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THE ULTIMATE

Home Seller's *Checklist*

Selling your home can be a complex process, but with the right tools and guidance, it can also be a rewarding one. This comprehensive guide will help you navigate the selling process from start to finish.

STEP ONE

Hire a Real Estate Agent

Hire a Real Estate Agent

Selling your home can be a complex process. That's why it's important to choose an experienced and knowledgeable agent who can guide you through each step of the process. Additionally, it's important to ask your agent questions to ensure they are the right fit for your needs. Here are some common questions you may want to ask, along with my answers to help you understand my approach and expertise in the real estate industry.



How long have you been a real estate agent?

Over 30 years! Wow, that makes me feel old.

What is your experience working with buyers/sellers in my area?

I have sold hundreds of homes throughout Western PA and concentrate in South Butler and Northern Allegheny counties.

How will you communicate with me throughout the selling process?

However you'd like! Call, text and email are all very effective. So the choice is truly yours!

A little about me



With 30+ years of experience in the Southern Butler & Northern Allegheny county real estate markets, I have a deep understanding of the local market and the needs of my clients. Whether you're looking to buy, sell, or invest in real estate, I'm here to help you achieve your goals.

What began in 1990 with a graphic design position for Prudential Preferred Realty has blossomed into a pretty successful business with a small but mighty real estate team. Having worked solo for years building the business, and now with a team of support and mutual respect, I can honestly say that teamwork is key to delivering exceptional service to our clients.

With over 75% of our business coming from repeat and personally referred clients, I believe this is a testament to the level of service we provide to each and every one of our clients. Clear and concise communication is also essential in the real estate industry, and we pride ourselves on our ability to communicate effectively, making sure clients feel heard and understood.

What you can expect from me...

I'm Curious

I want to have a clear understanding of your goals, who you are, and what your home means to you.

I'm Committed

I bring my A-game to every transaction, and I'm committed to achieving the best possible outcome for my clients.

I'm Proactive

I'm always one step ahead, anticipating potential roadblocks and finding creative solutions to overcome them.

I'm Personal

I believe in building relationships with my clients and treating them like family, because in the end, that's what leads to the best possible results.

STEP TWO

Preparing Your Home

In this section, we will go over how to get your home ready for sale. Preparing your home involves several key steps, including making repairs and upgrades, cleaning and decluttering, and staging your home.

Making Necessary Repairs

Before putting your home on the market, it's important to prepare it properly to make the best impression on potential buyers. This involves cleaning, decluttering, making necessary repairs and maintenance, and staging your home.



According to the NAR, 37% of contracts fall through because of repair issues sellers could have addressed before listing their property.

Once your buyers go under contract, they'll most-likely have inspections done on the property. If they are financing, the home will need to be able to pass the inspection in order to obtain home insurance and secure the loan. Because of this, consider making any repairs to your home prior to putting it on the market.

If it's recommended, schedule a pre-sale inspection. Then you'll know precisely what needs to be addressed from a functional standpoint. Invest in repairing major systems first. Think HVAC, plumbing, roofing, foundation, or electrical issues.

I have created a DIY checklist on the following page for you to inspect your home and determine whether any repairs or improvements are needed, or if you should schedule an inspection.

Make a List of Home Repairs

To prepare your home for sale, make a list of necessary repairs and improvements. Prioritize them based on importance and determine if you can do them yourself or need to hire a professional. Complete the most important items before listing your home.

| | Notes | Priority | DIY or Hire |
|--|-------|----------|-------------|
| <p>Walls and ceilings: Look for cracks, peeling paint, or water stains. Check the condition of your exterior walls.</p> | | | |
| <p>Windows and doors: Check for damage, fogging, or gaps.</p> | | | |
| <p>Roof and gutters: Look for signs of damage or wear.</p> | | | |
| <p>Plumbing: Check for leaks or other issues, such as low water pressure or slow draining sinks.</p> | | | |
| <p>Electrical: Look for any issues, such as flickering lights or outdated wiring, GFCI outlets etc.</p> | | | |
| <p>HVAC system: Check the age and condition of your heating and cooling system. Have it serviced if necessary.</p> | | | |
| <p>Flooring: Check for any damage or wear.</p> | | | |
| <p>Kitchen and bathrooms: Look for any outdated or damaged fixtures, such as faucets, cabinets, or tiles.</p> | | | |

Cleaning and Staging



A clean and tidy home is crucial when it comes to attracting potential buyers. Clutter and mess can make your home look smaller and less inviting. By decluttering and cleaning your home, you're helping potential buyers see the full potential of your space. It's also an opportunity to get rid of any items you no longer need or use, making moving to your new home easier.

Use the checklist on the following pages to walk through your home and ensure that you've cleaned and staged every room before listing your home for sale.

"Buyers decide in the *first 8 seconds* of seeing a home if they're interested in buying it. Get out of your car, walk in their shoes and see what they see within the first 8 seconds."

- BARBARA CORCORAN

Cleaning and Staging Checklist

KITCHEN

- Clean off counters and declutter
- Clean tile grout if needed
- Thoroughly clean all appliances, inside and out!
- Organize all drawers and pantries
- Thoroughly clean floors

BATHROOMS

- Thoroughly clean all surfaces
- Declutter countertops and drawers
- Fold towels and stage decor
- Remove any unnecessary items
- Clean or replace shower curtains
- Clean any moldy areas

LIVING & DINING ROOM

- Remove clutter & personal items
- Stage with pillows and throws (or borrow ours!)
- Dust and clean all surfaces and fixtures
- Keep all tables clear and decluttered

BEDROOMS

- Remove clutter & personal items
- Clean out and organize closets
- Repair any damage in walls
- Keep closets closed during showings
- Make beds before any showings

Cleaning Exterior Checklist

- Pressure wash any dirty concrete
 - Clean or repaint front door
 - Repaint exterior and trim if needed
 - Wash windows inside and out
 - Sweep walkways and patios
 - Mow the lawn and trim shrubs
 - Yard is clean and maintained
 - Replace any rotten wood
 - Outdoor furniture staged and inviting
 - Pressure wash any dirty concrete
 - Fence is in good shape
 - Pool/spa is clean and in working condition
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Exterior Home Upgrades to Consider

Exterior home upgrades can not only improve the overall look of your home but also increase its value. Here are some high ROI (return on investment) exterior home upgrades to consider:

Front door replacement: If you don't need to replace your front door, a fresh coat of paint can be an easy and simple way to refresh your home's exterior. By choosing a bold, on-trend color, you can transform your "dated" door and give it a modern look.

New house numbers: New house numbers can be a simple and inexpensive upgrade that can make a big impact on the curb appeal of your home.

Garage door replacement: Replacing an old garage door can significantly boost your home's resale value.

STEP THREE

Marketing Your Home

Determine Your Home's Value

Determining your home's value is one of the most important steps in selling your home. Pricing it too high can lead to it sitting on the market for too long, while pricing it too low can mean leaving money on the table. That's why it's crucial to work with a qualified real estate agent to determine your home's value.



The Comparative Market Analysis (CMA)

I will research and provide a Comparative Market Analysis (CMA) that will compare your home's features and recent sales data of similar homes in your area. This will give you a good idea of what your home is worth in today's market.

Factors Affecting Your Home's Value

Several factors, such as location, size, condition, age, and features, can affect your home's value. Desirable neighborhoods with good schools and upgrades and renovations tend to increase a home's value, while outdated features may lower it. Understanding these factors can help you make informed decisions about your home's value and potential improvements.

Setting the Right Price

Setting the right price is essential to attract potential buyers and sell your home quickly. By analyzing your CMA results and considering other factors, like the current real estate market, you can set a competitive price. Avoid overpricing or underpricing your home, as this can lead to your home sitting on the market for too long or losing money. By setting the right price, you can increase your chances of selling your home for the best possible price.

The Risks of Overpricing Your Home

Overpricing a home is a common mistake that many sellers make. While it may seem like a good idea to price your home high to leave room for negotiation, it can actually have negative consequences. Overpricing your home can lead to it sitting on the market for too long, which can turn off potential buyers who may wonder why it's not selling and leave you with a lower sale price in the end.



3 Reasons You Shouldn't Overprice

Negative perception

The longer your home sits on the market, the worse it looks to prospects. Potential buyers may assume that there's something wrong with the property or that it's overpriced, which can make it more difficult to sell.

Limited buyer pool

Overpriced homes may not attract the right buyers. Buyers who are interested in your home may have already seen similar homes in the area that are priced more competitively. As a result, overpriced homes may only attract buyers who are looking for a deal or those who may not be qualified to purchase your home at its current price.

Low appraisal

Overpricing your home can also lead to issues with the buyer's lender. If the home doesn't appraise for the listed price, the buyer may not be able to secure financing, which can lead to negotiations, delays or termination of the contract.

Professional Photography and Videography

The photos & videos of your home directly influence whether or not a potential buyer will schedule a showing of your home or not. It is crucial that we capture high quality, professional photo & video of your home showcasing the best qualities and features.

I work with a top local real estate photographer to capture your home in the very best light. This service is complimentary.



95%

of home buyers used the internet to search for homes.

90%

of home buyers under age 57 said photos was the most useful website feature

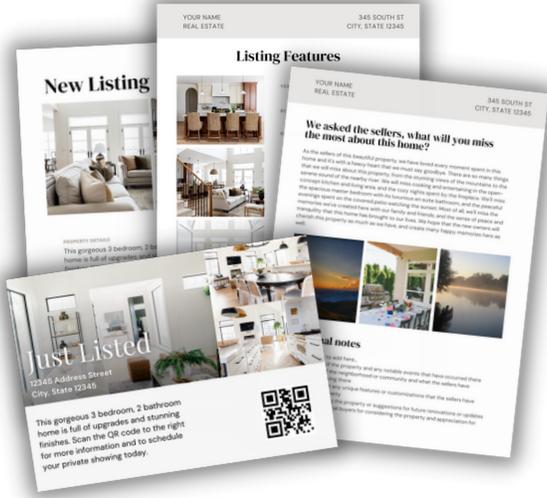
SOURCE: NAR HOME BUYER AND SELLER GENERATIONAL TRENDS (2022)

Going Live on the MLS

My team will gather information about your home to understand its unique selling points. A detailed, professional listing description will be written that highlights your home's best features and helps potential buyers envision themselves settling in.

Once your home is live on the MLS, it will be syndicated to thousands of websites (like Zillow & Realtor.com) Immediately, many buyers searching online will see your home. This is why our team is strategic with when and how we go live in the MLS.

Additional Marketing Methods



Printed Marketing Materials

While online marketing is essential, printed marketing materials can still be effective in reaching potential buyers. High-quality flyers and postcards that highlight your home's best features and provide potential buyers with all the necessary information can help attract more buyers to your home.

Leveraging Our Network & Social Media

As a real estate agent with Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices The Preferred Realty, I have access to a world-wide network of agents and clients. My brokerage has over 1,800 agents. Additionally, I have a strong social media presence across various platforms, and I am a member of several local real estate groups with thousands of members.

Through social media, I create engaging content that showcases your home's best features and generates interest in your property. By using professional photography and videography, I can capture the essence of your home and share it with a large audience.

By tapping into these resources, I can ensure that your home is seen by a large audience and maximize your chances of a successful sale. I am committed to providing exceptional service and delivering results that exceed your expectations.



STEP FOUR

Negotiating and Closing the Sale

Offers and Counteroffers

When you receive an offer on your home, it's important to carefully consider the terms and conditions outlined in the offer. As your real estate agent, I will guide you through the negotiation process and help you make informed decisions that align with your goals and objectives.



Reviewing Offers: What to Consider

When reviewing offers, there are several key factors to consider, including:

- The purchase price: Is the offer in line with your expectations? Do you feel that the offer accurately reflects the value of your home?
- The buyer's financing: Is the buyer pre-approved for a mortgage? What are the terms of their financing?
- Contingencies: Are there any contingencies outlined in the offer, such as a home inspection or appraisal?
- Closing timeline: Does the proposed closing date work for you? Are there any other logistical concerns to consider?

Counteroffers: How to Respond

When an offer falls short, a counteroffer is the next step. As your agent, I'll assist you in creating a counteroffer that matches your priorities and objectives. We'll collaborate to find a mutually beneficial solution for both parties, and I'll keep you informed throughout the negotiation process, providing expert advice to help you make informed decisions.

My goal is to help you achieve a successful sale that surpasses your expectations.

Home Inspections and Repairs

When you're selling your home, the home inspection process is a critical step in the transaction. An inspector will examine the major systems and components of your home, including the roof, HVAC system, plumbing, electrical system, and more.



Repairs and Negotiations

Once the inspection is complete, the buyer will typically request that certain repairs be made or that a credit be given to cover the cost of repairs. As the seller, you can either agree to make the requested repairs, offer a credit, or negotiate a different solution.

The Importance of Disclosure

When it comes to repairs, transparency is key. It's important to disclose any known issues with your home to potential buyers before they make an offer. Failing to disclose known issues can lead to legal and financial repercussions down the line. As your agent, I'll help you navigate this process and ensure that you're fully informed about your obligations as a seller.

Handling Repairs Fairly

It's important to keep in mind that repairs can impact the sale of your home. Serious issues can lead to a lower sale price, and minor issues can lead to delays or complications during the closing process. As your real estate agent, I'll work with you to ensure that any repairs are handled in a way that's fair and reasonable for both parties.

Appraisals, Contingencies, and the Closing Process

When selling your home, the appraisal, contingencies, and closing process are essential steps that will help ensure a smooth and successful transaction. Here's what you need to know.

The Appraisal Process

As part of the home buying process, the buyer's lender will typically require an appraisal. This is an objective evaluation of your home's value by a professional appraiser. The appraiser will consider factors such as the home's location, size, condition, and comparable sales in the area. If the appraisal comes in lower than the sale price, the buyer may need to renegotiate or come up with a larger down payment.

Contingencies

A contingency is a condition that must be met in order for the sale to move forward. For example, a common contingency is that the buyer's financing must be approved. Other contingencies may include a home inspection, appraisal, or repairs. As the seller, it's important to be aware of any contingencies and work with the buyer to meet them.

The Closing Process

The closing process is the final step in the sale of your home. This is when all parties involved in the transaction sign the necessary documents, and the buyer provides funds for the purchase. The closing process typically takes several hours and involves a lot of paperwork. As your real estate agent, I'll work with you to ensure that the closing process goes smoothly and that you're fully informed throughout.



STEP FIVE

Moving Out and Closing Up

Closing Day Checklist

As you prepare for the closing of your home sale, it's important to make sure that you have all of the necessary items and have completed all necessary tasks. To ensure a smooth closing process, please review and complete the items on this checklist.

PRIOR TO CLOSING

- Start, stop, or move services: Utility, home insurance, electric, internet, gas, etc.
- Clean your house thoroughly or hire a cleaning service
- Collect all the manuals, warranties, and receipts for appliances.
- Shut off water valves.
- Remove all personal items and belongings from the home, including furniture, decor, and clothing.
- Forward your mail to your new address.
- Notify your HOA of the sale and upcoming change of ownership.
- Make arrangements for the transfer of any warranties or service agreements for home systems (e.g. alarm system, lawn service, etc.).
- Review all statements and disclosures to ensure that all costs and fees are accurate and that you understand the terms of the sale.

BRING TO CLOSING

- Keys and/or security codes for the home, as well as any remotes for appliances (garage door, HVAC, etc)
- Photo identification (two forms of ID) for all sellers listed on the home contract. Make sure your ID is valid and not expired.
- Final utility bills to be paid at closing
- Cashier's check or proof of wire transfer to cover closing costs
- Proof of any repairs made as per the home inspection report

Moving Checklist

PRIOR TO CLOSING

- Declutter, discard & donate
- Purchase packing supplies
- Create a file of moving-related papers and receipts
- Collect quotes from moving companies, choose a mover and schedule service
- Secure off-site storage if needed
- Discontinue additional home services (housekeeper, gardener/lawn service)
- Arrange time off work and childcare and/or pet care on moving day
- Notify HOA about upcoming move, reserve elevator usage (if applicable)
- Pack an essentials box for quick access at new home (toiletries, medications, toilet paper, hand soap, basic tools, paper towels/cleaning supplies, pet food/supplies, hangers, etc)
- Label moving boxes with the contents inside
- Final cleaning, lock up house, dispose of trash, leave any keys and garage door openers

NOTIFY ABOUT CHANGE OF ADDRESS

- Post Office
- DMV
- Employer
- Banks & Loan Companies
- Lawn/Home Services
- Insurance Companies
- Doctors, Lawyers, Accountant, etc.
- Subscriptions
- Family + Friends

START, STOP, MOVE SERVICES

- Electric
- Utilities
- Internet/TV/Phone
- Gas

Final Walk-Through and Closing Day

Congratulations, you're almost there! The final walk-through and closing day are the last steps in the home selling process. Here's what you can expect:



Final Walk-Through

The final walk-through is typically scheduled 24 hours before the closing. During this time, the buyer will inspect the property to ensure that everything is in the same condition as when the offer was accepted. It's important to ensure that all agreed-upon repairs have been completed, and that the property is clean and free of debris. If there are any issues, we can work together to resolve them before closing day.

Closing Day

Closing day is when the sale is finalized, and ownership of the property is transferred to the buyer. As the seller, you will need to bring all necessary paperwork and identification to the closing. This may include the deed to the property, proof of title insurance, and any other documentation required by the title company or lender.

During the closing, you'll sign all necessary documents and pay any remaining closing costs. Once everything is complete, the buyer will receive the keys to the property and become the new owner.

Thank you!

Thank you for taking the time to explore the home selling process with me. I hope you found the information helpful and informative. If you're not quite ready to list your home yet, that's okay! Here are some next steps you can take to prepare:



Evaluate Your Finances

Take a look at your current financial situation and determine how much equity you have in your home. This will help you understand your potential profit and any expenses you may incur during the selling process.

Consider Your Timeline

Determine when you'd like to sell your home and how much time you have to prepare. This will help you create a plan and ensure you have enough time to make any necessary repairs or updates.

Prep Your Home

Start prepping your home for sale by decluttering, cleaning, and making any necessary repairs. Consider working with a professional stager or photographer to help showcase your home's best features.



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