

The Stonehaven Downsizing Guide: How I Did It (And What I Wish I Knew)

It took me four years to convince my husband it was time.

Four years of quiet conversations, of walking through rooms we weren't really using anymore, of watching the kids finish school, get married, move into their own lives. The house hadn't changed. We had.

We'd raised our family in a 4,200 square foot home in Stonehaven. It held everything — the chaos of four kids, the holidays, the homework, the noise. And then, gradually, it held mostly just the two of us. Busy careers. Empty rooms. A backyard we'd built for people who no longer needed it the way they once did.

The practical reality hit me first. Homes in Stonehaven are beautiful — and they're demanding. To do one properly, you're committing to a decade of thoughtful, significant upgrades. I looked at what that would require — the time, the investment, the energy — and I had to be honest with myself: that wasn't the season of life I was stepping into. It was the one I was stepping out of.

My husband needed more time to get there. That's not a criticism — it's just true. The home meant something to him that was worth sitting with. I respected that. And eventually, we arrived at the same place together: the question wasn't what the house had been for us. It was what the next chapter actually required.

That's the question I now bring to every client who's sitting in the same uncertainty. Not 'are you ready to sell?' But — what does your life actually need now? And do you have a plan to get there intentionally, rather than by default?

The transition is emotional. I won't pretend otherwise. But on the other side of it is freedom — and a future you designed, rather than one you just drifted into.

The question isn't what the house has been for you. It's what the next chapter actually requires — and whether you have a plan to get there intentionally, rather than by default.

What Nobody Tells You About Leaving a \$2M+ Home

The practical questions are the easy part. Where are we going? What will we net? How long will it take? Those have answers. What takes longer to work through is what I call the identity question: if this house was where I built my life, who am I in a smaller one?

I can't answer that for you. But I can tell you that every single client I've walked through this — and every conversation I've had with myself — arrives at the same place. The next chapter has more freedom in it than the last one. And the equity you've built in Stonehaven is your ticket to design it exactly how you want.

The Practical Downsizing Playbook I Give Every Client

Start 12–18 months before you think you need to. The best Stonehaven sale outcomes I've seen came from sellers who gave themselves time to be strategic — not sellers who listed because they were ready to be gone in six weeks. The market at \$2M+ rewards preparation.

Get a pre-sale assessment first, not an appraisal. Know which improvements will actually return value and which won't. I've saved clients from spending \$80,000 on renovations that returned \$20,000. That conversation costs nothing. The mistake costs everything.

Know where you're going before you list. The anxiety of selling without a clear next step is enormous. We map both sides of the move together — so you're not negotiating your next home from a position of pressure. That changes outcomes.

Honour what the house meant — then let it go with intention. A proper farewell to a family home isn't weakness. It's how you make peace with the next chapter. Some of my clients have a small dinner, take photos, write a letter to the new owners. Don't skip this step.

What I'd Tell Myself

I'd tell myself: the grief is real, and it doesn't mean you're making the wrong decision. The house held the memories — but the memories are yours. They come with you.

And the freedom that comes on the other side of this decision? I'd tell myself to trust that it's worth it. Because it was.

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