

The Buy & Sell Timeline

What Actually Happens (and When)

A calm, no-pressure guide for homeowners who want to move but aren't sure how buying and selling can realistically line up.

You don't need to decide anything yet. This guide is here to help you understand your options.

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You're Not Behind — You're Just Missing the Sequence

One of the most common reasons people delay moving isn't price, interest rates, or inventory.

It's uncertainty.

Most homeowners aren't afraid of moving — they're afraid of:

- Being rushed
 - Being homeless
 - Making the wrong decision in the wrong order
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The good news is this:

There is more than one way to buy and sell a home, and stress usually comes from not understanding the sequence — not from the market itself.

This guide walks through the most common ways people coordinate buying and selling so you can see what actually happens, and decide what fits your situation.

The Three Ways People Buy and Sell

There is no “right” order — only the order that fits your comfort level, finances, and timing.

1. Sell First, Then Buy

- How it works: You sell your current home, then begin shopping for your next one.
- Why people choose this: You know exactly how much you have to work with; No pressure to carry two homes; Clean, straightforward financing.
- Who this works best for: Sellers who value certainty, are flexible with timing, or are comfortable with short-term renting.

2. Buy First, Then Sell

- How it works: You purchase your next home before selling your current one.
- Why people choose this: No rush to move; Easier transition for families; More control over timing.
- Who this works best for: Those with a strong financial position, access to bridge financing, or sellers who want maximum control over their move.

3. Coordinated Buy & Sell

- How it works: The purchase and sale are planned together with timelines, contingencies, and backup plans.
- Why people choose this: Minimizes overlap; Reduces downtime; Creates structure.
- Who this works best for: People who want balance and are working with experienced guidance to manage the timeline.

WHERE STRESS REALLY COMES FROM

What Actually Causes Stress (Hint: It's Not the Market)

Most stress comes from:

- Assuming there's only one "correct" way
- Waiting too long to explore options
- Feeling pressure from family, friends, or headlines
- Trying to solve everything at once

What helps:

- Understanding timing before committing
- Knowing what can be adjusted
- Having a plan B (and sometimes C)

Stress usually fades when the sequence becomes clear.

Before You Make Any Decisions

Here are a few questions worth thinking through — no action required yet:

- ☐ What worries me most about moving?
- ☐ Is my concern financial, emotional, or logistical?
- ☐ Do I value certainty or flexibility more right now?
- ☐ What would make this feel manageable?

Sometimes the next step isn't moving forward — it's simply getting clearer.

If you want to talk through how these timelines might apply to your situation, that conversation can happen at your pace. This guide is meant to give you context, not push you toward a decision.

Created by Deborah Green A Tulsa-area real estate agent who helps homeowners navigate buying and selling decisions during major life transitions.

