



Guide to Buying & Selling Your Home





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“ABOUT US”



About RE/MAX *Integrity*

Company Profile

RE/MAX Integrity is brokered by Esther Cordova and owned/managed by Ruben & Nancy Villarreal along with exceptional office support staff who assists our Associates in serving their clients. With a friendly work environment and our commitment to teamwork, RE/MAX Integrity promotes and achieves employee and client satisfaction.

Our Mission

“To establish a positive, professional environment responsive to the needs of our clients.”

At RE/MAX Integrity it is our mission to create an environment where all things are possible! It is our goal to offer our client’s exceptional service, provide up-to-date technology, innovative marketing ideas and maintain the leading edge of creativity. RE/MAX Integrity Measures Success by attitude and commitment... We are committed to providing unparalleled quality service with the highest degree of professionalism & Integrity.

Our Values

-Integrity

-Service

-Excellence

“Home of the Best Agents”

RE/MAX *Integrity* – The Spencer Team



About The Spencer Team

The Spencer Team with RE/MAX *Integrity* includes Team Leader and Top Producing Realtors[®], Melissa Spencer, and four additional Realtors[®] - Doyle Spencer, Marjorie Moreland, Susan Wright and Jenny Whited. The Spencer Team has two support team members, Vivian Brandon and LeighAnn Yates to assist in serving you. We believe that having several people dedicated to supporting each step of your real estate transaction ensures every detail is addressed quickly and efficiently.

Our Core Values

We believe every client should see their dreams become reality.

Because we care, we strive to consistently provide exceptional service through increased proficiency and advanced education.

We faithfully serve our clients for all their real estate solutions.

Our passion is serving you!



MELISSA SPENCER

SALES AGENT &

REALTOR[®], ABR[®],

SRS[®], RENE[®], ALHS[®]

Melissa Spencer is a full-time, top producing Realtor[®] who has been voted as one of the 10 Best Real Estate Agents in Texas for 2019. Her extensive knowledge of the local market, keen listening and organizational skills, attention to details and exceptional negotiating abilities ensures first-class results. Her integrity, loyalty and passion for client care shows in her commitment to those that place their trust in her. She understands that your home is one of the most important pieces of your life, and she takes great care in helping you throughout the home buying and selling process.

Whether you are buying, selling or leasing, Melissa's responsive service is tailored to your wants and needs. She is committed to the highest standard of service and will work hard to find the best solution that meets your requirements. She believes in building and maintaining strong relationships and will remain a valuable resource you can always trust. She will be there to assist with all of your real estate needs and will exceed your expectations while doing so!



DOYLE SPENCER

SALES AGENT, FARM
& RANCH SPECIALIST
REALTOR®

Doyle comes to the Real Estate industry with 2 years of experience as an unlicensed assistant with The Spencer Team which has prepared him to provide exceptional service in buyer support and listing assistance. His 25 years of experience in commercial construction and 22 years of service in the Marine's provides a background in management, leadership and negotiation skills that will benefit our clients and team overall. He also has experience in the financial industry and insurance sales which provides a well-rounded background preparing him to support our clients. Doyle has considerable knowledge in contract negotiation, risk assessment, effective communication and problem solving. Doyle has personal experience with most aspects of home building and repair processes and a keen eye for detail. Doyle performs pre-offer property evaluations to minimize surprises during inspections. For The Spencer Team selling clients Doyle performs pre-listing consultation and recommendations to best prepare homes to reduce buyer concerns.



MARJORIE MORELAND

SALES AGENT &
REALTOR®

Having lived in the Montgomery County area for over 15 years and being a paralegal for more than 25 years, Marjorie has the expertise in the geographical area to serve you best. She prides herself with bringing excellent communication skills to the table that will benefit you along this journey to finding a new home. Smooth transactions are key and require the attention to detail and proficiency that she provides to each and every client and their transaction. Serving people has been the most rewarding part of her life in her career prior to real estate and continues to be. Buying or selling a property is often the most important decision one will make, and she looks forward to using her skills to help you have the best experience in real estate possible. She is a valuable asset to this team and we are proud to have her on our team and serving our clients.



SUSAN J. WRIGHT

**SALES AGENT &
REALTOR®**

Susan Wright has been a local resident for over 40 years and a licensed, Texas Realtor® for the last 16 years. She has extensive experience with residential homes, condominiums, townhomes, vacant land & lots, horse, hunting and lake property as well as experience with rental property. Susan has achieved Top Producer within RE/MAX Integrity and was inducted into the RE/MAX of Texas, Hall of Fame in 2018. Susan uses her vast knowledge to navigate through all aspects of your real estate transaction producing superior results that will help you save time and money. She works together with her clients to determine their needs and will take advantage of social media, cutting-edge technology, products and services to make sure her clients get the very most from their real estate transaction experience.



JENNY WHITED

**SALES AGENT &
REALTOR®**

Jenny is a native Houstonian who loves Texas and enjoys traveling. She has a strong background in records management, professional correspondence, documentation, legal compliance and information systems. From her corporate and business experience she brings an attention to detail that will ensure your real estate transaction is completed smoothly. Jenny's passion is serving others through the important process of buying or selling their home.



LEIGHANN YATES

MARKETING DIRECTOR

LeighAnn has proven herself as a self built marketer for her own artistry and home décor business that is known and carried nationwide. With a creative way with words to market listings just as she did her own products, we couldn't help but bring her on to help showcase our client's listings. She is results driven and thrives on making sure clients are pleased with the presentation of their property. Social Media marketing and online presence is key in the real estate industry and LeighAnn's expertise in these areas ensure that our clients are receiving the most up to date marketing services for their listing. LeighAnn also contributes to our buying clients with her attention to detail and market knowledge as we search for homes that meet the client's needs. The Spencer Team realizes LeighAnn's value in our business and what an asset she is to clients, you will be more than pleased with her services as you work with us!



VIVIAN BRANDON

ADMINISTRATIVE & MARKETING SUPPORT

Vivian Brandon supports the team with decades of project administration and quality management experience. Prior to entering the world of real estate, she led two large international corporations with the successful development, implementation and certification of new operating systems on schedule and within budget. Years of technical documentation reviews greatly enhanced her attention to details. Vivian uses these skills to ensure your transactions are effectively processed in a timely manner. Her extensive auditing experience helps her identify the accuracy of every transaction. Applying the vast knowledge gained from working with a corporate training department bolsters overall team performance. Her creative flair supports our marketing efforts. She also performs office administration duties at The Spencer Team.



What Others Say About Us

It was a pleasure to work with Melissa (and her husband Doyle) as we navigated unknown waters in purchasing our home. We had built the home we were in, so purchasing home was new to us as a family. She was very patient and kind as we visited at least 15 homes in the course of about 10 months, before finding the perfect home for our family. She is very knowledgeable and prompt with any questions or concerns. She promptly returned calls and texts and was on top of closing matters that I would not have known about had she not always brought her A game.

She also helped us with the sale of our home, which could not have gone more smoothly. Her marketing efforts of our home aided tremendously in our receiving multiple offers.

Melissa has a great personality and easy going style that made what could have been a very stressful time in our lives (buying and selling homes at the same time), much less so.

I would definitely call her again should we ever be in the market for another home and will most definitely recommend her to any of my friends needing a realtor.

Marjorie M. – Montgomery, TX, USA 10.30.2017

Wow! What a great experience we had with Melissa as our realtor. This is the 2nd home she has helped us with. She is so knowledgeable and her follow up is superb. You also get the advice of her spouse Doyle, which is such an added bonus. You can't go wrong with Team Spencer Realty!! We have a wonderful realtor and friends! Thank you Melissa! We love our new home!!!

Ginger C. 10.27.2017

You can't go wrong with Melissa helping you find a home! We were moving from Louisiana and she helped us every step of the way! She kept us totally informed and made a stressful move so much easier! Will use and recommend her to anyone looking to relocate in the future!

ginlori0509 11.18.2016

I was set up with Melissa after the broker ended up in the hospital and couldn't make an appointment. From the moment meeting her (and husband, Doyle) I knew they were the right duo for my family. Down to earth and understands everything we needed in our new home. She listed our home and worked tirelessly to sell it and help us get a new construction home under way. Our current home closes tomorrow and I'm thrilled to have shared this experience with her! A lasting professional relationship and friendship was built during this transaction.

Leighann Y. – Magnolia, Texas, USA 05.09.2017

When my husband and I started the process of buying a house We knew literally not one single about purchasing our dream house that can accommodate both of our needs. We met with couple of realtors before Melissa, but I knew instantly that she was the one for us. She is honest, professional and hands on, she was always more focused on answering our questions and giving us good advice. She made buying our first home an pleasant and cushy experience. We cant say enough marvelous things about Melissa A+++++!!!!WE LOVE OUR HOME

Salwa E. – Houston, Texas, USA 10.01.2017

Melissa was very helpful, thorough and easy to work with during the purchase of our first home. Melissa was always available for my many questions and guided me through the home buying process. She went above and beyond by providing options and recommendations when I asked for them. She is very trustworthy and we plan on working with Melissa in the future. Thanks, Melissa, for wonderful service.

zuser20140518194051509 – Creekside Park, Spring, TX 11.18.2016



“BUYER GUIDE”



Buyer's Guide

Table of Contents

Customer Service Commitment.....	1
Home Buying Packet - Your Top Five	2
Pre-Qualification and Pre-Approval	3
The Ten Commandments	5
Making an Offer	6
What Happens Next.....	7
Home Inspection	8
What is a Real Estate Closing?.....	9



Customer Service Commitment

As the REALTOR® you have chosen to exclusively represent you in the purchase of your new home, I promise that I will:

- Organize and schedule your home search process.
- Discuss the benefits and drawbacks of each home in relation to your specific needs.
- Provide you with on-going updates on available homes using HAR Platinum platform and a custom portal designed for you specifically.
- Help you to compare homes to assist with your decision-making process.
- Perform pre-offer property evaluations to minimize surprises during inspections.
- Advise you on the terms and conditions of the offer and complete the purchase contract and related forms and addenda.
- Present your offer and negotiate on your behalf.
- Coordinate and supervise the preparation of all closing documents and guide you through the closing process.
- Help you resolve any closing issues.
- Coordinate move-in and assist with any post-closing issues



Home Buying Packet - Your Top Five

The five most important criteria for my new home are:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____



Pre-Qualification and Pre-Approval

Many buyers apply for a loan and obtain approval before they find the home they want to buy. Why?

Pre-qualification will help you in the following ways. Generally, interest rates are locked in for a set period of time. You will know in advance exactly what your payments will be on offers you choose to make. You will not waste time considering homes you cannot afford.

Pre-approval will help you in the following ways. A seller may choose to make concessions if they know that your financing is secured. You are like a cash buyer, and this may make your offer more competitive. You can select the best loan package without being under pressure.

HOW MUCH CAN YOU AFFORD?

There are three key factors to consider:

- The down payment
- Your ability to qualify for a mortgage
- The closing costs associated with your transaction.

DOWN PAYMENT REQUIREMENTS:

Most loans today require a down payment of between 3.5% and 5.0% depending on the type and terms of the loan. If you are able to come up with a 20-25% down payment, you may be eligible to take advantage of special fast-track programs and possibly eliminate mortgage insurance.

CLOSING COSTS:

You will be required to pay fees for loan processing and other closing costs. These fees must be paid in full at the final settlement, unless you are able to include them in your financing. Typically, total closing costs will range between 2-5% of your mortgage loan.

QUALIFYING FOR THE MORTGAGE:

Most lenders require that your monthly payment range between 25-30% of your gross monthly income. Your mortgage payment to the lender includes the following items:

- The principal on the loan (P)
- The interest on the loan (I)
- Property taxes (T),
- The homeowner's insurance (I).



Your total monthly PITI and all debts (from installments to revolving charge accounts) should range between 33-42% of your gross monthly income. These key factors determine your ability to secure a home loan: Credit Report, Assets, Income, and Property Value.

The Ten Commandments

When Applying for a Real Estate Loan

1. Thou shalt not change jobs, become self-employed or quit your job.
2. Thou shalt not buy a car, truck or van (or you may be living in it)!
3. Thou shalt not use credit cards excessively or let your accounts fall behind.
4. Thou shalt not spend money you have set aside for closing.
5. Thou shalt not omit debts or liabilities from your loan application.
6. Thou shalt not buy furniture.
7. Thou shalt not originate any inquiries into your credit.
8. Thou shalt not make large deposits without first checking with your loan officer.
9. Thou shalt not change bank accounts.
10. Thou shalt not co-sign a loan for anyone.



Making an Offer

Once you have found the home you wish to purchase, you will need to determine what offer you are willing to make. It is important to remember that the more competition there is for the home, the higher the offer should be – sometimes even exceeding the asking price. Remember, be realistic. Make offers you want the other party to sign!

To communicate your interest in purchasing a home, we will present the listing agent with a written offer. When the seller accepts an offer, it becomes a legal contract. When you write an offer, you should be prepared to pay an earnest money deposit. This is to guarantee that your intention is to purchase the property.

After we present your offer to the listing agent, it will either be accepted, rejected, or the seller will make a counter-offer. This is when we will negotiate terms of the contract if necessary.

The step-by-step contract procedure for most single-family home purchases is standard. The purchase agreement used is a standard document approved by our local real estate board and the Texas Real Estate Commission.

The purchase agreement or contract constitutes your offer to buy and once accepted by the seller, becomes a valid, legal contract. For this reason, it is important to understand what is written on the contract offer.



What Happens Next

Once you have decided to buy your home, what happens between now and the time you legally own the home? A Title Company may handle the following items. NOTE: In different parts of the country, attorneys, lenders, escrow companies and other persons who are independent of title companies perform some or all of these functions.

Earnest Money – Earnest money is a deposit made to a seller showing the buyer's good faith in a transaction. An agreement to convey starts the process when the Title Company receives the earnest money.

Loan Application - Once you submit the loan application, it is usually subject to a credit check, an appraisal and sometimes, a survey of the property.

Tax Check – The Title Company contacts the various assessor-collectors to determine if any taxes are owed on the property.

Title Search – Copies of documents are gathered from various public records: deeds, deeds of trust, various assessments and matters of probate, heirship, divorce, and bankruptcy are addressed.

Examination – Verification of the legal owner and debts owed.

Document Preparation – Appropriate forms are prepared for conveyance and settlement.

Settlement – An Escrow Officer oversees the closing of the transaction: seller signs the deed, you sign a new mortgage, the old loan is paid off and the new loan is established. Seller, agents, attorneys, surveyors, Title Company, and other service providers for the parties are paid. Title insurance policies will then be issued to you and your lender.

Title Insurance - There are two types of title insurance:

- Coverage that protects the lender for the amount of the mortgage. (lender's policy)
- Coverage that protects the equity in the property. (owner's policy)

Both you and your lender will want the security offered by title insurance. Why?

Title agents search public records to determine who has owned any piece of property, but these records may not reflect irregularities that are almost impossible to find. Here are some examples: an unauthorized seller forges the deed to the property; an unknown but rightful heir to the property shows up after the sale to claim ownership; conflicts arise over a will from a deceased owner; or a land survey showing the boundaries of your property is incorrect.

For a one-time charge at closing, title insurance will safeguard you against problems including those events an exhaustive search will not reveal.



Home Inspection

If you are purchasing a resale property, we highly recommend that you have a professional home inspector conduct a thorough inspection. The inspection will include the following:

- Appliances
- Plumbing
- Electrical
- Air conditioning and heating
- Ventilation
- Roof and Attic
- Foundation
- General Structure

The inspection is not designed to criticize every minor problem or defect in the home. It is intended to report on major damage or serious problems that require repair. Should serious problems be indicated, the inspector will recommend that a structural engineer or other professional inspect it as well.

Your home cannot “pass or fail” an inspection, and your inspector will not tell you whether they think the home is worth the money you are offering. The inspector’s job is to make you aware of repairs that are recommended or necessary.

The seller may be willing to negotiate completion of repairs or a credit for completion of repairs, or you may decide that the home will take too much work and money. A professional inspection will help you make a clear-headed decision. In addition to the overall inspection, you may wish to have separate tests conducted for termites or the presence of radon gas.

In choosing a home inspector, consider one that has been certified as a qualified and experienced member by a trade association.

I recommend being present at the inspection. This is to your advantage. You need to be able to clearly understand the inspection report and know exactly which areas need attention. Plus, you can get answers to many questions, tips for maintenance and more general information that will help you once you move into your new home. Most important, you will see the home through the eyes of an objective third party.



What Is a Real Estate Closing

WHAT IS A REAL ESTATE CLOSING?

A “closing” is where you and I meet with some or all of the following individuals in order to transfer the property title to you:

- The Seller
- The Seller’s agent
- A representative from the lending institution
- A representative from the title company

The purchase agreement or contract you signed describes the property, states the purchase price and terms, sets forth the method of payment and usually names the date and place where the closing or actual transfer of the property title and keys will occur.

If financing the property, your lender will require you to sign a document, usually a promissory note, as evidence that you are personally responsible for repaying the loan. You will also sign a mortgage or deed of trust on the property as security to the lender for the loan. The mortgage or deed of trust gives the lender the right to sell the property if you fail to make the payments. Before you exchange these papers, the property may be surveyed, appraised or inspected. The ownership of title will also be checked in county and court records.

At closing, you will be required to pay all fees and closing costs in the form of “guaranteed funds” such as a Cashier’s Check. Your agent or escrow officer will notify you of the exact amount at closing.

WHAT IS AN ESCROW ACCOUNT?

An escrow account is a neutral depository held by your lender for funds that will be used to pay expenses incurred by the property such as taxes, assessments, property insurance or mortgage insurance premiums which fall due in the future. You will pay one-twelfth of the annual amount of these bills each month with your regular mortgage payment. When the bills fall due, the lender pays them from the special account. At closing, it may be necessary to pay enough into the account to cover these amounts for several months so that funds will be available to pay the bills as they fall due.

“SELLER GUIDE”



Seller's Guide

Table of Contents

Customer Service Commitment.....	1
12 Step Marketing Plan	3
Six Real Estate Truths	4
Six Selling Myths Uncovered.....	8
Getting Your Home in Top Selling Condition.....	10



Customer Service Commitment

As the REALTOR® you have chosen to exclusively represent you in the sale of your home, I promise that I will:

- Provide you with superior customer service during the entire selling process including, taking the time to understand your wants, needs and expectations and being honest with you at all times.
- Provide prompt and professional communication, including returning your calls and emails the same day.
- Advise you on pricing based on current market data.
- Assist with staging your home to attract potential buyers.
- Implement a highly aggressive marketing plan to market your house through as many channels as possible.
- Coordinate the home showing process.
- Present all offers and advise you on the terms and contingencies.
- Negotiate offers on your behalf.
- Monitor the buyer's loan process.
- Coordinate and supervise the preparation of all closing documents and guide you through the closing process.





12 Step Marketing Plan

Designed to provide maximum exposure for your home in the shortest period of time, I will implement the following 12 Step Marketing Plan.

1. Price your home strategically to be competitive with the current market and price trends.
2. Stage your home in a positive light to showcase the features that buyers are most interested in.
3. Place attractive custom For Sale signage in your yard.
4. Hire a high quality professional photographer for your property pictures that will highlight its best features.
5. Create a website specifically made to market your home with domain name.
6. Optimize your home's internet presence by posting it on MLS systems and adding multiple photographs and creative descriptions.
7. Create professionally printed materials such as color flyers describing your property and providing photos and additional information about your home and the neighborhood.
8. Target marketing efforts to thousands of active real estate agents who specialize in selling homes in your neighborhood.
9. Host open house events as frequently as possible to showcase your home to buyers.
10. Maximize the power of social media and target audiences to reach individuals who are searching for homes in your area.
11. Identify and contact active buyers and investors in my database who are looking for homes in your price range and area.
12. Provide you with weekly updates detailing the marketing efforts, including comments from the prospective buyers and agents who have visited your home.

Six Real Estate Truths

1. Having an agent represent you has its advantages:

Professional representation... I am your personal representative, and I am required by law to represent your best interests to the best of my ability.

Personal specialist... It is similar to hiring an accountant to help you file income taxes or a mechanic to fix your car. If you had the time to master those specialties, you would be doing your own taxes and fixing your car. But who has that sort of time? Besides, most people will sell only two homes in their lifetime – two real estate transactions in a lifetime will not turn anyone into a real estate specialist.

Objectivity... My job is to point out all the pros and cons for all the decisions you will be making throughout the home-selling process. I will even tell you things you may not want to hear because as your agent I want you to make informed decisions not emotionally-based decisions.

Convenience... these days, it's nearly impossible to sell a home all by yourself without it turning into a part-time job.

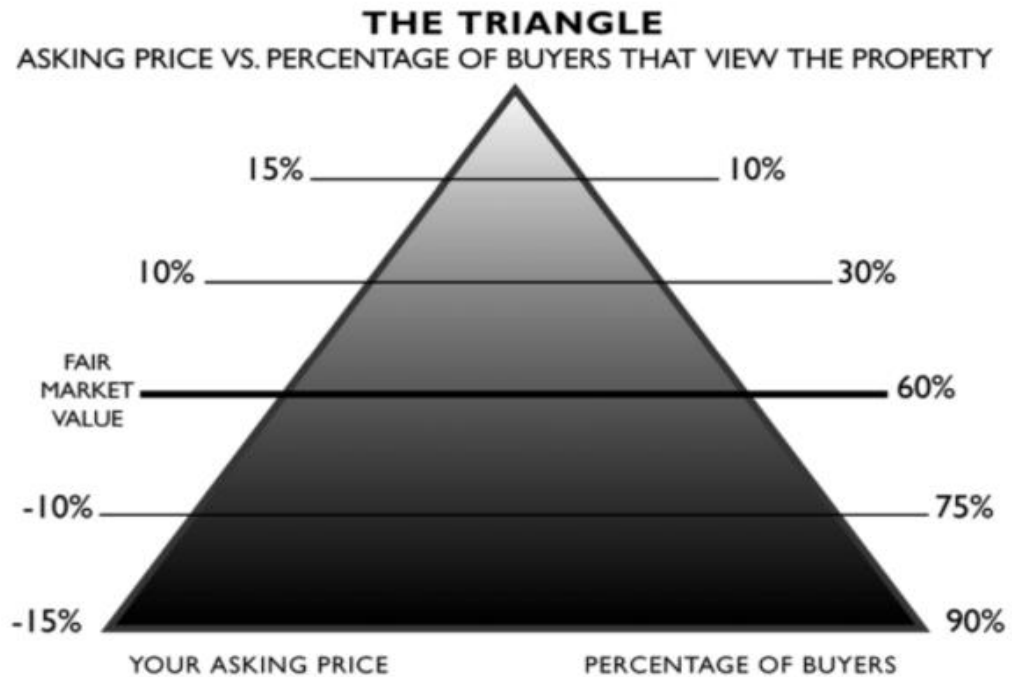
2. Not all real estate professionals are REALTORS®. Only licensed real estate agents who are members of the National Association of REALTORS® can call themselves REALTORS®. REALTORS® are committed to treat all parties honestly – they subscribe to a strict code of conduct and are required to maintain a high level of real estate standards. It is to your advantage to work with a REALTOR® because of the training and standards this professional designation requires.

3. The price of your home should be based on the price of sold properties in your area rather than the list price of properties now on the market – this is how we establish your home’s fair market value.

If it is priced OVER its fair market value it will:

- Not attract as many buyers because they will think it is out of their price range
- Take longer to sell
- Make competing properties look more attractive
- Become “shopworn”
- Be overpriced in everyone’s mind (agents and buyers) and they tend not to forget
- Cause you to lose valuable time and miss out on buying your dream home
- Cause advertising dollars and marketing efforts to be wasted
- Cause negotiations to stall
- End up selling below market value in order to make up for all of the above

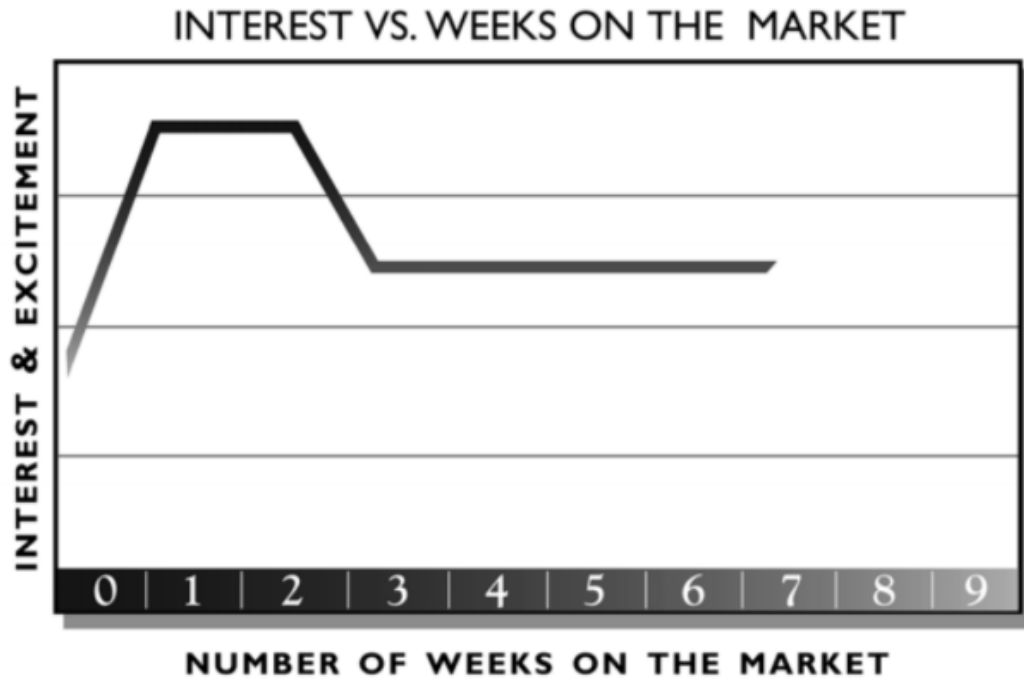
4. Research conducted by the National Association of REALTORS® shows that more buyers purchase their properties at fair market value not above it. The percentage of buyers increases even more when the price drops below fair market value.



5. The fair market value of your home is determined by the market - that is, what today's buyers are willing to pay. Buyers are comparing your home to other homes now on the market. They don't care about:

- What your neighbor says
- What another agent says
- What you spent on upgrades
- What it cost to build today
- What you spent on repairs
- What you spent on remodeling
- What you spent on new carpet
- What you paid
- What you need
- What you want

6. Your home generates the most interest in the real estate community and among potential buyers during the first 30 days it is on the market. If it is not properly priced during this time, we miss out on this peak level of interest:



Six Selling Myths Uncovered

Myth 1: You should always price your home high and negotiate down.

Truth: Pricing too high can be as bad as pricing too low. If you list too high, you'll miss out on buyers looking in the price range where your home should be. Offers may not even come in, because buyers who are interested in your home are scared off by the price and won't even take the time to look at it. By the time you correct the price and list your home at its fair market value, you will have lost that window of opportunity when your home draws the most attention from the public and real estate agents; i.e. the first 30 days that it is on the market. A well trained real estate agent who looks out for your best interests will consult with you on your home's fair market value and different pricing strategies for the current market.

Myth 2: Minor repairs can wait until later. There are more important things to be done.

Truth: Minor repairs make your house more marketable allowing you to maximize your return (or minimize loss) on the sale. Most buyers are looking for homes that are ready for them to move into. If your home happens to attract a buyer who is willing to make repairs, they will begin asking for repair allowances that come out of your asking price. The amount of an allowance that you have to offer a buyer is usually more than what it would cost for you to make the repair or hire someone to make the repair. Remember, buyers are comparing your home to other homes that are currently on the market. Your home should be inviting so that everyone who looks at it can see themselves living there.

Myth 3: Once a potential buyer sees the inside of your home curb appeal won't matter.

Truth: Buyers probably won't make it to the inside of the home if the outside of your home does not appeal to them. Buyers and their agents often do drive-bys before deciding whether a home is worth their time to look inside. Your home's exterior must make a good first impression so that buyers are compelled to stop and come inside. All it takes is keeping the lawn mowed, shrubs and trees trimmed, gardens weeded and edged, and clutter put away.



Myth 4: Your home must be every home buyer's dream home.

Truth: If you get carried away with repairs and replacements to your home, you may end up over improving the house. There is a point where improving your home does not pay off. The key is to consider what competing properties feature and look like. A highly-motivated real estate agent will consult with you on what competing properties have to offer. They can even show you competing properties so that you can make sound home improvement decisions.

Myth 5: You are better off selling your home on your own and saving money on the commission you would have paid to a real estate agent.

Truth: Statistically, many sellers who attempt to sell their homes on their own cannot consummate the sale without the service of a real estate agent. Homeowners who succeed in selling their home by themselves usually net less than if they had a real estate agent working for them. The National Association of REALTORS[®] surveys consumers every year including homeowners who succeeded in selling their home without a real estate agent. Over 70% of these homeowners say that they would never do it again.

Myth 6: When you receive an offer, you should make the buyer wait. This gives you a better negotiating position.

Truth: You should reply immediately to an offer! When a buyer makes an offer, that buyer is at that moment in time ready to buy your home. Moods can change, and you don't want to lose the sale because you have stalled in replying.

Getting Your Home in Top Selling Condition

Curb Appeal

- ... Drive up to your home and look at it from afar. Look at it through the eyes of buyers.
- ... Check the shingles – repair or replace damaged shingles.
- ... Clean and repair the gutters.
- ... Clean and repair the HVAC units.
- ... Repair broken windows and shutters. Replace torn screens. Make sure frames and seams have solid caulking.
- ... Repair or replace door knobs, doorbell and light fixtures if necessary.
- ... Remove all toys, equipment and litter.
- ... Remove cobwebs and nests.
- ... Remove mildew, moss and stains from the side of your home – use bleach. Remove stains from the walkways and driveway – use concrete cleanser and/or kitty litter.
- ... Repair and clean patio furniture and deck area. Remove anything that can't be repaired.
- ... Make sure the spa and pool sparkle.
- ... Go around and touch up the exterior of your home with putty and paint.
- ... Clean or paint the front door and mailbox.
- ... Hose off the exterior of your home, especially around entrances. Use siding cleanser.
- ... Wash the windows.
- ... Wash your garbage can and put it in a place where it's not the first thing potential buyers see when they drive up.
- ... Stack the woodpile neatly.
- ... Mow the lawn.
- ... Trim the trees and shrubs.
- ... Weed the gardens.
- ... Add colorful plants or foliage to fill in bare spots.
- ... Refresh flower beds with black mulch.
- ... Edge the gardens and walkways.
- ... Sweep the walkways and driveway.
- ... Replace doormats that are worn and torn.
- ... Shine brass hardware on the doors and light fixtures. Polish stained wood doors and trim.



... Drive up to your home again and look at it from the eyes of a potential buyer. Walk into your home as a potential buyer. Determine what kind of impression the walkways and entrances now make.

Overall Interior

- ... Walk through your home. Store, give away, throw, or donate anything that you won't need until after the move; e.g. furniture, knick-knacks, clothing, toys, equipment, appliances, worn rugs, papers, books, cosmetics, jewelry, games, CDs, etc.
- ... Walk through your home again, this time with some tools. Fix loose door knobs, cracked molding, leaky faucets. Remove cob webs.
- ... Replace worn or broken door knobs, cabinet fixtures, light fixtures, light switches, outlet plates, faucets and vent covers.
- ... Clean the fireplace.
- ... Clean the vents.
- ... Clean and organize your closets. Add extra space by storing or giving away items.
- ... Add a fresh coat of paint in light, neutral colors.
- ... Shampoo the carpet. Replace if necessary. Clean and wax the floors.
- ... Vacuum the window blinds, shades and drapes. Wash or dry clean curtains. Wash all the windows, frames and sills.
- ... Take care of stale or musty odors.
- ... Remove all valuables, such as jewelry, artwork, knick-knacks, medications, cash, coin collection, etc.
- ... Open all the window shades to create a spacious and bright look.
- ... Put pet supplies and dishes in a place where they are not the first thing potential buyers see or smell when they walk into a room.

Living Room and Family Room

- ... Make these rooms spacious and inviting.
- ... Discard or repair chipped furniture. Replace worn rugs and pillows.
- ... Remove magazines, games, toys and clutter.
- ... Make sure the entertainment center sparkles.
- ... Vacuum upholstery, drapes, pillows, etc.

Dining Room

- ... Clean out your china cabinet. Polish any visible silver.
- ... Put a lovely centerpiece on the table.

Bedrooms

- ... Arrange furniture to create a spacious look.
- ... Remove games, toys, magazines, cosmetics, jewelry – especially on the night stands.
- ... Replace bedspreads, quilts and pillow shams if they are worn or faded.

Bathrooms

- ... Remove rust and mildew stains.
- ... Wash or replace shower curtains.
- ... Make sure everything sparkles including grout.
- ... Replace worn rugs and towels.

Kitchen

- ... Make sure all appliances work.
- ... Throw away or eat the foods that you've been storing for so long.
- ... Clean the inside of the refrigerator, stove and cabinets. Make sure everything is organized to create a spacious look.
- ... If your stove has electric burners, purchase new drip pans for each burner. Wash removable knobs in your dishwasher.
- ... Polish the cabinets with furniture oil. Make sure appliances, countertops and the sink sparkle. Install new faucets if necessary.

Attic and Garage

- ... Get rid of unnecessary items. Store or pack items you won't need until after the move.
- ... Organize everything to create more floor space and make inspections easy. Put things on shelves or in matching boxes.
- ... Provide bright lighting.
- ... Clean all equipment and vents. Replace filters.



“GLOSSARY & FORMS”



Real Estate Glossary

Acceptance: The date when both parties, seller and buyer, have agreed to and completed signing and/or initialing the contract.

Adjustable Rate Mortgage: A mortgage that permits the lender to adjust the mortgage's interest rate periodically on the basis of changes in a specified index. Interest rates may move up or down, as market conditions change.

Amortized Loan: A loan that is paid in equal installments during its term.

Appraisal: An estimate of real estate value, usually issued to standards of FHA, VA and FHMA. Recent comparable sales in the neighborhood is the most important factor in determining value

Appreciation: An increase in the value of a property due to changes in market conditions or other causes. The opposite of depreciation.

Assumable Mortgage: Purchaser takes ownership to real estate encumbered by an existing mortgage and assumes responsibility as the guarantor for the unpaid balance of the mortgage.

Bill of Sale: Document used to transfer title (ownership) of PERSONAL property.

Cloud on Title: Any condition that affects the clear title to real property.

Consideration: Anything of value to induce another to enter into a contract, i.e., money, services, a promise.

Deed: A written instrument, which when properly executed and delivered, conveys title to real property.

Discount Points: A loan fee charged by a lender of FHA, VA or conventional loans to increase the yield on the investment. One point = 1% of the loan amount.

Easement: The right to use the land of another.

Encumbrance: Anything that burdens (limits) the title to property, such as a lien, easement, or restriction of any kind.

Equity: The value of real estate over and above the liens against it. It is obtained by subtracting the total liens from the value.

Escrow Payment: That portion of a mortgagor's monthly payment held in trust by the lender to pay for taxes, hazard insurance and other items as they become due.



Fannie Mae: Nickname for Federal National Mortgage Corporation (FNMA), a tax-paying corporation created by congress to support the secondary mortgages insured by FHA or guaranteed by VA, as well as conventional loans.

Federal Housing Administration (FHA): An agency of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Its main activity is the insuring of residential mortgage loans made by private lenders. The FHA sets standards for construction and underwriting but does not lend money or plan or construct housing.

FHA Insured Mortgage: A mortgage under which the Federal Housing Administration insures loans made, according to its regulations.

Fixed Rate Mortgage: A loan that fixes the interest rate at a prescribed rate for the duration of the loan.

Foreclosure: Procedure whereby property pledged as security for a debt is sold to pay the debt in the event of default.

Freddie Mac: Nickname for Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation (FHLMC), a federally controlled and operated corporation to support the secondary mortgage market. It purchases and sells residential conventional home mortgages.

Graduated Payment Mortgage: Any loan where the borrower pays a portion of the interest due each month during the first few years of the loan. The payment increases gradually during the first few years to the amount necessary to fully amortize the loan during its life.

Lease Purchase Agreement: Buyer makes a deposit for future purchases of a property with the right to lease property in the interim.

Lease with Option: A contract which gives one the right to lease property at a certain sum with the option to purchase at a future date.

Loan to Value Ratio (LTV): The ratio of the mortgage loan principal (amount borrowed) to the property's appraised value (selling price). Example – on a \$100,000 home, with a mortgage loan principal of \$80,000 the loan to value ratio is 80%.

Mortgage: A legal document that pledges a property to the lender as security for payment of a debt.

Mortgage Insurance Premium (MIP): The amount paid by a mortgagor for mortgage insurance. This insurance protects the investor from possible loss in the event of a borrower's default on a loan.

Note: A written promise to pay a certain amount of money.

Origination Fee: A fee paid to a lender for services provided when granting a loan usually a percentage of the face amount of the loan.

Private Mortgage Insurance (PMI): see Mortgage Insurance Premium.

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Second Mortgage / Second Deed of Trust / Junior Mortgage / Junior Lien: An additional loan imposed on a property with a first mortgage. Generally, a higher interest rate and shorter term than a “first” mortgage.

Settlement Statement (HUD-1): A financial statement rendered to the buyer and seller at the time of transfer of ownership giving an account of all funds received or expended.

Severalty Ownership: Ownership by one person only. Sole ownership.

Tenancy in Common: Ownership by two or more persons who hold an undivided interest without right of survivorship. In event of the death of one owner, his/her share will pass to his/her heirs.

Title Insurance: An insurance policy that protects the insured (buyer or lender) against loss arising from defects in the title.