always move in a straight line. You can negotiate:

— Price	— Conditions	— Other terms
— Deposit	— Inclusions	
— Closing date	— Exclusions	

Changing one term affects others. A buyer who can't meet your preferred closing date might compensate elsewhere. A buyer with a strong deposit might still have conditions that need a close look.

The job is to understand the overall strength of the deal, not just chase the highest price.

When There Are Multiple Offers

Multiple offers create competition, but they don't guarantee a particular result.

Each offer still needs to be judged on its own merits. Your REALTOR® should help you compare them objectively before you decide.

Don't Negotiate Against Yourself

It's tempting to guess what a buyer will do next and offer concessions before anyone asks for them.

Good negotiation means understanding the other side, knowing your priorities and making deliberate decisions rather than emotional ones.

The goal isn't simply the highest price. It's the strongest overall agreement — one that meets your objectives and gives you confidence in the deal.



05

— PART 05

Getting to Closing

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CHAPTER 13

From Accepted Offer to Closing

Accepting an offer is a major step, but the work isn't finished.

If the agreement has conditions, they need to be satisfied or waived before the sale is firm. Then there are deadlines, documents and arrangements to manage before closing.

1

STEP 1

The Conditional Period

The buyer arranges financing, an inspection, insurance or other due diligence, and you may need to provide access or information.

Know which conditions apply and when each must be satisfied or waived.

2

STEP 2

The Deal Becomes Firm

Once every condition is satisfied or waived, the agreement is firm and the focus shifts to closing.

Keep a copy of the signed agreement and know the commitments you've made.

3

STEP 3

Preparing to Close

Work with your lawyer, complete the paperwork, arrange your move and make sure the property is ready to transfer as agreed.

4

STEP 4

Closing Day

Your lawyer completes the legal transfer. The buyer takes ownership, and you receive the proceeds after adjustments, your mortgage discharge and other deductions. The lawyers handle the exact timing.

CHAPTER 13 • FROM ACCEPTED OFFER TO CLOSING

Your Lawyer

Handles the legal side — preparing and reviewing the documents that transfer ownership — and advises on:

- Mortgage discharge
- Adjustments
- Closing documents
- Funds required or payable
- The transfer of title
- Legal issues specific to your sale

Give your lawyer what they need and respond promptly.

Prepare for the Move

Use the weeks between the firm date and closing to:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| — Book movers | — Schedule cleaning |
| — Arrange storage | — Remove remaining belongings |
| — Cancel or transfer utilities | — Finish any agreed repairs or work |
| — Change your address | — Arrange keys and access |

Don't leave it to the final few days.

LEAVE THE PROPERTY AS AGREED

Your agreement sets out what's included and the condition the property must be in. Remove what isn't included, and leave included fixtures and chattels as agreed.

Your REALTOR®

Stays involved after the sale is firm: coordinating between the parties, answering real estate questions and helping resolve issues before closing.

If something changes or a problem comes up, say so right away. Don't assume someone else is handling it.

A smooth closing comes down to preparation: know your obligations, meet your deadlines and tell the professionals when something changes.

CHAPTER 14

Your Costs & Net Proceeds

The sale price is only part of the financial picture.

What matters is what you keep after the costs of selling. Knowing them before you list helps you make better decisions about pricing, preparation and your next move.

Common Selling Costs

Depending on your situation:

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| — Real estate commission | — Mortgage discharge fees or penalties | — Moving and storage |
| — HST on commission and legal fees | — Repairs and preparation | — Other property-specific costs |
| — Legal fees and disbursements | — Cleaning and staging | |

Not every seller has every cost.

Commission

No law sets a standard commission rate in Ontario. Commission is agreed between you and the brokerage. Make sure you understand:

- | | |
|--|--|
| — What services are included | — When commission becomes payable |
| — What commission is payable, and how HST applies | — Any other costs or terms in your agreement |
| — What, if anything, goes to the buyer's brokerage | |

Look at the total cost of the representation and what you get for it, not just the percentage.

CHAPTER 14 • YOUR COSTS & NET PROCEEDS

Legal Costs

Your lawyer handles the legal completion of the sale. Fees vary with the lawyer, the transaction and any extra work required.

Ask for an estimate of fees and disbursements early.

Mortgage Discharge

A mortgage registered on the property is discharged as part of the sale. There may be:

- A discharge fee
- A prepayment penalty
- Other lender-specific costs

Your lender or lawyer can confirm the amounts.

Preparation Costs

Getting a home ready for market can cost money, but it doesn't have to.

The question isn't simply "What could I improve?"

It's "Which improvements will make a meaningful difference, and are they worth the cost?"

TAXES ON THE SALE

Most homeowners pay no tax on the sale of their principal residence — but the sale still has to be reported on your income tax return.

Investment, rental and partly rented properties can be taxed differently. Talk to your accountant before you list.

CHAPTER 14 • YOUR COSTS & NET PROCEEDS

WORKSHEET

Calculate Your Expected Net Proceeds

Expected Sale Price	\$ _____
– Commission and HST	\$ _____
– Legal fees and disbursements	\$ _____
– Mortgage balance, discharge fee and any penalty	\$ _____
– Preparation, moving and other selling costs	\$ _____
= Estimated Net Proceeds	\$ _____

This is an estimate, not a guarantee.

Your actual proceeds depend on the final sale price, your agreement, your mortgage, legal costs, adjustments and other transaction-specific expenses.

Knowing your likely net proceeds is just as important as knowing what your home might sell for.

RELATED RESOURCE

What Does It Cost to Sell a Home in Hamilton?



CHAPTER 15

The Seller's Checklist

Selling a home involves many moving parts.

You don't need to remember everything at once. Use this checklist to track the major decisions and tasks from planning through closing.

Before You List

- ☐ Decide why you're selling and what the move needs to accomplish
- ☐ Set your preferred timing and any key deadlines
- ☐ Confirm your mortgage balance and discharge costs
- ☐ Choose your REALTOR®
- ☐ Discuss your home's market position and pricing strategy
- ☐ Raise any spousal, estate, non-resident or tax considerations
- ☐ Plan your move and any storage needs

Preparing Your Home

- ☐ Decide whether a pre-listing inspection makes sense
- ☐ Decide which preparation is worth doing
- ☐ Remove unnecessary furniture and belongings
- ☐ Pre-pack items you won't need before the move
- ☐ Complete agreed repairs
- ☐ Touch up or repaint where needed
- ☐ Deep-clean the home
- ☐ Tidy closets, storage and utility spaces
- ☐ Complete the staging

CHAPTER 15 • THE SELLER'S CHECKLIST

Before Going to Market

- ☐ Gather documents, permits and warranties
- ☐ Confirm the status of any secondary unit or renovations
- ☐ Confirm the asking price and pricing strategy
- ☐ Decide how offers will be handled
- ☐ Review the listing details, photos and marketing
- ☐ Confirm showing instructions
- ☐ Secure valuables, medications and confidential documents
- ☐ Make arrangements for pets

Once You're on the Market

- ☐ Keep the home clean and showing-ready
- ☐ Accommodate showing requests where you can
- ☐ Review meaningful buyer feedback with your REALTOR®
- ☐ Monitor buyer activity
- ☐ Adjust the strategy if the market's response calls for it

When an Offer Arrives

- ☐ Review the complete offer — not just the price
- ☐ Check the deposit and when it's due
- ☐ Review every condition
- ☐ Consider the proposed closing date
- ☐ Review inclusions and exclusions
- ☐ Decide whether to share details with competing buyers
- ☐ Discuss negotiation strategy with your REALTOR®

CHAPTER 15 • THE SELLER'S CHECKLIST

After Accepting an Offer

- ☐ Note every deadline
 - ☐ Provide access and information for the buyer's due diligence
 - ☐ Stay in touch with your REALTOR® and your lawyer
 - ☐ Complete required documents
 - ☐ Book your move
 - ☐ Arrange utility and address changes
 - ☐ Complete any obligations under the agreement
-

Before Closing

- ☐ Confirm closing arrangements with your lawyer
 - ☐ Complete your move
 - ☐ Remove belongings that aren't included in the sale
 - ☐ Leave included items as agreed
 - ☐ Make sure the property is ready for closing
 - ☐ Confirm how keys and access will be handled
-

You don't need to manage the whole process yourself. The checklist is there so you know what's coming and what to ask.

CHAPTER 16

How I Help You Sell

Selling your home isn't simply a transaction.

It's a major financial decision and a big change, with a long list of practical choices. My job is to help you understand each decision — and why you're making it.

A Thoughtful Plan

We start with why you're selling and what the move needs to accomplish — before we talk about marketing. Then we look at the market, where your home sits in it and what's worth doing before you list.

Preparing Your Home

- A pre-listing inspection, where it makes sense
- A walkthrough and recommendations from a professional stager
- Help deciding what to declutter, repair or adjust
- Straight advice on which improvements are worth the money — and which aren't
- Professional staging for most of the homes I list, and painting for some

Professional Marketing

- Professional photography
- Drone photography and video, when appropriate
- Virtual tours
- A dedicated property website
- Online and social media marketing
- MLS® and print marketing

Every plan is built around your property, the market and the strategy we set together.

Hands-On Service

I coordinate showings and offers, negotiate on your behalf and work with your lawyer, lender, inspectors and other professionals. If there's packing, moving, storage, cleaning or repairs to sort out, I'll help you understand what needs to happen and when.

CHAPTER 16 • HOW I HELP YOU SELL

Downsizing: The 3R Method™

For sellers moving to a smaller home, I use a simple framework:

Reflect

Decide what to take, what your next home needs and what your current home offers its next owner.

Relocate

Prepare your home for sale, find your next home and coordinate both transactions.

Rejoice

Settle into your next home.

Good Advice Isn't Always What You Want to Hear

- Sometimes the right advice is to make an improvement.
- Sometimes it's to leave something alone.
- Sometimes the right price is lower than you hoped.
- Sometimes the best decision is to wait.

I'll always explain the reasoning behind my recommendation — including when the answer isn't the one you expected.

SELLING IS A SERIES OF DECISIONS

DECIDE → CHOOSE → PREPARE → PRICE → MARKET → SHOW → NEGOTIATE → CLOSE

Each stage affects the next. The better those decisions fit together, the better your chance of reaching your goals.

CHAPTER 16 • HOW I HELP YOU SELL

FROM SELLERS I'VE WORKED WITH

Mike is an honest and straight-forward professional, and a realtor who always does what he says he'll do, no matter what. His sensitivity to and knowledge of downsizing was very much valued, and the extra services, like painting and staging he included, were just incredible and unexpected. He is so easy to work with – we keep in contact and I would recommend him to anybody.

SUE AND PETE CLARKIN

Mike is a realtor with exceptional people skills – caring, honest and down-to-earth with a quiet confidence without being pushy at all. His level of integrity is off the scale and we trusted his word immediately. He brought in experts as needed and they all operated at the same high level of service as Mike. He goes over and above and takes responsibility for everything. A joy to work with and I would 100% recommend him.

JULIE BOUDREAU

Working with Mike didn't feel like working with a realtor. He's honest and hard-working and I never felt like I was bothering him. He always kept me informed and updated. There were a lot of perks that Mike included – such as painting and staging, and it felt like we were working together as a 'family'. He is a total pleasure to work with and I would absolutely recommend him.

KATRINA FRIEDAY

SEE MORE

Our Selling Services



Home Listing Case Studies





CHAPTER 17

Your Next Step

You don't need to have everything figured out before you start planning a sale. A conversation can help you understand where your home sits in today's market, what preparation is — and isn't — worthwhile, what your options are and what the process could look like. Let's talk about your situation, your goals and what you're considering.

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