Selling a Home
2024 Edition





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Get Ready

TO GET SOLD!

Selling your home can be a daunting process! From fixing that squeaky stair you've lived with for years to figuring out how to price your home, there are a lot of steps in the process of selling your home, and it can take a lot of time and energy.

In 2024, home sellers face higher expectations than ever. Today's buyers expect a smartly priced home, expertly staged rooms, and more natural lighting than a photographer's studio. But with help from your real estate agent and the checklists in this guide, you'll have your home sold in no time.

In this guide, you'll learn how to evaluate your property to get it ready to sell. We'll help you identify the perfect real estate agent to get your home sold. We'll walk through marketing options for your home and explain how traditional marketing efforts can be brought up to date with essential tech tools.

We hope you'll walk away from this guide understanding how the home selling process works, with actionable tips you can put to use right away. Get ready, get set, get sold!

Home Selling Timeline

STAGE 1

Initial Interview and Property Tour with Your Agent

- **An initial interview and property tour is conducted with your real estate agent**

STAGE 2

Consultation with Your Agent

- **Evaluate property's condition with your real estate agent**
- **You and your agent determine initial terms of sale**
- **Establish an asking price (to be reviewed and/or updated regularly) with your real estate agent**

STAGE 3

Sign Listing Paperwork

- **Decide on the repair/fix-up items with your real estate agent**
- **Prepare the home for showing**

STAGE 4

Marketing Period

- **Install a lock box and yard sign**
- **Enter the property data into the MLS**
- **Advertise the property online through portals such as eXp.com, Zillow.com, Realtor.com, & others**
- **Create property flyers**
- **Generate a Guided Tour**
- **Mail "Just Listed" postcards**
- **Schedule an Open House within the first two weeks**

STAGE 5

Buyer Presents Offer, Negotiations Begin

- **We review the offer together**
- **You receive a Seller's Net Sheet to show what the offer means to your financial bottom line**
- **We strategize on whether to counter the offer or accept the terms as presented**
- **Responding in a timely manner is critical**
- **Once negotiations are complete, the contract is considered ratified**

STAGE 6

Pending Period

- **Repair items are noted and/or negotiated**
- **You are then responsible for completing any repairs agreed upon**
- **Just before closing, the buyer conducts a final walk-through to check on repairs and to confirm the property is in the**
- **Same condition as when the offer was initially made**

STAGE 7

Settlement

- **Conducted by a closing agent – may be an attorney or a settlement agent from a title company**
- **All required documents are signed**
- **The property transfer is recorded**
- **Funds are disbursed immediately or within two business days depending on the location of your property**

STAGE 1

Evaluating Your Property

Before you can sell your home, you need to evaluate your home's condition, and what shortcomings you may need to adjust with repairs or price adjustments.

Use a New Perspective

The best way to understand what you're bringing to the table is to take a dispassionate tour through your home. Imagine you're a buyer. Start at the outside and work your way through the home, evaluating your property from a buyer's perspective, with a fresh set of eyes.

You might be A-Okay with a squeaky stair or broken door handle, but will a buyer? Or will they use these small issues to try and negotiate a lower price or even to simply walk away?

Pick Your Renovations

Of course, you can't always change everything about your home. Some renovations simply aren't worth the money and shouldn't be done – but in other cases, you can make up for something that's lacking in your house easily, like replacing a doorknob. Some issues, like overly dark rooms, may be solved with some paint and creativity!

Necessary repairs, however, should be addressed if possible. Work with your real estate agent to determine which repairs will be critical to selling your home. Repairs that are needed, however large or small, could leave doubts about other components of your home that are not visible or accessible.

Show Your Best Side

You should also make note of your property's best features. Does your living room get a ton of natural light? Do you have amazing landscaping or any interesting structural details in your home? For four-season homes, do you have spring or summer photos available of your home? Make sure you know what your "best side" is and showcase it!

We recommend going through the checklist on the next page and taking additional notes on items that can be repaired or changed, so that you have a master list of potential projects. Once you've hired a real estate agent, work with them to prioritize your list so that you're using your time and money wisely.

When in doubt about making a repair or improvement, talk it over with your real estate agent first. They'll have smart recommendations on the best use of your hard-earned dollars.



CHECKLIST

Evaluating Your Property

STAGE 1

Take notes on features to highlight or issues to fix for key rooms in your home - don't forget to write in your own!

Exterior

- **Best features:**
- **Worst features:**
- **Major issues:**

Entryway

- **Best features:**
- **Worst features:**
- **Major issues:**

Living room

- **Best features:**
- **Worst features:**
- **Major issues:**

Bathroom

- **Best features:**
- **Worst features:**
- **Major issues:**

Bedroom #1

- **Best features:**
- **Worst features:**
- **Major issues:**

Bedroom #2

- **Best features:**
- **Worst features:**
- **Major issues:**

_____

- **Best features:**
- **Worst features:**
- **Major issues:**

_____

- **Best features:**
- **Worst features:**
- **Major issues:**

_____

- **Best features:**
- **Worst features:**
- **Major issues:**

STAGE 1

Selling Your Home with an Agent

Your real estate agent is your #1 secret weapon to selling your home quickly, easily, and for more money. They're like a fairy godparent with a cell phone – from helping you to identify the best price for your home to holding your hand through your first open house, they know how to do it all. They're tough negotiators, expert home stylists, and strategic marketers. In short: You want a full-time professional real estate agent on your side.

Build A Relationship with Your Agent

Make the most of your relationship with your real estate agent. It benefits you to begin working with an agent sooner rather than later, so that you can best take advantage of their expertise when listing your home for sale.

Make your expectations clear to your real estate agent at the start of your working relationship. Also, make sure you have a good understanding of what they bring to the table to help you sell your home.

What Do You Need from An Agent?

When talking to agents, make sure you communicate your preferences and expectations.

Think About Things Like...

- **How often would you like to talk to your agent? Weekly? Daily?**
- **How do you want your agent to communicate with you?**
- **Do you prefer phone calls, emails, texting, or something else?**
- **Is there a timeframe or deadline for your home sale?**

GET STARTED

You can start with Jim Young from eXp Realty who provided you with this Home Sellers Guide Call 843-295-0120 and I will put my 35+ years of full-time real estate experience to work for you.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Finding an Agent

STAGE 1

Before you commit to working with an agent, you may decide to have an interview process. To make sure you're fully comfortable with your agent, ask these questions.

What types of clients do you like to work with?

Have you worked with (first-time home sellers, condo buyers, etc.)?

What makes you different from other real estate agents?

What are your communication preferences? Do you text, email, etc.?

What do you expect from me as the home seller?

How many transactions have you done this year?

How well do you know the neighborhood my home is in?

How long have you been licensed? (If not long: Who is your team or mentor?)

What training and education do you have?

What technology tools do you have to help me sell a home?

What is your strategy for helping me sell my home?

Will you assist me in contacting other professionals I will need in this process?

WHY USE Jim Young?

Put simply, eXp Realty LLC believes Jim is one of the best in the industry! Jim is equipped to help you succeed. He has received continuous advanced training and exclusive technology to help you sell your home faster, easier, and for more money. His track record as a full time Broker/ Realtor for over 35 years is amazing!!

Call Jim 843-295-0120

STAGE 2

Pricing Your Home to Sell

If you're listing your home for sale this year, one of the biggest considerations is your asking price. No two homes are the same, even in the same neighborhood, and pricing a home is both an art and a science. Price too low and your investment might just slip through the cracks; price too high and you may scare people away.

SO, WHAT ARE SOME STRATEGIES FOR PRICING YOUR HOME?

- **Work with a real estate agent. Jim uses many different factors into the pricing of your home, including local market conditions such as the rise or fall of home prices. He can also tell you whether you're looking at a buyer's or a seller's market. Having the advice of a dedicated professional can make your transaction smooth, quick, and relatively painless.**

- **Leave room for negotiation. All parties want the best value; your buyer doesn't want to overpay, and you don't want to feel like you've left money on the table. Have a price with some wiggle room for maneuvering on both sides of the transaction. Selling a home can be emotional, but now is a good time to stay realistic so that buyers don't pass on your place.**

- **Get a market analysis and study past sales along with the current active market. Use a market analysis from Jim Young to inform your decision on the pricing of your home. This detailed explanation will help you to understand how your home should be priced and includes both existing and historical data.**

- **Finally, get into the buyer mindset. What are the qualities you love in your own home? What sets your place apart from the others in your area? Working with Jim and you can figure out how to best leverage the individuality of your home for a great price.**

Finding the "sweet spot" of home pricing is a delicate balance, but using these tips, you're sure to have a win-win for you and your buyer. If you've been thinking about listing your home for sale, don't forget to call Jim Young and work with an award- winning agent!



STAGE 2

What Is the Value of Your Home Based On?

Market value is based on:

- **Today's market**
- **Today's competition**
- **Today's financing**
- **Today's economic conditions**
- **The buyer's perception of its condition**
- **The property's location**
- **The normal marketing times**

Market value is not based on:

- **The contents or investment you have in the property**
- **The amount you need out of the property**
- **The amount you want for the property**
- **The appraised value of the property**
- **What you've heard your neighbor's house sold for**
- **The amount the tax office says it is worth**
- **How much it is insured for**
- **Memories and treasures**
- **Home prices in the area where you are moving to**

WHAT IS THE MLS?

Once you've determined the right price for your home, your real estate agent will list the home on the MLS (Multiple Listing Service). The MLS is a series of connected databases, and online property portals like Realtor.com and Zillow can pull information from them into their websites. It's how your home can get additional exposure, bringing in even more potential homebuyers.



CHECKLIST

Quick Fixes to Make Before Listing

STAGE 3

This is a checklist of commonly updated items in homes that are being sold. Go through this checklist with your real estate agent and identify which items are a priority to address now. And remember, before you spend money on major repairs, talk to your agent!

- ○ **Update cabinet handles in kitchens & bathrooms**
- ○ **Install new faucets in kitchens & bathrooms**
- ○ **Install new door handles throughout**
- ○ **Identify any squeaky or stuck doors and fix or replace the hinges**
- ○ **Purchase & install higher-wattage lightbulbs**
- ○ **Scrape & repaint peeling or fading paint, as well as boldly painted rooms**
- ○ **Identify & fix any broken, stained, or chipped flooring**
- ○ **Examine your window treatments, and decide which to replace & which to remove**
- ○ **Clean all windows, inside and out**
- ○ **Power wash the home's exterior, including any sidewalks and**
- ○ **driveways Prune any existing bushes or trees, or consider planting**
- ○ **new ones Replace bare spots in your lawn by seeding or adding**

  sod
- ○ **Plant new flowers and mulch flower beds in your yard**

Notes:

CHECKLIST

Staging Your Interior

STAGE 3

You live in a house differently when it's on the market. You must be ready for guests at a moment's notice. Look at your house through the buyer's eyes. Any time or money spent on clean-up and repairs will return to you in a better selling price.

De-Clutter Throughout the House

- [ ] **Make closets seem bigger by removing items that can be stored elsewhere**
- [ ] **Pack it up and store it — you are moving soon anyway!**
- [ ] **If necessary, remove or rearrange furniture in a room to accent the room's best traits (lighting, size, etc.)**

Clean the Kitchen

- [ ] **Keep appliances clean**
- [ ] **Clear the refrigerator of pictures, messages, etc.**
- [ ] **Put away rarely used items from countertops**

Make the Bathrooms Sparkle

- [ ] **Remove unneeded items from countertops, tubs, shower stalls and commode tops**
- [ ] **Group regularly used cosmetics, brushes, etc. in one small area**
- [ ] **Coordinate towels, floor rugs, etc.**

During Showings

- [ ] **Open the draperies or blinds**
- [ ] **Leave the lights on**
- [ ] **Keep soft background music playing during showings**

CHECKLIST

Staging the Exterior

STAGE 3

You never get a second chance to make a good first impression. What kind of "curb appeal" does your home currently have? How does the outside of the home present itself from across the street? Go across the street and look at your home. What needs to be done to make it more appealing to someone who is seeing it for the first time?

Remember, the exterior is the first and last thing your prospective buyer sees, and it will leave a lasting impression.

The Yard

- [ ] **Keep the lawn trimmed, edged, and watered**
- [ ] **Fertilize if needed**
- [ ] **Trim all bushes and plants**
- [ ] **Keep outside plants from blocking windows**
- [ ] **Weed and clear planting areas**

Porches, Decks, & Patios

- [ ] **Declutter outdoor spaces**
- [ ] **Store items such as garbage cans, yard equipment or toys in the garage**
- [ ] **Add porch or patio furniture if appropriate**

The House

- [ ] **Check exterior paint, especially front door and trim**
- [ ] **Check gutters and downspouts and repair as needed**
- [ ] **Check roof for dry rot or needed maintenance**
- [ ] **Repair, replace or repaint shutters**
- [ ] **Inspect windows and screens for repair or replacement**

Driveways & Walkways

- [ ] **Keep driveways and walkways free of debris, including leaves or snow/ice**
- [ ] **Check for areas that may need to be repaired or replaced**

STAGE 4

Marketing Your Home

When it comes to marketing your home, you can be sure that your real estate agent has a plan to make sure the right buyers see your home. The different marketing tactics they use will vary based on many factors – there are dozens of different options for marketing a home. Here are a few ways your agent may market your home:

Online Advertising

If your home is listed in the MLS (see page 10), your home will most likely show up on websites like eXp.com, Zillow.com, Realtor.com, and more! exp.com attracts millions of homebuyers to the website every month. However, there are other ways to use online advertising to promote your home.

Social media advertising can reach hundreds or thousands of people and can be targeted by demographic and zip code. Likewise, promoted listings on real estate websites like Realtor.com allow even more people to see your home online.

Some agents may create photo walkthroughs, video previews, or even interactive tours to help promote your listing on the internet. Jim has an arsenal of online technology available to help you sell your home.

Print Marketing

When it comes to marketing a listing, print is certainly not dead! Advertising homes in magazines, local newspapers, and even via physical postcards sent to people in your neighborhood can have a massive impact. Your agent will help you decide if print marketing materials are right for you, and if so, which ones.

Jim does send physical postcards to neighbors in your area when your home is listed! Your neighbors can be a great source of referrals for buyers.

In-Person Advertising

Nothing beats word of mouth when it comes to selling a home, and there's no better way to get people talking than to hold an open house! It's a classic marketing tool for a reason. Open houses encourage buyers to visit the home in person, and even neighbors not currently searching for a home themselves will be able to talk up your home to friends and family they want to encourage to move to your area.

Marketing Timeline

Your agent may implement one or more approaches for selling your home. Make sure you understand how your home is being marketed by asking your listing agent to provide you with information about what's being done to market and sell your home.

Multimedia, Multigenerational Marketing

Jim Young and eXp Realty LLC believes in multimedia, multigenerational marketing when it comes to real estate. From television commercials (in select markets) to smartphone apps, you never know where your home's buyer will come from. So, we cover all bases by ensuring that we're marketing where potential buyers are: Everywhere!

STAGE 4

It's Showtime! Showing Your Home



When you're selling a home, it's inevitable that buyers will want to tour the inside of the home (often very, very thoroughly). Whether your agent is planning an open house or simply a variety of showings, it's important to keep your property ready for guests at any time.

What to Expect

In many cases, your listing agent will ask you to leave the home while it's being shown and during open houses. That's because agents want buyers to have a distraction-free experience, and many buyers are put off by a seller following them throughout a showing. Most buyers prefer to experience a home on their own, and to form their own opinions without worrying about what the seller might think. Your agent will also want you to take any pets with you, so make sure you know what you'll do with them when the time comes.

Open House Tasks

If your agent is holding an open house, they will let you know right away what items you need to take care of. They may ask that you mow the lawn to ensure that the exterior of the home is looking its best. They will give you tips on how to clean up for the guests. While we're providing you with a checklist (see pages 12-13), you should also listen carefully to your real estate agent – they're the experts! Make sure you're cleaning less-used areas like furnace rooms, utility rooms, and garages. They are part of your home and need to be cared for and clean, just like the other areas of your home.

Keep It Clean

In general, while your home is on the market, you'll want to keep things clean and tidy. If you've followed this guide, you'll have already decluttered and done deep cleaning. The things you do now will be day-to-day maintenance tasks. You'll want to be ready to leave at a moment's notice, so taking small steps like keeping beds made and counters clear all the time will save you worry down the road.

As part of showing your home, your agent will likely want to install a lockbox and a sign on your property (where permitted). A yard sign lets potential buyers in your neighborhood know that your home is for sale, while a lockbox allows agents to show your home without compromising the security of your property.

CHECKLIST

Preparing for Showings

STAGE 4

While your home is on the market, there are things you can do every day to make your life easier when your home needs to be shown at the last minute. Then, there are also steps you can quickly take right before the showing to make sure it goes smoothly.

Everyday Checklist:

- [ ] **Make all beds**
- [ ] **Keep counters cleared off and cleaned**
- [ ] **Vacuum and dust**
- [ ] **Do all dishes immediately**
- [ ] **Eliminate any bad odors immediately**
- [ ] **Ensure valuable or sensitive items are stored safely out of sight**

HOME SHOWING TIP

Store smaller items, like bathroom products or desk gadgets, in bins and baskets while your home is on the market. It makes flat surfaces like counters and desks easier to clear off in a pinch.

Just Before a Showing Checklist:

- [ ] **Tidy any clutter**
- [ ] **Turn on all the lights**
- [ ] **Open all the curtains**
- [ ] **Ensure your home smells neutral and there are no bad odors**
- [ ] **Remove or store pet items, such as blankets and crates, if they have an odor**
- [ ] **Empty all trash cans**
- [ ] **Get pets and kids ready to head out the door**
- [ ] **Do a final walkthrough, pretending you are a buyer, and fix any other issues you spot**

HOME SHOWING TIP

Keep a spare laundry basket handy during the listing period. Before a showing, sweep any clutter into the basket and tuck it in your car. You can put everything back where it belongs after the showing.

STAGE 5

Evaluating an Offer



Congratulations! Getting an offer on your house is a big deal, even if you don't wind up accepting it. It means that your efforts and those of your listing agent are paying off, and that your home is getting attention.

Now, it's time to decide what to do next! In some cases, you may have multiple offers to consider. In others, you may initially only have one offer. You will need to discuss with your real estate agent your criteria for selling your home. You might consider things like:

- **Which offer is the highest?**
- **Are you willing to accept a lower offer, should that be the case?**
- **Is there an all-cash offer to consider?**
- **Did any of the potential buyers write personal letters, explaining why they want to buy the home?**
- **Are they asking you to cover closing costs?**
- **Do any of the buyers have mortgage pre-approval, which means they've already secured financing to make a home purchase?**

Your agent will help you consider these factors and more. You may opt to accept an offer on your home, or you might decide to negotiate and counter (through your agent) with another price or different contingencies.

Remember, the price a buyer offers is only as good as the terms and conditions of the sale and the quality of the buyer. Their ability to complete the purchase is critical. In other words, if the buyer isn't qualified, the price they offer is immaterial.

Once you receive an offer you've decided to accept, you'll be on your way toward selling your property!

Jim will provide on request our sellers with Seller's Net Sheets that show how an offer will impact your financial bottom line. We then help you strategize on whether to counter the offer or accept the terms as presented!

STAGE 6

Home Inspections

Just because you've accepted an offer from a buyer doesn't mean your journey is over! There are still several steps between you and a successful sale. Depending on the offer you've accepted, you may have to deal with one or more inspections and/or appraisals. You may also need to wait while the buyer completes financing for the purchase.

Home Inspections

A home inspector's job is to visually inspect and evaluate the conditions that are present at the time of the inspection. They examine everything in the home that can reasonably be accessed – without moving appliances, puncturing walls, pulling up carpet, or using any other invasive techniques. The areas and systems that are usually inspected (provided there is access) include:

- **Inside: attic, basement, ceilings, doors, floors, interior water penetration, structure, ventilation, walls, windows, appliances**
- **Outside: crawlspaces, driveway, exterior and siding, foundation, garage, grading, roof, sidewalk**
- **Systems: electrical, plumbing, heating and air conditioning systems**

Other Inspections

Depending on your area and the buyer's wishes, your home may be inspected for other items. This may include an appraisal, pest inspections, moisture inspections, lateral service lines and more. The terms of your contract will determine which inspections the buyer would like to have done, or which are required by the law in your area. Ask your agent if you have questions or concerns about these inspections!

After the Inspection

Based on the inspection results, your buyer may want to move forward with the transaction, walk away, or negotiate with you on repairs to items noted in the inspection. Your agent will help you by placing terms and remedies in your sales agreement.

If you opt to make repairs, your real estate agent is an invaluable resource. Although unable to endorse or recommend any one vendor, they have experience working with service professionals to address any issues.



STAGE 7

Getting Close to Closing

Selling a home is a very rewarding experience, but this excitement may sometimes be overshadowed by frustrating delays in the closing process. Fortunately, many of these situations can be avoided! Although closing procedures vary state to state**, having a solid understanding of the general closing requirements and preparing accordingly will help the process go smoothly. Your agent is well-versed in these requirements, though, so don't be afraid to lean on them for assistance!**

Mortgages on the Property

Please provide detailed information, including loan number and payment address, for all mortgages on the property. Home equity lines, even if they have a zero balance, will also require detailed mortgage information in order to satisfy the original loan requirements.

Buyer Protection Plan

If a home warranty product is being provided and shown on contract, advise the closing agent of the purchase amount to be collected.

Maintenance Contracts

If there are service contracts on equipment or appliances that the purchaser wants to assume, provide the closing agent with a copy of the service contract.

Judgment Search

Any judgments, tax liens, etc., filed against you which attach to the property, must be paid at closing.

Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

The closing agent is required to report the sale of the property to the IRS. Please provide your Social Security number/s and forwarding address at closing.

Power of Attorney

The use of a Power of Attorney must be approved in advance of settlement by the closing agent. If you are planning to use a Power of Attorney, inform the closing agent as soon as possible to allow time to properly review the document.

Marital Status

Spouses may be required to sign closing documents even though they do not appear to hold title and their name does not appear on the deed. Spouses must always sign the deed when homestead property is being conveyed, even if they are not in title.

This list isn't comprehensive, nor is it required in every area! Closing procedures vary from state to state. Your real estate agent will let you know what you need to do or provide in order to have a successful closing in your area.

Final Walkthrough

Before closing, the buyer and/or their agent conducts a final walkthrough to check on repairs and confirm that the property is in the same condition as when the offer was initially made. This walkthrough will typically happen within a day or two before closing.

CHECKLIST

What Can You Take When Moving?

STAGE 7

Now, you need to make sure you're ready to move! Follow these tips to make sure you're taking only your personal property – and that you remain on the right side of the law.

Should It Stay or Go?

When it comes to moving out of a home you've sold, it can be tricky to decide what to take and what needs to stay. In general, all fixtures need to stay with a home. That includes any items that are immovably mounted or placed in a home, such as:

- ○ **Fences, sheds, shrubs, and other outdoor elements (including landscaping!)**
- ○ **Outdoor items affixed to the ground, like swing sets and basketball hoops**
- ○ **Built-in furniture, including window seats and shelves**
- ○ **Blinds, including custom blinds**
- ○ **All lighting fixtures that were present in the home when it was shown**

However, items that are removable can go with you! That includes things like:

- ○ **Curtains**
- ○ **Lamps & any special lightbulbs, like smartbulbs or daylight bulbs (though it would be kind of you to replace them with regular bulbs afterward)**
- ○ **Unaffixed plants in pots or containers**
- ○ **Outdoor patio furniture & grills**

And, as with much of life, there are some gray areas. Some of these items may have been included in your contract. Other items, you may wish to discuss with the buyer. Your agent will be able to guide you with regards to items like:

- ○ **Appliances, which may have been included in your sales contract**
- ○ **Custom draperies specifically designed for a space**
- ○ **Larger plants in container gardens or window boxes**
- ○ **Swing sets, basketball hoops, and other outdoor play equipment that isn't attached to the ground**

When in doubt, make sure you itemize belongings you will be removing from your property upon moving.

Let Jim Young Guide You

First licensed in 1989 Jim Young began his career in Newark Delaware at a small family owned company named Gilpin Realtors. My goal has always been to help people achieve the American Dream of homeownership. I understand that selling a home can be stressful and I will be there to guide you every step of the way.

I want to make sure you feel completely comfortable when selling your home. That's why over the decades, I have developed exclusive programs to help you sell your home faster, easier, and for more money:

Call 843-295-0120 Direct
or visit my free online valuation tool at
www.jimyounghomevalues.com