UNITED
Realty Group

Seller's Guide

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Meet Debbie

Debbie Bates

Hi, I'm Debbie, and I've been helping buyers and sellers in South Florida since becoming a Realtor in 1998. During that time, I have worked through "normal" markets, buyers' and sellers' markets, bidding wars, foreclosures, the 2008 financial crisis, the housing boom after COVID and the challenging conditions buyers and sellers face today.

I have lived in Fort Lauderdale since I was five years old and like to consider myself an honorary "native." South Florida has always been home to me. Before becoming a Realtor, I worked as a professional dog trainer, following in the footsteps of my mother, who owned Command Dog Training. Through dog training, I learned the importance of patience, clear communication and persistence—qualities that have also served me well in real estate.

Deciding I was ready for a career change, I earned my real estate license, found a wonderful broker and surprised even myself by earning several Top Producer awards with Prudential Real Estate during my first five years as a Realtor.

What began as a career change became a profession I have now been part of for nearly three decades. Over the years, I have developed a straightforward approach to working with clients and believe in giving people my honest opinion, even when it may not be what they hoped to hear.
I have worked with a broad range of buyers and sellers, from first-time buyers purchasing their first home to longtime homeowners selling and moving on to the next chapter of their lives. My experience includes condos, townhomes, villas, single-family homes and waterfront properties across Broward, Miami-Dade and Palm Beach counties.

When marketing a home, I believe it needs to be priced realistically and presented professionally. My full-service approach includes professional photography, video and strong online exposure. I also offer sellers a lower commission while still providing full-service representation, allowing them to keep more of the proceeds from their sale.

Most buyers and sellers simply want someone who can help them accomplish their goals and provide the guidance they need along the way. But choosing a Realtor is also about finding someone you feel comfortable working with, can rely on and know will be responsive when questions, decisions or unexpected issues arise. I take that responsibility seriously, stay on top of the details and remain available and personally involved throughout the transaction.

The Seller's Roadmap

01

Prepare Your Home:

Get your home ready for sale by decluttering, cleaning, and making any necessary repairs or upgrades.

02

Price it Right:

Determine the optimal listing price based on market research and the advice of a real estate professional.

03

Market Your Property:

Create a compelling listing with high-quality photos, and promote it through various channels, including online listings and social media.

04

Negotiate Offers:

Review and negotiate offers from potential buyers, considering price, contingencies, and terms.

05

Close the Deal:

Finalize the sale by completing paperwork, inspections, and the transfer of ownership, ensuring a smooth and successful transaction.

Preparing Your Home for Sale

Setting the Stage for Success

Selling your home is a significant endeavor, and preparing your property for sale is a crucial step in achieving a successful transaction. In this section, we'll guide you through the essential steps to make your home appealing to potential buyers and maximize its market value.

Key Topics:

Declutter and Depersonalize:

Learn how to create a clean and neutral canvas that allows buyers to envision themselves in your home.

Home Staging:

Discover the benefits of professional staging and tips for showcasing your property's best features.

Repairs and Maintenance:

Find out which repairs and improvements are worth considering to enhance your home's overall appeal.

Curb Appeal:

Explore how to make a strong first impression with a well-maintained exterior and landscaping.

Pricing Strategies:

Understand the importance of setting the right listing price to attract potential buyers.

Preparing for Showings:

Learn how to prepare your home for viewings and open houses to make a positive impression on buyers.

What to Prepare to Increase Value

Did you know that clean and neutral spaces are more appealing to buyers? It gives buyers a blank slate so they can envision their life and belongings in the home.

Some suggestions:

Interior

- Touch up paint throughout the home
- Remove personal items/photos.
- Clean and/or remove carpets
- Declutter and organize your space
- Update and/or replace outdated or nonworking fixtures

Exterior

- Touch up the paint on the front door
- Power wash the siding if needed
- Check your landscaping and trim the lawn
- Consider replacing doorknobs and painting or fixing broken fences

Will my Property Sell or Not?

We've outlined some of the most important factors that influence a home's value, and ultimate sale:

1.The Neighborhood Comps

2. Home Size/Usable Square Footage

3. Location, location, location

4. Age of the home

5. Updates and key features

6. The Local Market

7. Interest Rates

8. Pricing

The Marketing

1 **Professional Photography:**

Capture your home's best features with high-quality photos.

2 **Online Listings:**

List your property on popular real estate websites to reach a broader audience.

3 **Virtual Tours:**

Engage buyers with virtual tours that showcase every corner of your home.

4 **Open Houses:**

Host open houses to give potential buyers an opportunity to see your property in person.

5 **Social Media:**

Leverage social platforms to share your listing and create buzz among potential buyers.

Real Estate Photography

The Benefits:

1. First Impressions: High-quality photos are often the first thing potential buyers see. Professional photography can make a property look more appealing, generating interest and increasing the likelihood of a viewing.
2. Highlighting Features: A professional photographer knows how to highlight the best features of a property, such as natural light, spacious rooms, and unique design elements. This can help attract buyers looking for specific features.
3. Increased Online Visibility: In today's digital age, most home buyers start their search online. Professional photos can make your listing stand out among the competition, attracting more views and inquiries.
4. Faster Sales: Listings with professional photos tend to sell faster and at higher prices than those without. The investment in professional photography can pay off in a quicker sale and potentially a higher selling price.
5. Perception of Value: High-quality photos can convey a sense of value and quality. Buyers may perceive a property with professional photos as being more desirable and worth the asking price.

Overall, professional real estate photography is a worthwhile investment that can help you sell your property faster and for a better price.

Home Showing "Do's"

1. **Clean and Declutter:** Ensure your home is clean, organized, and clutter-free. This helps potential buyers envision themselves living in the space and highlights the home's features.
2. **Maximize Curb Appeal:** First impressions matter, so make sure the exterior of your home is well-maintained. This includes mowing the lawn, trimming bushes, and adding a fresh coat of paint if needed.
3. **Create a Welcoming Atmosphere:** Set the stage for a welcoming atmosphere by opening curtains to let in natural light, turning on soft lighting, and adding pleasant scents with candles or air fresheners.
4. **Highlight Key Features:** Showcase the best features of your home, such as a fireplace, built-in shelves, or a renovated kitchen. Make sure these areas are clean and well-presented.
5. **Provide Information:** Leave out informative materials, such as a flyer or brochure, that highlight the key selling points of your home, including any recent updates or improvements.
6. **Be Flexible and Accommodating:** Try to be flexible with showing times to accommodate potential buyers' schedules. This may include evenings or weekends when buyers are more likely to be available.

Offers

Things to Consider when Reviewing Offers:

- **Offer Price:** The most obvious factor is the offer price. Sellers will compare the offer price to their asking price and the current market value of their home. A higher offer price is naturally more attractive, but other factors also play a role.
- **Buyer's Financial Strength:** Sellers want to ensure that the buyer has the financial ability to complete the purchase. A pre-approval letter from a reputable lender can reassure sellers of the buyer's financial strength.
- **Earnest Money Deposit:** The amount of earnest money can indicate how serious the buyer is about the purchase. A larger deposit can show commitment and provide the seller with some financial protection if the deal falls through.
- **Contingencies:** Sellers prefer offers with fewer contingencies, as these can delay or jeopardize the sale. Contingencies related to financing, home inspection, and appraisal are common but can be negotiated.
- **Closing Timeline:** The proposed closing timeline can be important to sellers, especially if they are looking to move quickly. Offers with flexible closing dates may be more appealing.
- **Inclusions and Exclusions:** Sellers should carefully review any inclusions or exclusions in the offer, such as appliances or fixtures, to ensure they align with their expectations.
- **Buyer's Terms:** Sellers should consider the overall terms of the offer, including any special requests or conditions from the buyer. For example, a request for a rent-back period after closing may be appealing to sellers who need more time to move out.
- **Competition:** If there are multiple offers on the table, sellers will need to compare the offers and consider which one is most favorable. This may involve looking beyond the offer price to other terms that could benefit them.

The Art of Negotiating

WITH AN OFFER, WE CAN:

- Accept it,
- Decline it, OR
- Counter-offer

FOLLOWING THIS, A BUYER CAN:

- Accept the counter,
- Decline the counter, OR
- Counter back

WHEN BUYER AND SELLER COME TO AN AGREEMENT:

Sign the purchase agreement and you are now officially under contract. You will go into escrow. In escrow there will be periods with contingencies.

Inspections

What's Checked:

- Roof: The inspector will examine the roof's condition, looking for any signs of damage or wear, and estimate its remaining lifespan.
- Exterior: This includes the siding, windows, doors, and any trim. The inspector will look for damage, decay, or signs of water penetration.
- Foundation: The inspector will inspect the foundation for cracks, shifts, or other signs of damage that could affect the structural integrity of the home.
- Basement/Crawlspace: The inspector will check for any signs of moisture, leaks, or structural issues in the basement or crawlspace.
- Plumbing: The plumbing system will be inspected for leaks, water pressure, drainage, and the condition of pipes and fixtures.
- Electrical: The inspector will check the electrical system, including the main panel, outlets, switches, and wiring, to ensure they are in good working order and meet safety standards.
- HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning): The inspector will inspect the HVAC system, including the furnace, air conditioning unit, and ductwork, to ensure they are functioning properly.
- Insulation and Ventilation: The inspector will check the insulation in the attic and walls and assess the ventilation in the attic and other areas to ensure proper airflow.
- Appliances: While not always included, some inspections may include checking the condition and functionality of major appliances, such as the stove, refrigerator, dishwasher, and laundry machines.
- Overall Structure: The inspector will assess the overall structural integrity of the home, including the framing, walls, ceilings, and floors, looking for signs of damage or instability.
- Safety Features: The inspector will check for the presence and functionality of smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, and other safety features required by local building codes.
- General Condition: The inspector will provide an overall assessment of the home's condition, noting any areas that may need repair or further evaluation by a specialist.

Inspection FAQ's

Why do I need a home inspection?

- A home inspection is important because it can uncover hidden problems with a property that may not be apparent during a casual viewing. It can also provide you with peace of mind about the condition of the home you are buying.

Who pays for the home inspection?

- In most cases, the buyer pays for the home inspection. It is typically included in the buyer's closing costs.

How long does a home inspection take?

- The duration of a home inspection can vary depending on the size and condition of the home. On average, a typical inspection takes two to three hours.

What does a home inspection cover?

- A home inspection covers the major systems and components of a home, including the roof, exterior, foundation, plumbing, electrical, HVAC, insulation, and more. It is a visual inspection and does not typically include invasive measures.

Can I attend the home inspection?

- Yes, it is recommended that buyers attend the home inspection. This allows you to ask questions, learn about the home's systems, and see any issues firsthand.

Will the home inspector provide a report?

- Yes, the home inspector will provide a detailed report outlining their findings. This report is typically delivered within a few days of the inspection and can be used to negotiate repairs or credits with the seller.

What should I do if the home inspection reveals issues?

- If the home inspection reveals issues, you may want to discuss them with your real estate agent. Depending on the severity of the issues, you may negotiate with the seller to have repairs made or request a credit to cover the cost of repairs.

Can a home inspection uncover all issues with a property?

- While a home inspection is thorough, it cannot uncover every possible issue with a property. Some issues, such as hidden structural problems or mold, may require further inspection by a specialist.

The Appraisal Process

the appraisal process is an important step in the homebuying process, as it helps ensure that the property is worth the agreed-upon purchase price and provides protection for both the buyer and the lender.

The Steps:

1. **Ordering the Appraisal:** Typically, the buyer's lender will order the appraisal to assess the fair market value of the property. The buyer usually pays for the appraisal as part of their closing costs.
2. **Visit and Inspection:** The appraiser will visit the property to inspect its condition, size, layout, and any unique features. They will also take note of the overall quality of the property and its surroundings.
3. **Comparative Market Analysis:** The appraiser will research recent sales of similar properties in the area to determine the fair market value of the home. This helps ensure that the property is priced appropriately.
4. **Appraisal Report:** The appraiser will prepare a detailed report that includes their assessment of the property's value, based on their inspection and comparative market analysis. This report is sent to the lender and the buyer.
5. **Review and Decision:** The lender will review the appraisal report to ensure that the property meets their lending criteria. If the property appraises for the agreed-upon purchase price or higher, the loan process can proceed. If it appraises lower, negotiations may be necessary to determine how to proceed.

The Closing Process

The closing marks the culmination of the transaction, where the buyer, seller, and all involved parties have met their legal responsibilities to each other. The escrow officer carefully examines the contract to ascertain the payments owed by each party, prepares the necessary closing documents, oversees the closing process, and ensures all outstanding payments are settled. Following the closing, the buyer's title is officially recorded, and any payments owed to you are disbursed.

What the Seller Pays:

- Title Search
- Unpaid assessments on your property
- Any claims against your property
- Mortgage balance & penalties (if applicable)
- Real estate agent commission
- Title insurance policy
- Home warranty

What to Bring with You:

- A government issued picture ID
- **Home keys**
- **Garage door openers (if applicable)**

Recommendations:

- Keep copies of all closing documents
- Records and receipts of all home improvements

for tax purposes

The Final Steps

Here are some common steps that you'll typically take as you near the closing date:

1. Final Walk-Through: The buyer will likely conduct a final walk-through of the property shortly before the closing to ensure that the property is in the agreed-upon condition.
2. Closing Preparations: Sellers need to prepare for the closing by gathering any necessary documents, such as the deed, bill of sale, and any HOA documents. They may also need to coordinate with their lender to pay off any remaining mortgage balance.
3. Settlement Statement Review: Sellers should review the settlement statement (also known as the closing disclosure or HUD-1 statement) to ensure that all details of the sale are accurate, including the final sale price, closing costs, and any credits or prorated expenses.
4. Transfer of Utilities: Sellers should arrange for the transfer of utilities (such as electricity, water, and gas) out of their name and into the buyer's name effective the closing date.
5. Closing: The closing is the final step in the transaction where the seller signs the necessary documents to transfer ownership of the property to the buyer. The buyer will also sign documents and pay any remaining funds due at closing.
6. Possession and Keys: Sellers should be prepared to provide the buyer with possession of the property according to the terms of the purchase agreement. This typically involves handing over the keys at the closing or shortly thereafter.
7. Post-Closing Tasks: After the closing, sellers should cancel any homeowner's insurance policies, notify the post office of their change of address, and update their address with any relevant entities (such as banks, credit card companies, and government agencies).

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1: How do I determine the right listing price?

A: Pricing your home correctly is crucial for a successful sale. Your realtor will conduct a comprehensive comparative market analysis (CMA) that evaluates similar properties in your area. They'll consider factors like location, size, condition, and recent sales to help you set an appropriate listing price. It's essential to strike a balance between attracting potential buyers and getting the best possible value for your property.

Q2: Should I make repairs before listing my home?

A: Addressing necessary repairs and improvements before listing your home can significantly impact its appeal and value. Buyers are often willing to pay more for a well-maintained property. Your realtor can help you identify which repairs and updates are most cost-effective and likely to yield a higher return on investment. These may include fixing structural issues, addressing cosmetic concerns, or updating outdated features.

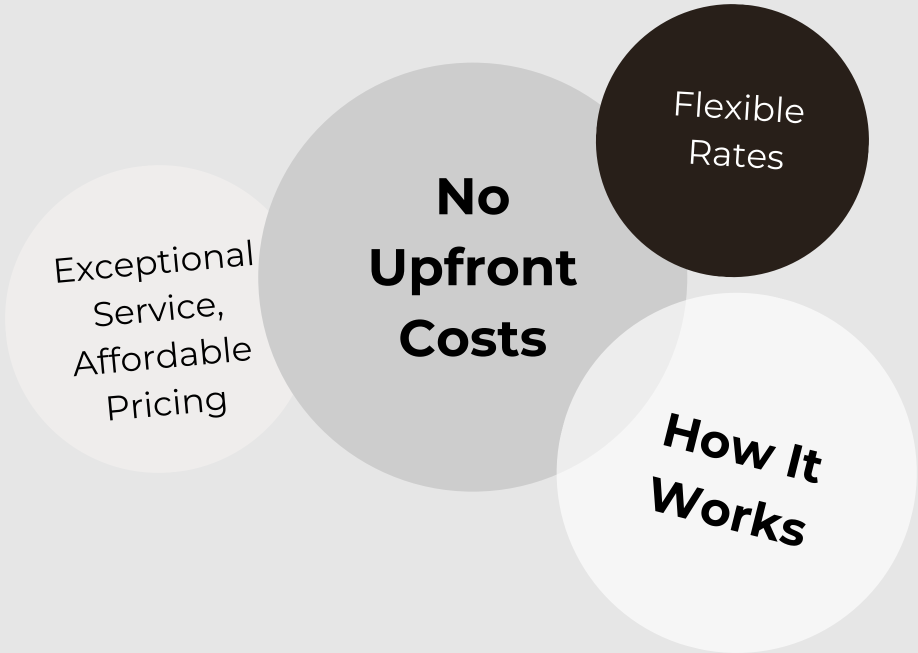
Q3: How can I make my home more attractive to buyers?

A: To make your home more appealing, consider decluttering and thoroughly cleaning each room. Properly staging your home can also help potential buyers visualize themselves living there. Staging involves arranging furniture and decor to highlight your home's best features and create an inviting atmosphere. Your realtor can provide guidance on staging or even connect you with professional stagers to enhance your home's presentation.

Q4: What's the role of a realtor in selling my home?

A: A realtor plays a crucial role in every stage of selling your home. They provide expertise in pricing your property competitively, marketing it effectively to reach potential buyers, negotiating offers to get the best deal, and guiding you through the complex paperwork and legal aspects of the transaction. Realtors are experienced professionals who work tirelessly to ensure a successful and stress-free sale, while also saving you time and effort.

The Commission Broken Down



At United Realty Group, we understand that selling your home is a significant decision, and you deserve transparent and competitive pricing. We are committed to providing you with a fair and attractive commission structure that reflects our dedication to your success.

WHAT SETS US APART

Flexible Rates
We offer flexible commission rates that take into account your unique circumstances and the value of your property. Our goal is to ensure that you receive the best possible return on your investment.

No Upfront Costs
With [Your Company Name], you don't have to worry about upfront costs for marketing or listing your property. We cover these expenses and only get paid when your property is successfully sold.

Exceptional Service, Affordable Pricing
Our competitive commission rates are a testament to our commitment to providing exceptional service without compromising affordability. We believe in delivering outstanding results while respecting your budget.

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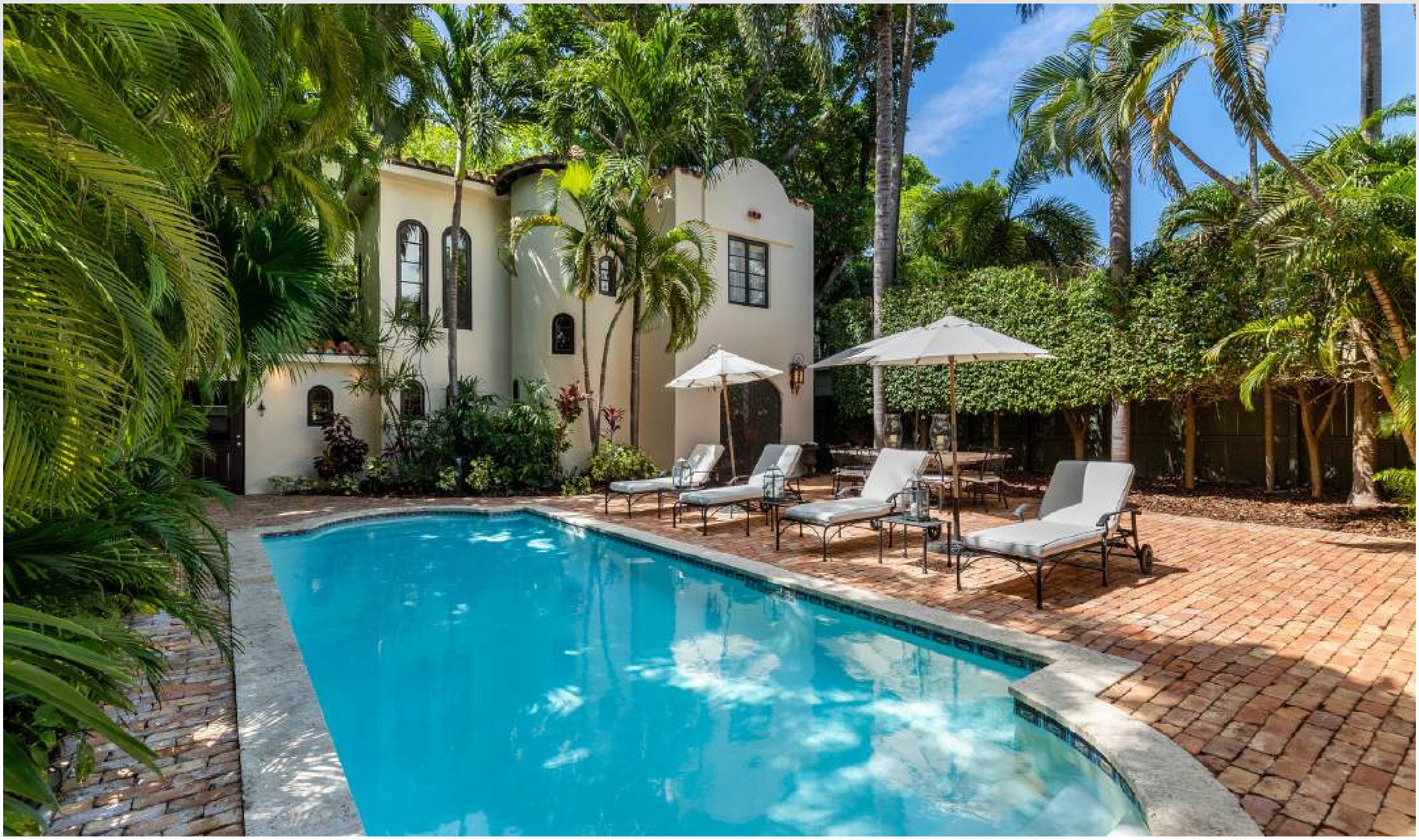
Let's Start Your Journey!



Whether you're a first-time homebuyer, an experienced investor, or looking to sell your property, we invite you to experience the United Realty Group difference. Let's work together to turn your real estate aspirations into reality. Contact me today, and let the journey begin.

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Pricing Terms:

- While the suggested retail price is $35, you may not give away the buyer's and seller's guide for free. They must be priced no lower than 9 USD individually, or together!