

Home Selling Guide



Time to move on



A new job, growing family, or just looking for a better climate – there may come a time when you need to move from your current home. While the reasons for it are often exciting ones, the idea of selling your home can be overwhelming. Some sound strategy and the help of a real estate professional can help you go from “For Sale” to “Sold” in no time.

This guide is designed to provide first-time sellers like you, a detailed look at the home-selling process.

9 Steps to a successful sale:

- Step 1 - Choose a U.S. Veterans Realtor
- Step 2 - Find Out How Much Your Home Is Worth
- Step 3 - Get Your Home Ready for Sale
- Step 4 - Make Any Necessary Repairs
- Step 5 - Market Your Home
- Step 6 - Show Your Home
- Step 7 - Receive Purchase Offers and Negotiate
- Step 8 - Due Diligence
- Step 9 - Attend the Closing

Step 1 - Choose a U.S. Veterans Realtor



Your U.S. Veterans Realtor will represent you and look out for your best interests. Meet your selected U.S. Veterans Realtor to ensure your personalities align and you are comfortable that you've selected the right person for the job of selling your house. Ask questions about a marketing plan for your house and what you should expect during the marketing phase, negotiating phase, and getting to closing.

If confusion, mistakes, and headaches are to your liking, then go it alone. If you want to help sell your home faster, for more money, and with less hassle, then you're going to want to hire a one of our Elite Realtors. When finding an agent, asking friends and family for referrals is smart, but be sure to narrow it down by location. Our Elite Realtors have experience and expertise in your particular market. In working for you, our Elite Realtors will:

- Outline their professional responsibilities to you, including complete disclosure, loyalty, confidentiality and accountability
- Help you determine the best asking price
- Extensively market your home
- Offer expert advice on ways to prepare and show your property
- Assist you, if necessary, in finding any home-related services you need
- Provide feedback from all showings and open houses
- Update you on market changes that could affect your property's sale
- Be available to help potential buyers
- Promptly present and evaluate each offer with you
- Negotiate the highest possible price and best terms in partnership with you
- Manage contractual, title and transaction details
- Ensure that mandatory items are signed, sealed and delivered on closing day
- Assist you to arrange for a moving company and relocation agent, if needed

Step 2 - Find Out How Much Your Home Is Worth



Your professional U.S. Veterans Realtor should prepare a comparative market analysis, which will compare your house to similar houses to determine the market value. A seller's greatest mistake is often overpricing their home with the thought of leaving room to negotiate. This is a mistake many people make, which usually results in your home taking too long to attract a potential buyer. Potential buyers start to think something is likely wrong with a house that remains on the market too long. Keep your price in line with sold homes that were identified in a comparative market analysis report. A well-priced house that shows well will likely sell quicker and very near the list price. Consider whether your market is hot, cold, or neutral and price according to the market temperature.

Pricing your home right is all about finding the right balance between pleasing yourself and any potential buyers. Ask for too much and buyers won't even look twice, ask for too little and you could miss out on a better return on investment.

Research comparative homes

You'll want to obtain a Comparative Market Analysis (CMA). This is a document drawn from a local Multiple Listings Service (MLS) database that presents pricing information, property details, and photos of homes similar to yours that recently sold, failed to sell, or are currently on the market in your area. Your Elite Realtor should provide you with a CMA and include a suggested price range for your listing. Gaining a good understanding of what has worked and what hasn't in your area will help you to strategically price, position, and present your property to sell at top dollar in a reasonable time frame.

Allow room to negotiate

When pricing your home, it can be a good idea to add a bit of a cushion. Most buyers come to the table expecting a little back and forth negotiating, and providing a cushion allows for this. Your Elite Realtor can help you determine the right amount of wiggle room. Another way to help seal the deal is offering to cover closing costs, while sticking to a higher asking price.

Step 3 - Get Your Home Ready for Sale



Prepare your home for sale by cleaning and decluttering it and improving curb appeal. In real estate, they say the three most important aspects of value are location, location, location. You can't change your location, and therefore, one of the most important things you can do is clean, clean, clean. A clean, well-organized and decluttered house will sell faster and for more money. You might want to consider hiring a professional stager to stage your home for showings or ask your real estate agent for help with this. You can often use your own furniture.

Unless you don't mind getting a lower price for your home, you're going to need to address any wear and tear on your property. Doing so will not only help increase your home's appearance, but also its appeal and therefore value.

Carefully examine your home and take note of issues you can easily handle on your own such as fresh paint, landscaping, updating lighting, new doorknobs, etc. Then take stock of the more significant fixes such as heating, cooling, plumbing, mold, foundation, gutters, wood rot, and roof as problems with any of these can make the difference between "deal" or "deal-breaker".

Once you have a clear assessment of what improvements are needed, tackle the ones of highest priority. While this will cost you both time and money, it can help generate a faster sale at a higher price.

Step 4 - Make Any Necessary Repairs



Be objective as if you were a potential buyer and evaluate the house for items that should be repaired. Start from the street view examining all aspects of the house and work your way inside and through every room. A house in good repair will sell faster and for more money. If you're selling a home where pets live, you might want to make temporary, alternate plans for them. Remember, you only get one chance — and sometimes only 3 seconds or so — to make a great first impression so make it count.

Of course, every homeowner's situation is different, but there are some great reasons to consider a home renovation project. Some of the most common projects are listed below and all may increase your home's value, marketability, or both!

Major kitchen renovation

Does your kitchen look old and tired? Are the cabinets, counters, appliances in bad condition or just so dated you hate to spend any time in the kitchen or have friends over? Time to do something about this condition - schedule some time with a professional who can work with you to get to a better place!

Major bathroom renovations

When you walk into your bathroom, do your thoughts immediately go to the projects you would like to complete to update the look and functionality? Kitchen and bath remodels typically provide the highest return on investment and many times financing is available to spread the cost out over time while you get to enjoy the results immediately. This job is best left to a professional, so schedule some time with a professional who can work with your ideas to arrive at a plan to get the job done!

New durable flooring, either tile, stone, wood, etc. is in high demand in the marketplace and many home shoppers are specifically looking for the durability of these products and are willing to pay more for a home that provides what they are looking for. These are major projects that require specific skills and experience to get the results you desire.

Step 4 - Make Any Necessary Repairs



New HVAC system

Is your current HVAC system 15+ years old and hanging on by a thread? Time for a new system and for good reason. There is nothing like the peace of mind provided by knowing that on that first 90 degree plus day that your new HVAC system is up to the task. Additionally, many advancements have been made in the design of modern HVAC equipment, which have resulted in a reduction in electricity use of almost 50%!

Landscaping design and maintenance

Of course, your lawn is the first thing seen by anyone approaching your house. Everyone knows the old adage that you only have 15 seconds to make a first impression. Well, guess what people see during those first very important seconds? That's right. Your landscaping provides the window into what people expect to see inside. While landscaping projects are important, they also require hard labor with heavy materials while exposed to the elements. These projects are typically best left to professionals with the experience, manpower and equipment to handle the task.

Repainting

Repainting the house is one of the easiest projects with a modest cost to make your home look and feel almost new again. The projects above are just a small sampling of the types of projects available from a variety of professionals.

Combined, all of these maintenance, repair, or renovation projects make you love your home even more, protect your investment, and potentially improve both the market value and market appeal of your home.

U.S. Veterans Home Services

U.S. Veterans Home Services can connect you with a Veteran-owned home services professional in your area. To get started, visit www.USVeteransHomeServices.com, or click [here](#).

Step 5 - Market Your Home



Nice job! You've followed steps 1 through 4 and are well on your way to selling your home. But it takes more than improvements and strategic pricing to have a successful sale. You need to reach the maximum number of potential buyers with your home listing.

You and your U.S. Veterans Realtor should identify and agree on the sizzling selling points of your home and choose the best advertising words to sell it. Your U.S. Veterans Realtor should communicate their marketing plan and answer any questions or concerns you have.

Home buyers rely heavily on the Internet, mobile apps, and real estate professionals for information on properties. Other sources include yard signs, open houses, newspaper and real estate magazine ads, homebuilders and television.

Be where the buyers are

95% of all home buyers use the Internet at some point during the search process while 44% start their search online. Simply put, you'll want a real estate agent with a robust online marketing strategy.

When searching online buyers want to see:

- Property photos
- Detailed property information
- Virtual tours
- Neighborhood information
- Real estate agent contact information

Step 6 - Show Your Home



Showing your home to potential homebuyers

Your U.S. Veterans Realtor will offer to place an electronic lock box on your house, which will permit authorized electronic key holders to access your property for showings. We will get the most objective feedback of your house if you are not present during showings. Remember that potential buyers try to imagine themselves in your house, so clean and decluttered are paramount to creating a great first impression.

Showcase your community

The look and condition of your home is critical, but don't discount the importance of where you live. Most buyers usually "buy" an area first, so the quality of a neighborhood is actually one of the most important factors. Be sure to talk up what makes your community great – proximity to quality schools, parks, restaurants, shopping and other attractions. These are the type of things that impact quality of life and potential buyers will be interested in. Your agent has access to the kinds of detailed neighborhood and school information that buyers want and is skilled at selling the relationship between community and home.

A comprehensive approach to showcasing your home and community

When selling your home the name of the game is "more". You want more serious buyers. More showings. More offers. Therefore it's essential that you don't rely solely on the Internet but rather a comprehensive advertising strategy to maximize your property's exposure. Some ideas include:

- Multiple Listing Service (MLS)
- Open houses
- Social media sites like Facebook® and Twitter Real estate professional tours
- Craigslist
- For sale sign
- Local real estate papers and magazines
- Networking within the local community
- Notifying potential buyers and referral sources in their database

Step 7 - Receive Purchase Offers and Negotiate



Your U.S. Veterans Realtor will be with you every step of the way as offers are received. Your U.S. Veterans Realtor will ensure you understand provisions of offers received and will guide you through the negotiation process. Your U.S. Veterans Realtor will also provide their experience dealing with objections to get to a successful sale.

The basic process

Generally, the buyer will make an offer on your home using a contract developed by your local real estate association. In this contract the buyer will set a sale price and include conditions for terms of purchase called “clauses.” These clauses may include specific closing and possession dates, deposit amounts, home improvements, and a variety of other conditions.

When your agent delivers you the offer you have the option to accept it, reject it, or counter it. If you choose to counter, the negotiating process begins. This may include several rounds of successive counter offers, each with deadlines for responding and meeting various conditions set forth by either the seller or buyer. This will continue until either both sides reach a mutually satisfactory pending agreement or the negotiations collapse.

Basic principles for successful negotiation:

- **Disclose everything** – Smart sellers proactively disclose all known defects to their buyers. Most states have property disclosure forms. Use them.
- **Ask questions** – Offers may contain complicated terminology, sometimes three or more addenda. Your Elite Realtor can help to clarify.
- **Respond quickly** – When buyers make an offer, they are in the mood to buy. But moods change, and buyers are known to get buyers’ remorse. Don’t delay if you want the sale.
- **Stay calm and be patient** – At all times keep communication civil and agreeable.
- **Meet halfway** – If there are disagreements about relatively small expenses, consider splitting the difference.
- **Be cautious with contingencies** – When you’ve landed your buyer, your signed acceptance of a written offer becomes a sales contract. Except for removing any contingencies, this document is the binding basis for the sale.
- **Rely on your Elite Realtor** – It’s your Elite Realtor’s responsibility to represent your best interests every step of the way. Your success is their success.

Step 8 - Due Diligence



Most offers to purchase will include a due diligence period, during which time the buyer has the opportunity to perform many types of inspections of the property. These inspections typically uncover some type of concern, which the buyer may request be addressed by the seller as a contingency for moving forward with the purchase.

This is the second phase of negotiations, which your U.S. Veterans Realtor will guide you through. The buyer will review any items of concern documented on the inspection reports and will typically request corrective actions be taken on defects they deem necessary for them to move forward with the home purchase. The buyer will request these actions on a separate form and the seller has the opportunity to agree to take the requested actions, decline to take action on one or more items, or reject the entirety of the request. Agreement, one way or the other, must be reached for the deal to move forward or terminate.

Any actions the seller agrees to take, typically must be complete by a certain date in accordance with the agreement, and for the transaction to close successfully. This is oftentimes an emotional and stressful part of any home sale, but you have an Elite U.S. Veterans Realtor standing side-by-side with you to navigate through this process to a successful conclusion! Most purchase agreements authorize a final walk-through inspection by the buyer just prior to closing. It is not uncommon for the buyers to stop by the house on the way to the closing in order to ensure everything remains as expected.

Step 9 - Attend the Closing



Closing (or settlement) is the final step in the process. During the closing, the buyers and sellers sign all required paperwork to transfer legal ownership. Money due from the buyer is collected and money due to the seller is delivered, minus costs incurred.

The negotiations have ended amiably and you and the buyer have followed through with your respective contractual obligations associated with finalizing the sale. Perfect!

The various contingencies and special conditions stipulated by the seller and buyer in the pending sales agreement must be met by the closing day which usually falls within 60 days after both parties have signed the agreement.

Common contingencies and conditions:

- The buyer's securing of financing
- A title search – a historical review of all legal documents relating to ownership of the property to ensure that there are no claims against the title of the property
- The purchasing of title insurance in case the records contain errors or there are mistakes in the review process
- A professional appraisal of the home, requested by the lender to ensure that the home's actual value justifies the loan amount
- Any additional contractual promises you have made in connection with buyer incentives, home improvements, etc.
- An independent inspection of the home's structural and functional condition (foundation, roof, electrical, heating, plumbing, etc.)
- An independent termite inspection
- A final walk-through by the buyer to verify that the home is in the same condition as when the sale agreement was signed

Carefully review the sales agreement with your agent to have a clear understanding of your obligations. Any shortfalls or mistakes at this point can be costly.



Home Selling Guide

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Corporate Website

USVeteransRealtyCorp.com

Customer Website

USVeteransRealty.com

Our Ecosystem

USVeteransHomeLoans.com | USVeteransHomeServices.com | USVeteransGear.com | VATeam.org

