ENGEL&VÖLKERS®



A Seller's Guide

to listing your property

COURTESY OF

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A bespoke plan for selling your home

IN TODAYS MARKET, SELLING YOUR HOME IS A PROCESS, AT TIMES WE WILL NEED TO MOVE QUICKLY, WHILE IN OTHERS WE MAY SEEM TO BE IDEAL.
TRUST IN THE PROCESS.

Most sales move through these eleven stages in order. Timing varies with the market and the terms of your contract, and I will guide you through each step.

01 Initial Consultation

1–6 MONTHS PRIOR TO LISTING

We will meet to fill out preliminary paperwork, discuss goals, timelines and make sure that we are the right fit for each other.

02 Listing Consultation

1–2 WEEKS BEFORE LISTING

We will meet at your home and review a CMA (Comparative Market Analysis, a report of recent nearby sales) so you can set a price based on real market data.

03 Preparation

1–3 WEEKS BEFORE LISTING

You will declutter, deep clean and handle small repairs so the home photographs well and buyers can picture themselves living there.

04 Photos and listing

LISTING DAY

Professional photos and a written description are completed, and your home goes live on the MLS (the shared database other advisors and home-search sites draw from).

05 Marketing and showings

FIRST DAYS TO WEEKS

Buyers will tour your home at showings and open houses, so keep it tidy and be ready to step out on short notice.

06 Offers and negotiation

AS OFFERS ARRIVE

I will walk you through each offer's price, terms and conditions, and you accept, counter or decline until you and the buyer sign a contract.

07 Inspection period

ROUGHLY 10–15 DAYS AFTER CONTRACT

The buyer's inspector will examine the home, and the buyer may request repairs or a credit, which you can agree to, negotiate or decline.

08 Appraisal

ABOUT 2–3 WEEKS AFTER CONTRACT

If the buyer is financing, the lender will order an independent valuation to confirm the home is worth the loan amount; a low value can reopen price talks.

09 Title and loan approval

CONTRACT TO CLOSING

A title company will confirm you can transfer clear ownership with no unpaid liens (debts tied to the property) while the buyer's lender finalizes the loan.

10 Final walkthrough

1–2 DAYS BEFORE CLOSING

The buyer will visit to confirm the home is in the agreed condition, so finish any agreed repairs and leave it clean and moved out.

11 Closing

OFTEN 30–45 DAYS AFTER CONTRACT

You will sign the final documents, hand over keys and receive your proceeds after your mortgage payoff and closing costs are paid.

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How to Sell a home



Find an Experienced Advisor

While there is some truth behind the idea that well-priced homes sell themselves, who you hire to sell your home matters more than most people think. Your Advisor can actually make or break your sale. The majority of people hire the first agent they meet–whether that is at an open house, via a street sign, or through a family member or neighbor. Recommendations are helpful, but for a financial transaction this large, they should still be vetted through your own research.

At the very least, you should read their reviews and know the answers to these questions before you agree to work with them:

- What level of service do they provide?
- Does this person have the training to sell my home or is real estate their side hustle?
- Does this person seem the capable of giving me hard advice that we need to hear even if I do not want to hear it?

Having an experienced professional on your side will be your greatest asset in the home selling process.

Find the right Realtor

An experienced agent equipped with the right tools and training will help you maximize your home's sale price, simplify the process, and protect your interests at every step. Just as critical, however, is the personal fit: their personality, communication style, and professionalism must align with yours to ensure a seamless partnership and the best possible outcome.

“Can I Sell My Own House?”: The FSBO Trap

It is a common question. Most homeowners could do a For Sale By Owner, but ultimately opt not to because of three important considerations: time, effort, and getting a fair price. A good real estate Advisor can set an appropriate timeline and strategy for your home’s sale, and has experience getting fair offers.

Look for a Full Service Agency

Once you have found the right real estate Advisor for you, you will sign a listing agreement with them. This is a contract that gives the Advisor the right to sell your home, and establishes the Advisor’s fee or commission percentage. It also specifies that they have the right to advertise your home on the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) and potentially elsewhere.

Run the Numbers: The Cost of Selling a House

Closing Costs

Closing costs encompass transfer taxes, the Advisor’s commission, seller conveyancing, and other miscellaneous fees.

Advisor / Brokerage Commissions

Full service brokerages typically charge the home seller 6% of the home’s sale price, which is split between the listing/seller's Advisor and the buyer’s Advisor. This means that for a home that sells for $600,000, you will pay $18,000 per agent, for a total of $36,000.

Taxes:

- **Transfer tax** varies by state and can have additional transfer tax at the local level. Typically transfer taxes are split between the buyer and the seller, but it can sometimes be negotiated in the deal.
- If you are selling a second home, a flipped home, or rental property, you may need to set aside additional money to cover **capital gains taxes** that you will owe at tax time. This is a tax that applies to non-inventory assets, including real estate.
- **Property taxes** should be paid up to the closing date; you should pay your share of the property taxes in advance, by placing the money in an escrow account.

Clean up (optional):

- **Painting.** Though it's not required, a simple fresh coat of paint can do wonders for sprucing up your home for showings.
- **Deep Clean.** If you decide to pay for someone to deep clean your home - getting all the nooks and crannies you might overlook while doing your general sweep through - expect to pay between $200 and $400 for this service.

Other:

- **Hire an appraiser:** Having a professional appraisal done on your home can cost between $300 and $700, but it can be a small price to pay if it helps you sell your home quickly and for an appropriate price.

Find Out What Your Home is Worth

The next step of the home buying process is to find out how much your home is worth. There are a few ways to answer this.

Have a listing consultation with your Advisor

During the listing consultation, the Advisor will take a tour of your home. They will point out potential problems, and suggest mprovements. Their extensive experience will help you get the most realistic sense of what your home is worth.

Scenarios that could raise or lower the value of your home:

Lower

- wiring not up to code
- roof needs repairs
- cracks in the drywall – this can indicate more serious foundational damage

Raise

- double-pane soundproof windows
- hardwood flooring
- walk-in closet(s)
- finished basement

This is not intended to be an extensive list; just examples of the types of specific features agents are taking into consideration.

Update and Improve

If you do want to make improvements to your home before selling it in order to net a higher asking price, prioritize improvements that appeal to millennials as they are the largest group of home buyers, representing around 37% of the market. This generation values updated kitchens and baths, and rarely sees the appeal of wall-to-wall carpeting.

These are three of the top updates millennials are looking for in for-sale homes; home office space, smart tech and energy-efficient appliances.

Figure Out Real Estate Comps

An important part of determining your home's value is a comparative market analysis (CMA), which is a review of what similar properties in your neighborhood have sold for over the past few months and maybe what active properties are selling for in the area as well.

Your Advisor can help produce a CMA for you so that you have access to more information than what the general public can view.

Here is what some listing Advisors are looking at for determining comparable properties (comps):

- **Rooms:** bed, baths, finished square footage.
- **Location specifics:** if it is a “hot” neighborhood, walkable.
- **Condition:** regardless of age, has the home been well maintained?
- **Acreage:** large, level lots on private streets sell well.
- **Renovations:** updates to kitchen, bath, and basement carry the highest return.
- **Unique features:** built-in pool, fireplaces, new deck.
- **Age and maintenance of major components:** roof, windows, heater, AC, plumbing, etc.
- **Days on Market:** Taking into account how long similar properties spent on the market (DOM), at what price, and if they were listed multiple times or required price reductions.

Real estate transactions are different from every day transactions. If you go to the store to buy a box of cereal, the price generally stays the same regardless of how many people want to buy it. The price of your home, however, fluctuates constantly due to local supply and demand.

Understanding this will help you let go of expecting a price you think your home “should be.” **What dictates your home’s price, ultimately, is the amount buyers are willing to pay – and this number can go up or down within the space of a year, or even a season.**

Property Disclosure: Required by law

The property disclosure, or seller’s disclosure, is an important document for the home selling process. This document outlines any potential issues that could impact a home’s safety or value, and the laws surrounding disclosure vary by state. Common issues noted in disclosure may include, and are not limited to:

- The presence of lead paint
- Renovations without a permit
- Property tax disclosure
- The presence of mold
- Asbestos
- Foundation problems
- Persistent flooding issues
- Presence of pests

A failure to properly disclose these issues once you know of them can leave you liable for damages, even after the home has been sold. Florida requires a disclosure during the listing process.

List at the True Market Value

Your seller's Advisor will recommend a listing price, but it is ultimately your choice. It is highly recommended that you list your home at its market value. Many homeowners are tempted to list it higher, just in case someone will pay, to give room to negotiate, etc. But this approach can backfire. Thanks to the internet, it is extremely easy for buyers to know more or less how much a home is worth and buyers will be hesitant to make an offer on an overpriced home.

If you want to sell your home fast, sell it at a fair price and you could end up entertaining multiple bids. During or shortly after the listing consultation, you and the agent will finalize an agreed upon price and listing dates and then you are ready to sign the listing agreement.

Listing Your Home

Once you are ready to list your home, it is important to move quickly. The average home takes about 65 days to sell, but this number depends on the local market and how the home is priced.

The Listing Description

Creating a listing description is important. This is where you summarize your home and why people should want to live in it. Sometimes less is more, and it is best to let an experienced Advisor lead on this and decide on what is worth highlighting and adding to this description.

Professional Photography

Professional photography is an important part of the listing process. About 90% of people now start their home search process online – often before approaching an Advisor. Well lit photographs and detailed 360° virtual tours that highlight a home's best features can help get more potential buyers to see your home. Your listing agent is likely aware of how to get high quality images of your property so work with them to do so.

The MLS

Once your home is ready to go, it will be added by your listing Advisor to the Multiple Listing Service (MLS). By uploading it to the MLS, your home will appear on sites like:

- RealtyTrac
- Rent.com
- Realtor.com
- Trulia
- Zillow

This helps to ensure maximum exposure. Once people are interested in actually seeing your home, showings can be requested and open houses advertised.

Tackle Easy Home Fixes

Costly renovations may not be recommended, but small, inexpensive fixes definitely are. Homeowners might be surprised to discover that bright-colored accent walls rarely help sell a home: instead, neutral-toned walls work best. Now is also the time to fix the broken shower head or door handle so that a small repair for you does not turn off would-be buyers.

Showing Your Home

A sign can be installed in front of your home to let people know it is for sale, as well as a lock-box for easy entry for home showings. Keep your home relatively clean and de-personalized so that it can be shown whenever buyers are interested.

If someone is interested in purchasing your home, their buyer's Advisor will contact your listing Advisor, who will contact you. Once again, it is a good idea to have a listing Advisor who is all in and not working multiple side jobs at the same time so that they can be available when necessary.

Open House

Open houses help to generate hype for your property, and they can be a good way to separate potential buyers that are truly interested. An open house allows for people with low purchase intent to see your home without taking up a lot of anyone's time, leaving the individual showings for the truly interested buyers. And if serious buyers are in attendance, witnessing a well-attended open house can encourage them to come in with a high bid.

Here is what you should do to prepare for your open house, which will typically happen on Saturday or Sunday:

- Declutter the house
- Do a full-house clean
- Get rid of excess furniture to better showcase room size
- Beautify outdoor spaces (pruning, grass cutting, etc)
- Do not use synthetic smells (like plug-ins): some people are allergic
- Curb appeal: flowers are great, and pressure-washing can make a world of difference

Evaluating an Offer

An offer on your home allows you to potentially move forward with the process of selling your home. There is a lot that goes into evaluating and accepting an offer, though. Here is what you need to know.

Should I accept the first offer on my house?

There is no right or wrong answer, since it will depend on what stage of the selling process you are at, and the quality of the offer. If your home has been on the market for three months already, you are unlikely to receive a higher offer later on. If anything, buyers may assume you are desperate to sell (and willing to accept less than your home is actually worth).

On the other hand, if your home was just listed, you have more room to wait and see what happens. Buyers who come in with a low asking price, with contingencies, or without a mortgage pre-approval might not be the right match.

What are the main consideration when comparing multiple offers?

Ideally, you will have several offers to choose from. Here is what you should look at:

- Purchase price
- Expiration date of the offer
- Deposit (initial and second deposit amounts and terms)
- Settlement and possession date
- Inclusions/exclusions
- Types of financing (cash or mortgage)
- Mortgage terms and commitment date
- Contingencies elected and terms

What should be included in home offer?

The offer is a legal document. Home offers generally follow the Agreement of Sale (AOS) and usually include:

- **The purchase price:** this is, quite simply, what they are offering to pay for your home.
- **Expiration of the offer:** how long their offer is good for. Typically one or two days.
- **Initial deposit and second deposit:** the initial deposit is a good-faith escrow deposit the buyer puts down while waiting for mortgage approval.
- **Required home inspection:** the buyer is entitled to have your home checked for defects. They will note whether you are expected to address any issues that come up in inspection. This is important to note because something always comes up during the inspection, so be prepared.
- Warranties: the buyer will want to make sure the property is yours to sell. You will need to show your title to the home.
- An appraisal: lenders typically require a licensed appraiser to validate the value of your home.

- **Contingencies:** the buyer can void their purchase if certain outlined conditions are or are not met (such as major structural defects being revealed in the home inspection, they need to sell their own home, or your home appraises for far less than they offered)
- **A time frame for the loan closing date:** usually 30 to 60 days



What a counter-offer looks like?

If a home buyer comes in below your asking price, if you receive multiple offers, or if the buyer asks you to complete certain renovations as part of the sale, there is definitely room to negotiate.

It is important to have an experienced Advisor on hand for this. Many listing Advisors are trained specifically in negotiation tactics, ensuring that you will walk away from the deal with as much home equity as possible. There are a few different ways to counter an offer;

- You can meet the buyer halfway, but you are under no obligation to, especially if it is a low offer. Maybe you can go down $1,000 to appease them, or even counter with your original listing price if you think your home was priced fairly.
- You can reject their offer completely. A truly interested buyer may come back anyway.
- If you receive multiple offers, you can negotiate for a higher bid by asking the top bidders for their best and final offer.

Consult with your listing Advisor for which strategy and option will achieve your goals in the current market.

Once you accept the offer, it can take between 30-60 days to close the sale. Closer or farther out settlement dates are also possible, depending on your needs and the Buyer's ability to match your goals.

The interim

The stretch between an accepted contract and closing day brings an exciting transition from the whirlwind of showings to forward-looking anticipation.

Much of this interim period is dedicated to the practical and rewarding process of preparing for your move. As buyers work through their standard financing and inspections contingencies, you have the opportunity to take inventory, declutter, and curate what moves with you. Many sellers find unexpected joy in this stage, using it to rediscover keepsakes, donate items that they no longer need, and visualize their aesthetic in a new living space.

During this period, it is helpful to designate a kitchen draw to place all your appliance manuals, remote controls, warranties, paid invoices and any completed repairs receipts and certifications. This will ensure that they are all in one place during your move.

This is also the perfect time to say a warm farewell to favorite neighbors while preparing to hand off the keys to the eager buyers wanting to start their own journey.

Review closing costs and net proceeds

A few days prior to settlement, review your Closing Disclosure or Settlement Statement to verify every charge. Typical seller expenses often range from 6% to 10% of the sale price, covering Advisor commissions, local transfer taxes, escrow fees, and title charges. Assuming you have equity in the property, these costs are deducted directly from the sale proceeds rather than paid out of pocket.

Closing day

On closing day, you will review and sign the final legal documents. The settlement agent, typically an escrow officer or closing attorney, will manage the financial disbursements. They will verify funds, record the new deed with the county clerk, pay off any outstanding mortgage balance, settle closing expenses, and arrange the wire transfer or check for your net proceeds.

Essential moving preparation

Beyond the paperwork, closing day marks an active transition for both properties—the home you are leaving and the one you are preparing to occupy. Coordinating these logistics 2 to 3 weeks before closing prevents unexpected service disruptions:

UTILITIES TRANSFER:
Contact electric, gas, water, and trash providers to schedule shutoffs or final meter readings for your sale date, while simultaneously scheduling activations at your new residence so services are running the day you arrive.

INTERNET AND CABLE INSTALLATION:
Service appointments often book weeks in advance. Schedule your equipment transfer and setup early so your home office and streaming connections are active upon move-in.

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT:
If you have school-aged children, gather residency documents (such as your signed closing statement or lease), immunization records, and transcripts to register with your new school district before the moving boxes arrive.

ADDRESS UPDATES:
File an official change of address with the postal service, and update banking accounts, driver's licenses, voter registration, vehicle registrations, and recurring subscription deliveries.

HOME HANDOVER PACKETS:
Leave behind any appliance manuals, warranty paperwork, HVAC filter dimensions, paint touch-up codes, and security codes in one of your kitchen drawers for the next owner.

POST-CLOSING DOCUMENTATION:
Once settlement is complete, download and archive all digital and physical paperwork from the transaction. Retain your signed settlement statement, 1099-S forms, receipts for capital improvements made over the years, and payoff verification notices. Having these securely organized ensures you are fully prepared when filing annual income taxes or calculating capital gains exemptions.

After Your Home Sale

Post-Closing Documentation: Keep track of all the documents related to your home's sale. You never know when you will need this information in the future when filing taxes, etc.

Complete repairs and obtain certifications: If you are obligated to complete repairs as a condition of your post-inspection negotiations, it is your responsibility to complete those tasks before closing. Additionally, if the buyers asked for (and you agreed to) any specific inspections or certifications, like a sewer line inspection or roof condition certification, those should be completed as well.

Submit property disclosures: In most states, as a seller you are required to disclose any known defects or issues that could affect the value or safety of the home — this is known as a property disclosure. These must be documented in writing prior to closing, and the specific rules and procedures vary based on where you live.

Review expected closing costs: Selling a house can be expensive, so review your estimated closing costs ahead of closing day to prepare for the charges you will see. Closing costs for sellers can be as high as 8 to 10 percent of the sale price of the home, and that amount is made up of your Advisor's commission, the buyer's Advisor's commission (which is typically paid by the seller), and taxes and fees. But, assuming you have some equity in the home you are selling, these costs will come directly out of the profits you will be receiving upon closing.

Hand over keys: The keys are handed over to the buyer once you vacate the premises, and as dictated in your contract with the buyer. If the buyer is taking immediate possession, you might hand over the keys at the closing appointment. Or, depending on the terms of your agreement, it could be much later.

Close the transaction: At closing, the settlement agent (either the closing attorney or escrow company hired at the outset of the transaction) will record the new deed for the home with the county, pay off your remaining mortgage balance, pay all closing costs and make sure you receive your profit.

What a few past friends are saying ...



We're a family that comes from another country, and there's something I really want to say: if English isn't your first language, you won't struggle with David. He speaks calmly, akes the time to explain things, and has enormous patience. I never felt rushed when I was trying to express myself, and I was never embarrassed to ask him to repeat something. He always waited kindly and made me feel comfortable.

He found us exactly the house we wanted, and within our budget. He never showed us options he already knew wouldn't be right for us, and that says a lot about how well he listens.

We recommend him with complete confidence. Today we have our home thanks to him.

... Lorena Noriega



Buying a house can be a stressful and difficult process but not with David, he was hand with hand with us through the whole process, with kindness and patience and even after the sell he makes sure we have all we need to start our new journey. We are very grateful to have such a great realtor. Thank you David.

... Jose Dionisio Gutierrez Holguin



David Dell'Olio

GLOBAL LUXURY REAL ESTATE ADVISOR

WITH GRATITUDE

Thank you for your trust.

Choosing someone to help you buy or sell a home is a personal decision, and I never take that lightly. It is an honor to be considered to be part of your real estate journey.

I'm here for you before, during and long after the sale. Please feel free to reach out to me at anytime. I look forward to staying in touch.

Namaste,
David

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