

# 3 Steps

To Selling Your Home

The steps to selling a house can seem even more exhaustive than buying a home, even if you have already been through the process. For first-time home seller, the steps can get confusing, and the preparation can be tiresome. It's often hard to focus as well when you get on this emotional roller coaster. Use this resource as a reference to help you through the process as you go through each step.

A good REALTOR® is your best resource to help avoid issues that might jeopardize your home purchase. They will walk you through each step below and make sure that nothing is overlooked.

## 1 Get Your Home Ready To Sell

**First,** When considering how to sell your house, start by identifying and completing any repairs your property may need. When you sell your home, the buyer will most likely hire a professional inspector to inspect your property for damages and potential problems. It's best to take care of these problems before listing your real estate so that they do not become potential deal breaking issues later on.

**Second,** evaluate whether or not your home needs updating to receive a good offer. Look at other homes in your neighborhood online, or with your REALTOR®. If all the current listings, or recently sold listings have granite countertops, solid wood floors, and/or other updates, it will be in your best interest to add those things to your home as well. If most of the homes around you are offering upgrades and your property does not, the chances are high that your home will be on the market for a while and eventually receive offers much lower than you prefer. Installing and performing upgrades before listing can be a smart investment. For the best results, meet with your REALTOR® to get advice on which upgrades will have the greatest impact.

**Third,** you will want to make your home look new again. The goal is to take all the “wear and tear” out of your home. This usually involves touching up the paint and baseboards, shampooing carpets, adding fresh mulch, trimming bushes, and deep cleaning every room in the house. It's often that sellers find that they need to completely paint the interior of the house and put new floors in, as even every day wear and tear can turn buyers off. You will also want to take the “you” out of your home. Take all personal pictures and pack them in a box for your next residence. You also take any items that are personal to you and pack them as well. Make your home as clean and neutral as possible so that homebuyers can imagine their furniture and items in your house. If possible, hire a professional home stager to help arrange your home for an amazing presentation to homebuyers. Staging is becoming more common every year and many of the homes that your home will be competing with may be staged.

## 2 Get Your Home Listed For Sale

**First,** Start by hiring a good REALTOR®. Don't just use a family member or someone in your neighborhood. Do your homework and find someone with a good online presence and strong testimonials and/or reviews.



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Here's a good list of questions to ask before hiring a REALTOR®.

- Do they hire professional photographers, or use professional equipment to take photographs?
- Do they (or their photographers) use High Resolution imaging equipment and software?
- Do they photograph with wide angle lens?
- Do they use a professional Showing Service, or are they personally responsible for coordinating all of your showings?
- Do they use Secure Electronic Lockboxes or cheap un-secure combination lockboxes?
- How many homes do they sell each year, and how does that average compare for the area?
- How long have they been in the business?
- How many different brokerages have they worked for?
- Do they have strong testimonials and references?
- Do they have a strong online presence?
- Do they communicate in ways that you prefer? (email, text, social media, phone call, etc.)?
- How much of their commission are they offering the buyer's brokerage?
- Where are they marketing your listing?
- Do they use electronic document and signing services for your convenience?
- Do they have professional and industry accreditations, education and training?

These are just a few of the many questions you may wish to ask the REALTORS® you may interview. Your whole home selling experience will be greatly affected by the competency of the real estate agent that you hire. I can't stress enough how important it is that you feel comfortable in the end on this one. The more that you... Know, Like & Trust Your REALTOR®, the better the transactional experience will ultimately go!

**Second, you'll want to think long and hard about the price that you want to list your property at. Get comparable sold property information from your REALTOR® and ask their advice. The challenge is to find the right price that will sell your house fast, and yet not leave any money on the table. Statistically, the longer a home is on the market, the lower the offers seller(s) will receive. It's a common scenario for sellers to list their home for too much and then drop the price later, after few or no showings and/or offers. The problem is that your best chance for a great offer is when you first list the property. Once your house has been on the market for a couple of months, buyers will know that you are worn down and are more desperate to get rid of your home. The offers that you receive will, most likely, be lower than offers that you would receive in the first week, because buyers know that if they are interested, then so are other competing buyers. It works out great if you can create a bidding war between buyers.**

**Third, and finally, make sure you keep your home presentable and ready for showings. I've shown many houses to homebuyers over the years and I am always surprised at how many of them are dirty and not ready to be shown when I get there. Home usually look different in person than they do online. Above all, make sure your home smells good and is clean. This is a non-negotiable point. In addition, try to set the home up for the showing by opening blinds and curtains in strategic areas to allow natural light in and highlight the best views. Also, leave some lamps and lights on so that the home buyers don't see your home in dim light. Make it feel like a home as soon as they walk in the front door.**

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## Get Your Home Sold

First, once your house is listed and you have taken the right steps to get it sold, you will start receiving offers. It's important to wait for the right offer. Home selling rookies will be tempted to get excited about the first offer that comes along. This can cause problems if you are only concerned with the offer price. The downpayment amount, loan type, and pre-approval letter are very important parts of the offer as well. Any seasoned REALTOR has had deals that fail. Most would agree that FHA loans with 3.5% down payment from buyers who need closing cost assistance are some of the most common deals to fall apart. When buyers do not have much cash in the bank and are barely able to qualify for a loan, it can greatly increase the chances of a deal failing. If you have the option to wait for a strong contract from a buyer offering a decent down payment and who can pay for their owning closing costs, your chances of closing the deal are much higher. Take these things into consideration when you are receiving contracts on your home.

Second, once you have an executed contract at the title company, you'll want to keep the communication going between you and your real estate agent. Make sure that they are checking in with the buyer's agent and lender on a regular basis. Make sure that they know you are anxious for information and that you are going to be contacting them regularly. I've seen too many deals where agents left things alone expecting the mortgage lender to be doing their job, only to find out days before closing that transaction needs to be extended, or that it is dead in the water. Unfortunately you can't just assume that your REALTOR, mortgage lender, title company, appraiser, or anyone else involved in the transaction are all doing their jobs well. Check in often and stay on top of them.

Third, and finally, once the deal has a clear to close from the lender, schedule the closing with the title company. If you want to get your funds on the same day, try to schedule the closing in the morning so that the wire transfer has time to make it to your bank. It is very important for people on the west coast as the wire cut off time is 6:00 pm eastern time. Also, Fridays are usually the most hectic at the title companies because everyone wants to close on Friday. If you can schedule Monday through Thursday, your chance of not having any issues are higher.

Bring your photo ID (driver's license, passport, etc.) to closing, along with all the keys, garage door openers, appliance documentation (if applicable), repairs receipts, and any other relevant items to the transaction. As the seller, your paperwork will be minimal and you should be finished within minutes. Once the buyers sign their documents, the title company will forward the documents to the lender and if everything was done properly, the loan will fund within a couple of hours and you will receive the funds from the closing. This is a basic walkthrough of the home selling process as a reference. A good REALTOR® will be able to help you navigate the process with confidence, and will get the best price for your home within the least amount of time on the market. Please, let me know if you need help selling your home. I get great satisfaction in helping the homeowners I work with get the highest offer in shortest time possible, using modern technology and years of experience.

### Final Thoughts

As a home seller, your main concerns should be as follows:

- Make sure you re-fresh and stage the property well for photograph and presentation.
- Make sure you are wise in choosing a attorney and REALTOR® to guide you through the process.
- Feel free to ask me any questions that you may have about the home selling process.

At [HomesInTheFoxValley.com](http://HomesInTheFoxValley.com), we ready to coordinate the smoothest transaction possible. Buying or Selling a home takes time and energy, but it's extremely rewarding. After you've signed the papers at closing, all of our hard work will have paid off, and you will feel that wave of excitement as you move in your new home, or on to your next home!



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*"When Excellence Matters - Count on Christopher!"*

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