



HOMESELLER GUIDE



Thinking About **SELLING YOUR OWN HOME?**

Selling your home yourself depends on your personal preferences and how much time and energy you're willing to invest in your home sale.

Industry experts advise against owners selling their own homes, citing that an experienced real estate sales professional can find the right buyer, the best price and often prevents costly and time-consuming problems that may arise during the transaction.

Home sellers need to be prepared to do a lot of the work, like holding their own open house. You will need

to be outgoing and comfortable answering endless questions about your property. You will need to accept that strangers are going to look in your closets, under your sink and cabinets, etc.

Patience can also be important when holding out for the best possible offer. A good eye and a willingness to spend time staging your home are helpful, too. You can hire staging consultants to give advice on how to make your home look its best. Sometimes an objective set of eyes can see "curb appeal" that you may have overlooked.

Common **FSBO MISTAKES**

- 1 Repairs that may need to be done prior to presenting your home for sale vs. repairs that are to be done after you find a buyer are important decisions and may affect your asking price for the home.
 - 2 Are you going to prepare the contract yourself or are you going to have an attorney prepare it for you? Either way, you need to have a copy ready for the buyer to sign on the dotted line at a moment's notice.
 - 3 Select a title or settlement company before putting your home on the market so the company can take delivery of the contract and the buyer's earnest money check. Many FSBO sellers are simply not prepared to sell their home and are unaware of the sale and closing process.
 - 4 What is a competitive price for a home? Are you informed enough or able to do research to competently price your home? Or do you need the assistance of a professional appraiser? Many appraisers will sell you a competent and objective "paper appraisal."
- If you price your property too high, it could take forever to sell it. If you price the home too low, you could lose money.
- Real estate agents consistently work to keep properties in front of buyers by placing them into their shared database known as MLS: Multiple Listing Service. The MLS database provides real estate professionals access to your property information to increase visibility and opportunities for a sale.

Reasons to Use a **REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONAL**

It pays to use a real estate professional because real estate has become a very complicated business, and selling or buying a home will be one of the most important financial transactions of your life. From the moment you consider selling you will benefit from choosing a professional to list your home and the combined efforts will ensure a smooth and pleasant experience for everyone involved. Your home may be listed in the Multiple Listing Service, providing you with incomparable exposure and ensuring you have as many real estate professionals as possible helping to find a buyer. Additionally, your agent knows how to specifically target advertising and use all the marketing tools available to sell your home expediently by conducting a variety of efforts on your behalf. Most importantly, when it comes to closing escrow, your PROFESSIONAL can be invaluable, leading you through the paperwork and familiarizing you with insurance, property disclosures, inspection procedures, and so much more.

It's always a good market in real estate - when you know what you're doing - and no one knows as much as your real estate professional about today's real estate market.

LOCATION

You usually cannot move a home! To coin the favorite phrase of appraisers: "Location, Location, Location". The pricing of your property must reflect its location.

CONDITION

The upkeep and presentation of your property is crucial to obtain the highest value for your home in any given market at any given time. The pricing of your property must reflect its condition.

PRICE

Price is the number one factor in the sale of a home. A property is really only worth what one person is willing to pay another to gain ownership of the property. Price must be in direct relationship to the other four ingredients and it is the most important of all!

TERMS

The more terms available on your property, the more potential purchasers you reach. The pricing of your property must reflect the kinds of terms available to purchase it.

THE MARKET

Interest rates, competition, and the economy all make up and influence the state of the market when you sell your home. The pricing of your property must reflect the current status of the market.

When all of the above ingredients are in agreement...there is a good possibility your home will sell!
If just one ingredient is out of line, it will take a longer time to sell. The more ingredients that are out of line, the longer it will take before you can begin packing and moving to your new home.

KEY PROFESSIONALS

Involved in a Real Estate Transaction

Knowledgeable, customer-focused professionals are available to answer your title and settlement questions. Throughout the home selling process, you may also encounter the following industry specialists who are able to professionally answer questions in their area of expertise.

REAL ESTATE AGENT Licensed by the state to represent parties in the transfer of property.

HOME INSPECTOR Objectively and independently provides a comprehensive analysis of a home's major systems and components.

LOAN OFFICER A representative of a bank or other financial institution. They help customers identify their borrowing options and help them understand the terms of their loan.

APPRAISER Works on behalf of a lender and provides a market analysis of the subject property. An appraiser's finding is subjective and combined with market findings of sold properties within the surrounding neighborhood.

INSURANCE AGENT Helps a homebuyer determine the homeowner's protection coverage needed and then finds the right insurance policy to fit those needs.

REAL ESTATE ATTORNEY Can give advice on all legal aspects of the real estate transaction. Additionally, they are able to draft and review contracts, help decide how to take title and assist with the closing process. In some states, real estate closings can only be conducted by attorneys.

ESCROW/CLOSING OFFICER A non-biased third party who works with all participants to facilitate a successful closing of a real estate transaction. At closing, the closing officer will collect the purchase money funds from the buyer and lender as well as the settlement costs from each party. They disburse the funds in accordance with the closing documents and record the necessary documents to transfer ownership of the property.

CLOSING/SETTLEMENT/TITLE AGENT Performs title searches to ensure a clear title so a title insurance policy can be issued. In some states, they facilitate the transfer of real estate.



Quick REFERENCE

Escrow #	
New Address	
City/State/Zip	

Complete the following information as it becomes available.

IMPORTANT: Do not cancel your home insurance or disconnect utilities prior to the close of escrow.

REAL ESTATE AGENT	
Name	
Team Members	
Company	
Address	
City/State/Zip	
Phone #	
Cell #	
Fax #	
Email	
Website	

CLOSING AGENT OR ATTORNEY	
Name	
Phone #	
Fax #	
Email	
Assistant	
Phone#	
Email	
Address	
City/State/Zip	

SERVICE	COMPANY	PHONE #	ACCOUNT #	DEACTIVATION DATE
Internet				
Cable/Satellite				
Gas				
Electric				

HOME INSURANCE	
Current Agent	
Phone #	
Policy #	
END Date	

New Agent	
Phone #	
Policy #	
START Date	

Home Warranty	
Plan #	
Policy #	

PHONE SERVICE	
Company	
Phone #	
Account #	
New Phone #	
Deactivation Date	

NOTES

Important Reminders for Sellers

AUTOMATIC LOAN PAYMENTS

If your mortgage payments are set up on autopay, be sure to contact your lender to cancel future withdrawals. It can take time for the payment department to receive notification that the loan has been paid in full.

UTILITIES

Be sure to contact all utility service providers to remove your name and close out your accounts. Please note: final utility bills are not paid through escrow. You'll need to arrange direct payment for any charges up to the closing date.

KEY EXCHANGE

Your realtor will typically coordinate the exchange of keys with the buyer.

HAZARD INSURANCE

Once your transaction has officially recorded, reach out to your insurance provider to cancel any policies tied to the property.

FINAL SETTLEMENT STATEMENT

Your final closing statement will be mailed to you after the transaction is complete. Keep this document for your tax records.

WHAT TO EXPECT NEXT

Once all documents are signed and approved, we will proceed with recording and fund disbursement, including your proceeds.

ESCROW ACCOUNT REFUND

If you had an escrow account with your lender, you may receive a refund for unused tax or insurance funds. Confirm your forwarding address is on file.

HOA NOTIFICATIONS

If your property is part of an HOA, notify the association of the sale to stop assessments and update records. Cancel any auto-payments tied to your account.

FORWARDING MAIL

Submit a change of address with USPS to ensure all mail is forwarded to your new address.

LISTING PHOTOS

Talk to your realtor about removing your home's photos from online listings once the transaction is complete, if preferred.

DOCUMENT RETENTION

Keep a file containing all transaction documents, including disclosures, settlement statements, and closing instructions, for your future reference.

PROPERTY TAXES

Check with your county tax collector for any upcoming property tax payments. If taxes were prorated through escrow, confirm timing of the next bill.

FINAL WALKTHROUGH PREP

Ensure the home is clean and free of personal belongings before the final walkthrough. Most contracts require the home to be in "broom clean" condition.



Thank You!

We're grateful you chose **Consumer's Title Company** for your title and escrow needs. Please contact us with any questions, we're here to support you every step of the way!

Get Your Home **SHOW READY**

EXTERIOR		Replace any broken stepping stones	Make sure all electrical outlets work
Clean around service areas/trash cans Haul away rubbish		Adjust any sprinkler system; repair any broken/leaky heads	Eliminate cooking odors
Straighten woodpile		Install fences or shrubs to hide any unsightly views	Deodorize garbage disposal, dishwasher, and refrigerator
Repair leaky faucets		CLEAN/WASH	Repair faucets
Clean up pet droppings		Siding	Put fresh shelf paper in cabinets
Paint or varnish doors		Windows	Organize cupboards
Polish door hardware		Screen	Clean out under sink
Make sure the doorbell/knocker works		Outdoor BBQ	Replace garbage disposal gasket to reduce noise
Paint or replace street numbers on house		A/C Unit	BATHROOMS
Make sure the septic tank is odor free		Pool/Spa	Shine mirrors
Clean oil stains from driveway/street		CHECK LIGHT BULBS	Keep wastebaskets empty and clean
Patch/reseal driveway if necessary		Porch Lights	Clean out cabinets
Replace, repair, and/or paint any damages:		Carport	Keep fresh, clean towels on towel racks
Plaster		Garage	Clean shower door – if sliding door, keep track lubricated
Wood siding		CLOSETS	Remove soap residue, mildew and mold from sink/tub/shower
Trim		Keep closets clean and free of clutter	Remove stains from porcelain sink tub toilet
Rain gutters		Throw out or pack away non-essentials Adjust/repair sliding doors	Replace torn/moldy shower curtain
Shutters		Lubricate sliding door hardware	Clean tile grout
Doors		Paint, if needed	Make sure toilet flushes properly – replace mechanism if necessary
Window frames		ALL ROOMS, Clean especially around:	Clean exhaust fan/heater – replace if broken or noisy
Glazing		Doors	GARAGE/CARPORT/SHED
Screens		Windows	Install 100-watt light bulb
Hardware		Light switches	Keep area clean/uncluttered
Fences/gates		Baseboards	Hang up/put away tools
Outdoor lighting		Chair rails	Clear away any cobwebs
Landscaping		Wash lace curtains and have draperies cleaned if necessary	Remove oil/paint stains from floor
Mow/edge lawn regularly		Remove or pull back dark curtains	Adjust tension rod to eliminate sag from overhead garage door
Aerate/feed lawn		Lubricate window slides (soap for wood silicon or a candle stump for metal)	Lubricate/adjust/repair garage door opener
Overseed bare spots in lawn		Make sure doors open smoothly	Paint if needed
Water lawn regularly		Clean ceiling light fixtures	LAUNDRY AREA
Remove/replace dead plants		Check for cobwebs in all corners	Clean out area behind washer/dryer
Prune overgrown/diseased/damaged shrubs		Fix any scratches in wooden floors	Eliminate any mildew odors
Prune or remove shrubs/trees blocking view from windows (unless view is undesirable)		Replace worn/broken flooring	BASEMENT
Stake up any sagging trees/shrubs		Remove or replace worn carpet	Eliminate any signs of dampness
Keep flower beds free of weeds		Use area rugs where needed	Check for and eliminate cracks
Trim around base of trees/walls/fences		Empty wastebaskets	HEATING/AIR CONDITIONING UNIT
Repair or remove any broken or damaged landscape accessories such as:		KITCHEN	Vacuum
Fences		Keep dishes and food out of sight	Replace filter
Walls Gazebos		Clean appliances	Clean intake vent
Fountains		Clean range hood, including light bulbs	Remove any stored items
Trellises		Clean behind appliances	
Planters		Keep floor clean	
Other		Clean light fixture	

Make sure the temperature in your home is comfortable – keep it cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter. If it's cooler outside and you have a fireplace, a nice fire can make your home seem cozy and inviting.

Provide an written list of the features of your home.

Know the distance to schools and shopping centers.

MOVING Checklist

NOTIFY OF ADDRESS CHANGE

- ☐ Post Office
- ☐ Bank
- ☐ Credit card companies
- ☐ Insurance companies – Medical, auto
- ☐ Automobile – Registration, drivers license
- ☐ Utility companies
 - ☐ Arrange for any refunds of deposits
 - ☐ Arrange for service in new location
- ☐ Home delivery subscriptions
- ☐ School(s)
- ☐ Doctor(s)
- ☐ Pharmacy – Transfer prescriptions
- ☐ Church, clubs, civic organizations

DON'T FORGET TO

- ☐ Empty freezers – Plan use of foods
- ☐ Have appliances serviced for moving
 - ☐ Stay in contact with mover and confirm: insurance coverage, packing/unpacking labor, time/date of move, details of payment

MOVING DAY

- ☐ Carry currency, jewelry, and important documents
- ☐ Let a friend or relative know route, scheduled stops and arrival estimate
- ☐ Double-check closets, attic, shed
- ☐ Leave any keys needed by new owner – Garage, sheds, mailbox, etc.

Tips for MOVING WITH PETS

Moving to a home in a new location can be an exciting adventure, but it can also be the cause of stress and confusion for household pets. To minimize the trauma, here are a few tips that may help make your pet's transition a little easier:

SCHEDULE A VET CHECK-UP Obtain a copy of your pet's medical history along with rabies certifications that state when/where your pet was vaccinated. Keep an ample supply of current medications to last until a veterinarian in your new location can provide refills.

PROPER IDENTIFICATION IS ESSENTIAL Be certain that any required license tags are secured properly and the contact information is current.

CONSIDER BOARDING your pet during the most hectic of moving days. Pets can become anxious with the increase of activity prior to a move.

GATHER CAR SUPPLIES Kennel and/or safely restraint, favorite toy or two, a leash for when stops are made, and plenty of water to keep your pet hydrated.

KNOW STATE REQUIREMENTS for the movement of pets across state lines. Contact the State Veterinarian in your new location to obtain the most current information.

PET-FRIENDLY ACCOMMODATIONS Long-distance moves may require an overnight stay. People and pet-friendly accommodations can be found by searching a number of internet sites.

ALLOW TIME TO ACCLIMATE Once you have arrived in your new location, allow sufficient time for your pet to adjust to the new neighborhood; it could take a few days or a few weeks.

CARRY A CURRENT PHOTOGRAPH If your pet is lost during the move, a photograph will make it much easier to search effectively.



Closing DAY

VALID PHOTO IDENTIFICATION To help defend against forgery and fraud, state notary laws include requirements that parties signing documents in a real estate transaction to provide acceptable forms of identification. Although specific requirements may vary from state to state, here is a general overview of the type(s) of identification that are typically used to substantiate and affirm identity.

ACCEPTABLE IDENTIFICATION

One or more of the following may be requested to verify identification. The document must be current and contain the document signer's photograph, physical description, signature, and bear a serial or other identifying number.

- Valid Driver's License or Non-Driver ID Issued by any State
- United States Passport
- Valid United States Military ID
- Veterans Health ID Card
- Foreign Passport Stamped by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)
- Valid Canadian or Mexican Driver's License Issued by the Official Agency*

UNACCEPTABLE IDENTIFICATION

- Temporary Driver's License
- Driver's License without a Photograph
- Social Security Card
- Employee ID Badge
- Permanent Resident ID Card

Closing document signatures must match the name that appears on the identification presented. An abbreviated form (John D. Smith instead of John David Smith, for example) may be acceptable. However, deviation is only allowed if the individual is signing with less than and not more than what is on the identification document. If your name has changed, or will change, prior to the closing, documentation must be provided to support the change.

CASHIER'S CHECK, TREASURER'S CHECK, OR WIRE TRANSFER In the event you are required to bring funds to closing, we cannot accept personal checks or cash. If you prefer to wire your funds, contact us for bank routing instructions. If you will be bringing a proceeds check from another settlement, contact us to verify the acceptance of those funds - we do not automatically accept all checks.

HAZARD INSURANCE POLICY AND PAID RECEIPT

A hazard policy, also known as homeowner's insurance, with the lender designated as the insured holder of the mortgage, is required on most loans. Evidence of hazard insurance, including a paid receipt, must be provided prior to closing.

IF POSSIBLE, ALL PARTIES WHO HOLD TITLE TO THE PROPERTY SHOULD ATTEND THE CLOSING

State-specific laws may require the spouse of the parties in title, even though their name does not appear on the deed, to sign certain documents when obtaining a mortgage. If anyone is unable to attend the closing, contact us to arrange a power of attorney or closing by mail.

IF APPLICABLE

- Buyer(s) Pre-Approval Letter
- Home Warranty Application
- Payoff Authorization to Release Information
- Association/Condominium Contact Information
- Copy of Earnest Money Deposit Check
- Cashier's Check, Treasurer's Check, or Wire Transfer
- Power of Attorney (original needed at closing)
- Divorce Decree and Quit Claim Deed (original needed at closing, if not recorded)
- Court Order from Bankruptcy Court
- Death Certificate (original needed at closing)
- Prior Owner's Title Policy
- Trust Agreement and Attorney Contact
- Letter of Authority for Probated Estate (original needed at closing, if not recorded)
- Limited Liability Company Documents: Operating Agreement and Articles of Organization
- Hazard Insurance Policy and Paid Receipt
- Corporation Documents: Board of Resolution, Certificate of Good Standing and Articles of Organization

*Not accepted in all states. Contact your closing/settlement agent for more information.

TERMS to Know

APPRAISAL

An estimate of value of property resulting from analysis of facts about the property; an opinion of value.

ANNUAL PERCENTAGE RATE (APR)

The borrower's costs of the loan term expressed as a rate. This is not their interest rate.

BENEFICIARY

The recipient of benefits, often from a deed of trust; usually the lender.

CLOSING DISCLOSURE (CD)

Closing Disclosure form designed to provide disclosures that will be helpful to borrowers in understanding all of the costs of the transaction. This form will be given to the consumer three business days before closing.

CLOSE OF ESCROW

Though varied from state-to-state, escrow generally refers to the date the buyer becomes the legal owner and title insurance becomes effective.

COMPARABLE SALES

Sales that have similar characteristics as the subject real property, used for analysis in the appraisal. Commonly called "comps."

CONSUMMATION/CLOSING

Occurs when the borrower becomes contractually obligated to the creditor on the loan, not, for example, when the borrower becomes contractually obligated to a seller on a real estate transaction. The point in time when a borrower becomes contractually obligated to the creditor on the loan depends on applicable State law. Consummation is not the same as close of escrow or settlement.

DEED OF TRUST

An instrument used in many states in place of a mortgage.

DEED RESTRICTIONS

Limitations in the deed to a parcel of real property that dictate certain uses that may or may not be made of the real property.

DISBURSEMENT DATE

The date the amounts are to be disbursed to a buyer and seller in a purchase transaction or the date funds are to be paid to the borrower or a third party in a transaction that is not a purchase transaction.

EARNEST MONEY DEPOSIT

Down payment made by a purchaser of real property as evidence of good faith; a deposit or partial payment.

EASEMENT

A right, privilege or interest limited to a specific purpose that one party has in the land of another.

ENDORSEMENT

As to a title insurance policy, a rider or attachment forming a part of the insurance policy expanding or limiting coverage.

ESCROWS/IMPOUNDS

A trust type of account established by lenders for the accumulation of borrower's funds to meet periodic payments of taxes, mortgage insurance premiums and/or future insurance policy premiums, required to protect their security.

HAZARD INSURANCE

Real estate insurance protecting against fire, some natural causes, vandalism, etc., depending upon the policy. Buyer often adds liability insurance and extended coverage for personal property.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION

A description of land recognized by law, based on government surveys, spelling out the exact boundaries of the entire parcel of land. It should so thoroughly identify a parcel of land that it cannot be confused with any other.

LIEN

A form of encumbrance that usually makes a specific parcel of real property the security for the payment of a debt or discharge of an obligation. For example, judgments, taxes, mortgages, deeds of trust.

LOAN ESTIMATE (LE)

Form designed to provide disclosures that will be helpful to borrowers in understanding the key features, costs and risks of the mortgage loan for which they are applying. Initial disclosure to be given to the borrower three business days after application.

MORTGAGE

The instrument by which real property is pledged as security for repayment of a loan.

PITI

A payment that includes Principal, Interest, Taxes, and Insurance.

POWER OF ATTORNEY

A written instrument whereby a principal gives authority to an agent. The agent acting under such a grant is sometimes called an Attorney-in-Fact.

RECORDING

Process of filing documents affecting real property with the appropriate government agency as a matter of public record.

SETTLEMENT STATEMENT

Document providing a detailed breakdown of costs involved in a real estate transaction.

TILA-RESPA INTEGRATED DISCLOSURE (TRID)

A rule issued by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) that combines and integrates the disclosures under the Truth in Lending Act (TILA) and the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act (RESPA). Effective in October 2015.

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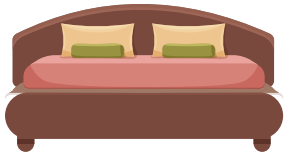
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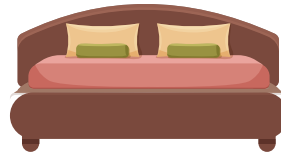




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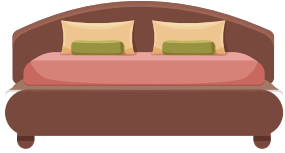
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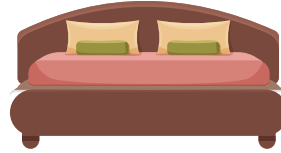
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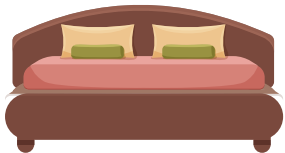
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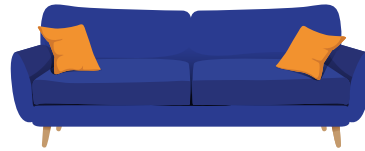


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