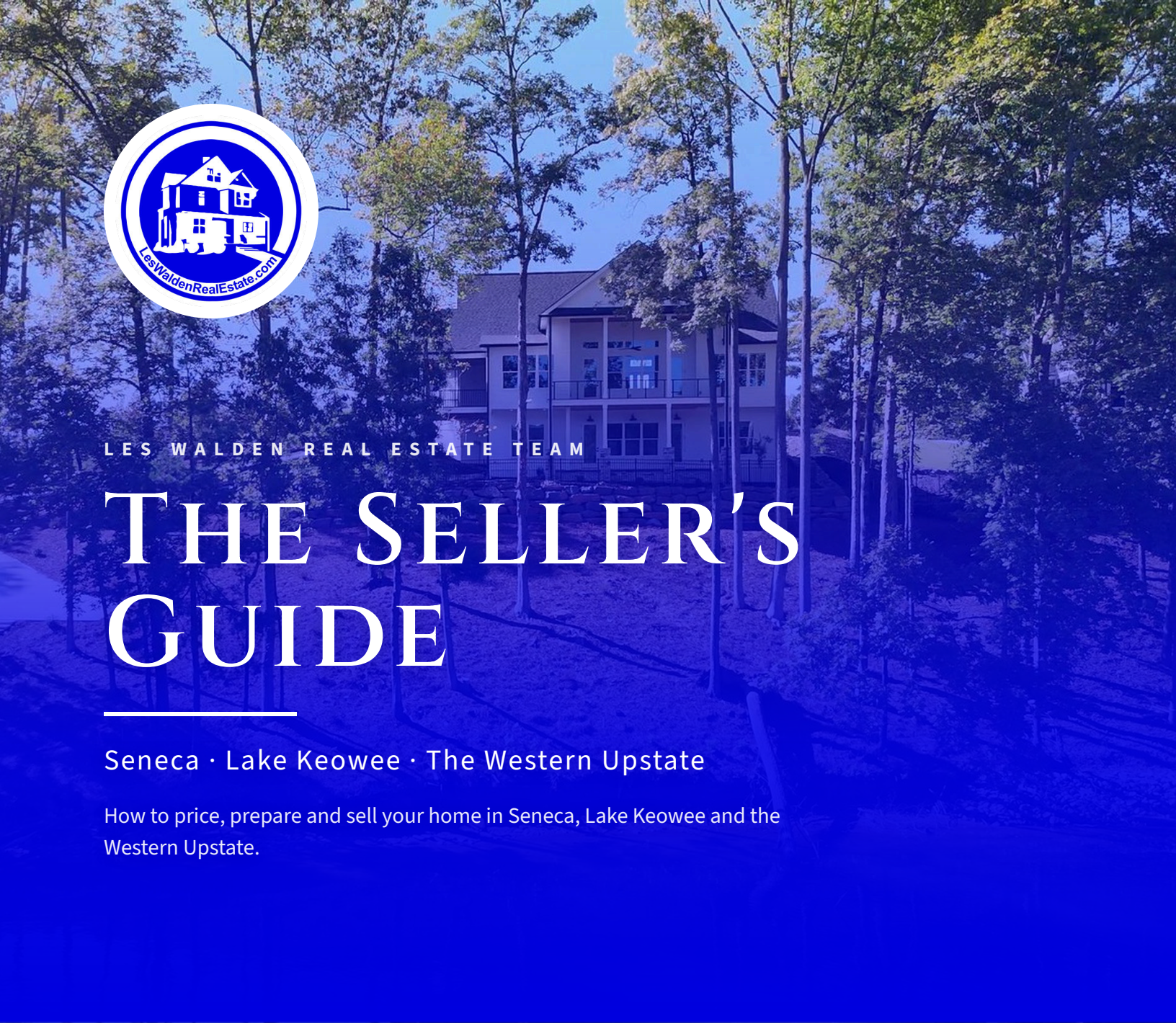


LES WALDEN REAL ESTATE TEAM

The Seller's Guide

Seneca · Lake Keowee · The Western Upstate

How to price, prepare and sell your home in Seneca, Lake Keowee and the Western Upstate.

LES WALDEN
REAL ESTATE TEAM

HELPING PEOPLE FIND **HAPPY**

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WELCOME

A Note from Les

Your home holds a lot more than square footage. It holds Sunday dinners, first days of school, sunsets off the dock, and maybe a few projects you swore you'd finish. Selling it is a big decision, and you deserve someone in your corner who knows this market from the inside.

I've been selling homes in Seneca and the surrounding Upstate area for 30 years. Our team has handled more than 4,000 transactions across Oconee, Pickens, Anderson and Greenville counties. We've sold in-town bungalows near Ram Cat Alley, lake homes on Keowee and Hartwell, farms in the foothills, and starter homes near Clemson.

That range matters, because the buyer for your home could be a retiree from Ohio, a young couple from Greenville, or a professor who just took a job at Clemson University.

This guide walks you through the whole process the way we'd walk you through it at your kitchen table. Read it, mark it up, and call us when you're ready to talk about your home specifically.



Les Walden

Founder, Les Walden Real Estate Team

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SECTION 01

Know Your Market

The buyers for your home depend on where it sits. A three-bedroom ranch in Seneca and a three-bedroom on a Keowee cove can draw completely different buyers, with different questions and different timelines.

AREA	FROM SENECA	WHO'S USUALLY LOOKING	WHAT THEY ASK FIRST
Seneca (home base)	Center of it all	Local buyers moving up or downsizing, relocating retirees, people working in Clemson or nearby	Drive time to downtown, one-level living, lot size, quick lake access
Lake Keowee: Salem, Seneca, Sunset, Six Mile, West Union	North, 10 to 30 min	Retirees and pre-retirees, second-home buyers, out-of-state buyers	Water depth at the dock, dock permit, view, gated amenities, HOA dues
Clemson, Central, Pendleton	East, 10 to 20 min	University faculty and staff, Clemson fans, investors, local move-up buyers	Commute to campus, school district, game-day traffic, rental rules
Walhalla, Westminster	West, 15 to 20 min	First-time buyers, people wanting land, mountain lovers	Acreage, well and septic, outbuildings, national forest nearby
Lake Hartwell: Anderson, Clemson, Fair Play, Townville	South, 15 to 30 min	Boaters, anglers, buyers wanting water for less than Keowee prices	Corps of Engineers line, dock permit, winter water level
Easley	East, about 35 min	Greenville commuters, first-time buyers, buyers wanting newer construction	Commute on US-123, newer construction, schools

What This Means for You

- **Your marketing should speak to your actual buyer.** A lake listing needs dock and water details up front. An in-town Seneca listing should lead with convenience and easy drive times to downtown, the lakes and Clemson.
- **Many of our buyers are not local yet.** A big share of lake and retirement buyers are relocating from the Northeast, the Midwest and Florida. They shop online first, often from hundreds of miles away. Your photos and video do the first showing.
- **Pricing is hyper-local.** A home on Keowee's main channel and one in a shallow cove two miles away can price very differently. The same is true of a Pendleton house inside the historic district versus outside it.

SECTION 02

Timing Your Sale

There's no bad month to sell a well-priced home here. But our market has rhythms, and knowing them helps you plan.

SEASON	WHAT TO EXPECT
Spring March to May	Traditional peak season. Azaleas and dogwoods are blooming, and buyers who want to move before the next school year start shopping. One local catch: the yellow pine pollen in late March and April. Power-wash decks, porches and screens right before photos.
Summer June to August	Lake season. Keowee and Hartwell homes show best with green trees, full water and boats out. Buyers on vacation tour on a whim. University faculty and staff often relocate for the fall semester.
Fall September to November	Mild weather, great color and a steady stream of out-of-state buyers scouting on long weekends. Near Clemson, we schedule showings around home football Saturdays, when US-123 and US-76 back up for hours.
Winter December to February	Fewer listings means less competition. January buyers are usually serious, and many are relocating on a timeline. Lake homes can still sell well, especially with good summer photos.

Lake-Specific Timing

Lake Keowee is a Duke Energy reservoir, and its level tends to stay fairly steady through the year. That's a selling point in every season.

Lake Hartwell is run by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and can drop noticeably in late fall, winter and drought years. If your dock sits in shallower water, full-pool photos and a clear explanation of depth help a lot.

Your Timing Matters More

The best time to sell is usually when your next step is lined up. Are you buying here, moving away, or moving in with family? Do you need to close before you buy, or after?

We help sellers work out the order, including buying first with a contingency, or arranging a short rent-back after closing so you aren't rushed out.

SECTION 03

Pricing It Right

Price is the single biggest lever you control. Priced right, a home draws showings in the first two weeks, when buyer interest is highest. Priced too high, it sits, and buyers start asking what's wrong with it.

> **Why online estimates miss here.** Automated estimates like Zillow's Zestimate work best in neighborhoods full of similar homes that sell often. Our area is the opposite. A Keowee lake home, a 10-acre farm outside Walhalla and a historic house in Pendleton may have only a handful of true comparables in a year. Online estimates can't see your dock, your view, your water depth or the new roof you put on last spring. Use them as a conversation starter, never as a price.

What Drives Value: Every Home

- Recent sales of truly similar homes nearby, adjusted for size, age, condition and lot
- Main-level living, a big deal to many of our retiring buyers
- Updates buyers can see: kitchens, baths, roof, HVAC
- School zone and commute, especially toward Clemson and Greenville

On Top of That: Lakefront

- **Water depth at the dock.** Deep water is a premium feature.
- **Dock permit and condition.** Duke Energy (Keowee) or Corps (Hartwell)? Single or double slip? Lift? Covered?
- **Main channel or cove.** Big views or calm privacy. Each has its buyer.
- **The walk to the water.** Gentle slope or a lot of steps.
- **View direction.** Long water views and sunsets add value.
- **On Hartwell, the Corps line.** How far your land is from the water matters.
- **Community.** Gated amenities, HOA dues and rental rules.

How We Price Your Home

We walk through your home, then build a market analysis using closed sales, active competition and pending deals. For lake homes, we compare water frontage, dock details and view as carefully as square footage. You'll see exactly how we got to the number, and you make the final call. Start with a free home valuation at www.leswaldenrealestate.com.

SECTION 04

Preparing Your Home, Upstate Style

Buyers here are smart, and many are moving from places where homes are built differently. A little preparation that fits our climate and building styles heads off surprises later.

What Upstate Buyers Check

- **Crawl spaces.** Our humid summers can mean moisture. A vapor barrier or dehumidifier in good shape reassures buyers.
- **Termites.** Buyers routinely order a CL-100, South Carolina's official wood infestation report. A transferable termite bond is a plus.
- **Septic.** Many homes outside city limits, including many lake homes, are on septic. Have a copy of your septic permit.
- **Wells.** A recent water test answers the question before a buyer asks.
- **HVAC.** Our summers are long. Have a recent service ticket.
- **Drainage.** Red clay and summer storms show where water goes. Keep gutters clean.

Your required disclosure. South Carolina requires most sellers of one- to four-unit homes to complete a Residential Property Condition Disclosure Statement. You disclose what you actually know about the home's condition. We'll walk you through it. When in doubt, disclose.

For Lake Homes

- **Find your dock permit.** Duke Energy for Keowee, the Corps of Engineers for Hartwell.
- **Make the dock shine.** Fix loose boards, test lights and outlets, service the lift. Buyers often walk to the water first.
- **Clear the path** and trim the view, within what your permit allows.
- **Decide what stays.** Boats, lifts, kayaks, golf carts and furniture often come up in negotiations.

Inside the House

- Declutter and depersonalize
- Deep clean, windows included
- Fix the small stuff
- Fresh, neutral paint where needed

Paperwork to Gather Now

- [ ] Deed and survey
- [ ] Termite bond and CL-100 history
- [ ] Septic and well records
- [ ] HVAC, roof and repair receipts
- [ ] Dock permit
- [ ] HOA documents and dues
- [ ] 12 months of utility costs
- [ ] Property tax bill

SECTION 05

Marketing and Showings

We know what makes a home sell here: how it's priced, how it shows, and how it's marketed. Here's how we put your home in front of the right buyers.



How We Market Your Home

- **Professional photography.** For lake homes, that means shots from the water and of the dock.
- **Video walkthroughs.** A buyer in Cleveland or Tampa can tour your home before booking a flight.
- **Our website and the MLS,** which feeds the major home search sites like Zillow, Realtor.com and Homes.com.
- **Social media and YouTube,** reaching people researching a move to the Upstate.
- **Our database and referral network.** Thirty years and 4,000+ transactions means a lot of people who already know someone looking.
- **A listing description written for your buyer.** We lead with what the most likely buyer for your home cares about most, whether that's deep water and a covered dock, one-level living, or a short drive to downtown Seneca.

Showing Your Home

- **Make it easy.** A buyer here for one weekend can't come back next Tuesday.
- **Step out.** Buyers relax and linger when the owner isn't home.
- **Quick daily reset.** Beds made, counters clear, lights on, blinds open, pets out of sight.
- **Lake homes:** dock lights on for evening showings.
- **Secure valuables and medications** before any showing.

We Keep You in the Loop

You'll hear from us with showing feedback, market activity and changes in competing listings. If something isn't working, we'll tell you plainly and recommend what to adjust.

SECTION 06

Offers, Negotiation and the SC Contract

An offer is a lot more than a price. We'll review every term with you and help you compare offers side by side.

What to Look At in Every Offer

- **Price,** and what it nets you after costs
- **Financing** and the strength of the pre-approval
- **Earnest money,** held in trust until closing
- **Due diligence period**
- **Termination fee**
- **Appraisal terms**
- **Closing date** and your next move
- **Contingencies,** like the buyer selling a home first
- **What conveys:** boat lift, kayaks, golf cart, furniture

How SC Contracts Work

1. **Due diligence period.** The buyer gets a set number of days to inspect, review the HOA and check insurance.
2. **During that period, the buyer can walk away for any reason** by giving notice and paying the termination fee. No fee is owed for financing issues, a low appraisal or a CL-100 issue.
3. **Repair requests are requests.** You're not obligated to agree.
4. **After due diligence ends,** the buyer is committed, subject to the remaining terms.

> **Negotiating with Les in your corner.** Negotiation is where experience pays for itself. We've negotiated thousands of deals in this market, from in-town starter homes to lakefront estates. We know what's normal here, what's a red flag and when to hold firm. You'll always know where things stand, and you'll make every decision.

Backup offers. If you get more than one offer, a backup offer protects you. If the first deal falls apart during due diligence, you aren't starting over.

SECTION 07

Closing Day and Your Options

South Carolina requires a licensed attorney to handle real estate closings. The closing attorney checks the title, prepares the documents, pays out the money and records the deed.

Typical Seller Costs

- Real estate commission, per your listing agreement and/or contract of sale
- Mortgage payoff and any liens
- Deed preparation and attorney fees
- South Carolina deed recording fee
- Prorated property taxes and HOA dues
- Any repairs or credits you agreed to

We'll give you an estimated net sheet before you list and again with every offer.

Closing Day Checklist

- [ ] Photo ID
- [ ] All keys, garage remotes, gate cards and fobs
- [ ] Dock and boat lift keys and remotes
- [ ] Manuals and warranties in a kitchen drawer
- [ ] Utilities scheduled to transfer
- [ ] Forwarding address set

More Than One Way to Sell

Some sellers want the highest price and are happy to wait for it. Others need speed or certainty. We offer three programs.

Worry-Free Listing

SELL FOR TOP DOLLAR, PARTNERED WITH AREA EXPERTS

Accurate pricing is crucial in today's competitive market. We stay ahead of market trends and use deep local knowledge, current data and years of experience to build a pricing strategy with you that maximizes your home's value. Your customized marketing plan highlights your property's unique features to attract the right buyers. From staging advice to impactful open houses, we handle every detail so your sale is smooth, rewarding and worry-free.

Instant Cash Offer

NO CLEANING, NO SHOWINGS, NO REPAIRS, NO OPEN HOUSES

Selling can be exciting and overwhelming. Our Instant Cash Offer Program is a seamless, hassle-free option that gives you control and peace of mind. You receive an instant cash offer and skip showings, open houses and months on the market. Our team handles the details so you can sell on your timeline and move forward with confidence.

Back-Up Cash Offer

TEST THE MARKET WITH A SAFETY NET

Want to test the market but keep a fallback? List your home, and if you don't like the results or the stress of the market becomes too much, take the Back-Up Cash Offer and bypass all of that. Our team handles the details so you sell on your timeline, with confidence and control.

Family Forever. Once you've worked with us, you're one of ours. Need a contractor's name, a value check or help with your next move? Call us. One tax note: if this was your primary residence, talk with your tax professional about capital gains and the primary residence exemption.

SECTION 08

Your Seller Roadmap

Our proven process has seven steps. Here's what happens at each one and what you'll do.

#	STEP	WHAT HAPPENS	YOUR TO-DO
1	**Listing**	We walk through your home, talk through goals and timing, and agree on a price strategy.	Request your free valuation. Gather paperwork.
2	**Property Prep**	A short, specific list of what's worth doing and what isn't.	Repairs, cleaning, HVAC service, septic and well checks, dock work.
3	**Market Launch**	Photos, video, description and launch across our website, the MLS and social media.	Complete the disclosure. Set showing instructions.
4	**Goal Success**	Showings, feedback and offers. We negotiate for your best terms.	Review each offer and your estimated net.
5	**Pending Process**	Due diligence, inspections, appraisal and loan approval.	Respond quickly to requests. Plan your move.
6	**Closing**	Sign with the closing attorney and hand over the keys.	Bring ID, keys, remotes and dock keys.
7	**Family Forever**	We stay in touch long after the moving truck leaves.	Call us anytime.

How long does it take? Prep usually takes one to four weeks. Time on the market depends on price, location and season. From accepted offer to closing typically runs 30 to 45 days with financing, and can be faster with cash.

Let's Talk About Your Home

Every home and every seller is different. This guide gives you the lay of the land. A conversation with us gives you a plan for your home: what it's worth, what to fix and what to leave, and when to list.

Start with your free home valuation at www.leswaldenrealestate.com, or call us today.

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30 Years in the Upstate

4,000+ Transactions

Helping People Find Happy

This guide is for general information only and isn't legal, tax or financial advice. Rules, fees and market conditions change. Talk with a South Carolina real estate attorney, tax professional or lender about your specific situation.