

For Sale BY OWNER



PREPARATION

PRICING

MARKETING

CLOSING

In this comprehensive guide to selling your house by owner, we'll take a look at what FSBO entails, point out what paperwork you'll need to complete, and give you tips for making the process as smooth and potentially profitable as possible.

guiding QUESTIONS

BEFORE YOU READ ON AND EMBARK ON THIS JOURNEY, TAKE A FEW MOMENTS TO SOUL SEARCH AND ASK YOURSELF THESE 3 QUESTIONS.

1

Do I have the mental fortitude to take on a stressful project that will take lots of time and effort and involves one of the biggest investments of my life?

2

Do I have the computer and technology skills in order to effectively market my property on the internet (where over 95% of people look for homes)?

3

Am I willing to deal personally with buyers who a.) can be quite critical of your home, b.) need to be screened and qualified for financing, and c.) will negotiate hard for the cheapest price they can get.

If you answered YES to each of these questions, great! Move on to STEP 1.

If you answered NO to any of the questions, consider the 4 statistics next...

CONSIDER *this*

IF YOU ANSWERED NO TO ANY OF THE QUESTIONS, CONSIDER THESE 4 STATISTICS:

1

A 2013 National Association of Realtors® study found that the typical sold price of an FSBO home is \$184K compared to \$230k sold by a licensed agent.

2

FSBO properties take on average 19 more days to sell than those listed with Realtors®.

3

A survey revealed that the top challenges for FSBO sellers were the paperwork, getting the price right, and preparing the home for sale.

4

It's been estimated that 80% of people who try the FSBO method, end up giving up and listing with a Realtor®. It doesn't hurt to at least have a discussion with a Realtor® before trying FSBO.

When you sell your home by owner, you're in charge of everything from setting the price and marketing the property to filling out the paperwork and negotiating with the buyer. You'll have to do practically all the heavy lifting of the sale yourself, but in return, you won't have to pay a listing agent.

Done correctly, selling your house for sale by owner can save you thousands of dollars and be a rewarding experience. Done incorrectly, going the FSBO route could lose you HUGE money and cause you a great deal of frustration.

PROS & CONS

of selling on your own

PROS

01

You won't have to pay commission to a listing agent, saving you thousands of dollars in realtor fees.

02

You'll have complete control over the entire sale process. You'll call the shots on open houses, viewings, and sale negotiations.

03

You're already the top expert on your home. When you list FSBO, you'll have the advantage of knowing the property's best features.

CONS

01

You'll probably still have to pay a commission (typically 2.5-3%) to incentivize buyer's agents to bring their clients to see your home.

02

You'll have to do all the work of a trained, licensed realtor. If you don't have the time to respond to buyer inquiries around the clock, this isn't for you.

03

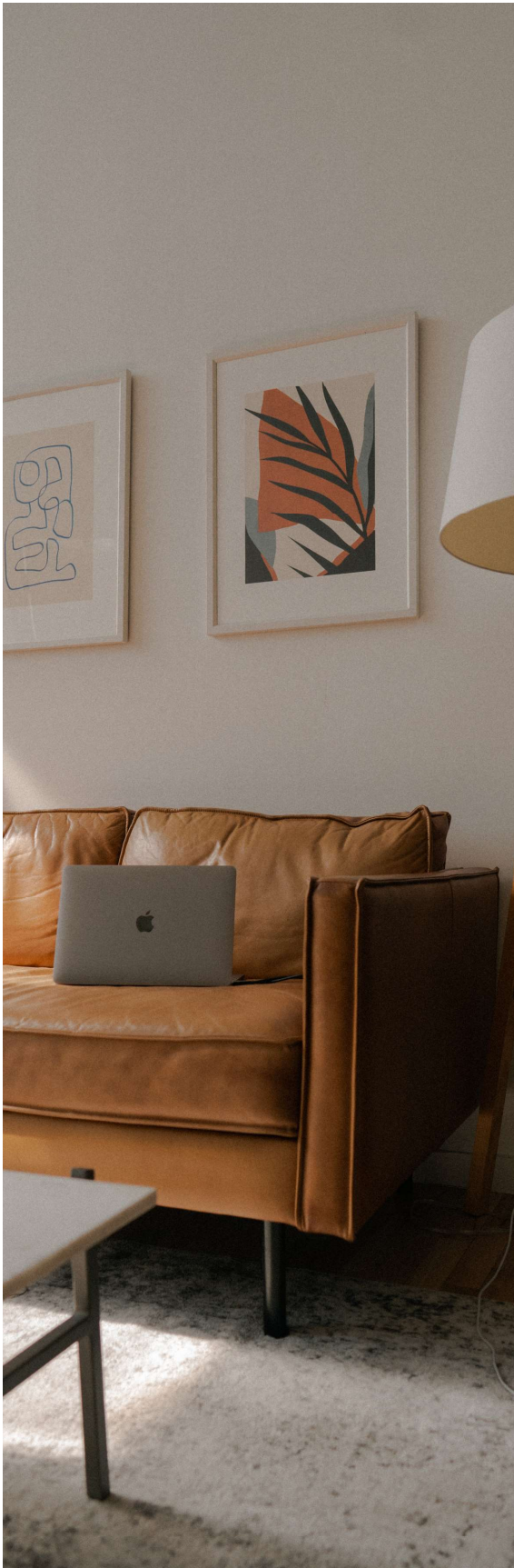
You may be overwhelmed with calls from both buyers and agents.



Part *One*

Preparation of Your Home

The key is to be properly prepared. If you are not, your home could remain on the market longer than you expect because you are not attracting and getting offers from qualified buyers. This can be the point where many homeowners become frustrated and consider giving up their dream of selling their homes themselves. However, there are sellers who successfully accomplish selling their own homes. You can be one of them!



01

Home *Preparation*

We have developed a very specific and intentional 20 step process of getting your home sold fast and for top dollar. 20 steps might seem like a lot but it is our mission to work with you throughout the process so you never feel left in the dark or confused about what is going on.



PREPARING *your home*

M A K E R E P A I R S

Now is the time to fix all of those nagging things that you just lived with. Inside the house, look for stained ceilings, missing tile, broken windows, doors, heavily scratched floors, and other signs of neglect. Outside, look for broken or missing shingles, patio pavers, and tuckpointing. If you have a deck, check for cracks in floorboards and loose railings. Make a list of everything you see and then decide which things you're going to tackle. A real estate agent can be very helpful in determining what needs to be done and what doesn't. Here are complete how-to instructions for several common repairs: Wall and Ceiling Repair, Laminate Floor Repair, Shingle Repair, and Deck and Railing Repair.

F I N I S H P R O J E C T S

Every homeowner has at least a couple of ongoing projects that never seem to get finished. Now is the time to finish painting the guest room, install the ceiling fan you bought last summer, and stain that beadboard you put up in the pantry.

C R E A T E C U R B A P P E A L

It's important that your home makes a good first impression. When potential buyers drive up to your home, you want them to think, "Wow! I could live here!" To make sure buyers want to see the inside of your home, make sure the outside is well-kept, tidy, and inviting. It's important to touch up or completely repaint the trim, keep the grass cut, edge along sidewalks and paths, maintain flowers and shrubs and keep the yard tidy. You never know when curious buyers will drive by.

D E C L U T T E R

Resist the urge to roll your eyes at this one. It is imperative that your home looks livable. Potential buyers may not be able to see past your clutter. Think of it this way—don't move things you no longer want or need. Make decisions now and your house will sell faster and your move will be easier. It's no secret that getting started is the hardest part of decluttering. Take one room, or even part of one room, at a time and dive in. Recycle or shred paper. Donate books, toys, clothing, and duplicate household items. If you're getting frustrated and you can't deal with one more stack of papers or shoebox of old photos, put them in a plastic tub, label the tub and stack it somewhere out of the way.

D E C L U T T E R S O M E M O R E !

Don't overlook items on display on your shelves, tables and countertops, and inside buffets and other glass-door or open-shelf cabinets. You probably don't even notice what's there, but too much clutter in everything can distract a buyer. A good rule of thumb is 'Reduce by 50%.' In other words, if you have 10 things on a shelf, put away (or get rid of) five. If there are a dozen mugs on display in the kitchen, lose six. One more thing: If you have a lot of personal items on display, it can make it harder for potential buyers to imagine themselves living there. If you display items of a political or religious nature that could be off-putting to others, consider putting them in storage until you can proudly display them again in your new home.

T H I N K N E U T R A L S

If you decide to do some interior painting, stick to neutral colors. You've heard it before, but it's the truth. Neutrals don't distract and they allow potential buyers to imagine their things in your home.

R E A R R A N G E Y O U R F U R N I T U R E

Your furniture is arranged the way it best suits you and your family. When you're staging your home to sell, you'll need to use your furniture as marketing tools to help create inviting vignettes. Avoid having furniture lined up along the walls. Pull the sofa away from the wall and pull chairs close to create a conversation area. Also, you may need to remove some furniture so it's easy for people to walk around in the rooms. If you've toured model homes and had the feeling you could move right in and live there, that's what you're going for.

CREATE A WELCOMING ENTRYWAY

If your apartment doesn't have a proper entryway, create your own. Use a padded bench and hang some hooks for coats, or build simple entryway storage and organizer to keep clutter at bay.

REMOVE PERSONAL ITEMS

If you have a lot of family photos on the wall or several pieces of your child's artwork on the refrigerator door, you should take them down and store them out of sight. This will help buyers see the home as a clean slate they could make their own. It might be sad to take those personal items down but it will help you sell your home in the meantime.

UPGRADE LIGHTING

If your lamps and other light fixtures are outdated, consider replacing them with modern ones. Buyers don't want to feel like they're taking a step back in time with outdated fixtures. This is an easy fix that will help sell your home.

FIX PET ISSUES

Did Fido leave a stain on the living room carpet? Does the basement smell like a cat's litter box? Address these issues before potential buyers visit the home. Pet smells are serious turn-offs when trying to sell your home.

WASH THE EXTERIOR

If your house has siding, carefully use a pressure washer to clean the exterior. Also, make sure the windows are clean and the gutters are clear before you try to sell your home.

GET A HOME INSPECTION

Before trying to sell your home, hire a home inspector. While buyers usually have the home inspected, have an inspection prior to putting the home on the market. This will make you aware of any potential issues that may come up during the sale.

F I X F E N C I N G

A fence adds value to your property. If your wood or chain-link fence needs a little TLC, be sure to take care of any repairs before trying to sell your home.

R O O F R E P A I R S

Few things turn away buyers more quickly than a leaky roof, so address roof repairs before trying to sell your home. If your roof needs serious work, be ready to negotiate a lower price with buyers.

F I X C R A C K S

Fix any cracks in the driveway, walkway, or patio. And this will help increase your home's curb appeal and will surely help you sell your home.

T O U C H U P A N Y S C U F F M A R K S

Even if you're not doing a full-on repainting project, pay special attention to scrubbing and then touching up baseboards, walls, and doors to make the house sparkle and look cared-for.

C O N D U C T A S M E L L T E S T

Foul odors, even slight ones, can be a deal-breaker, and the problem is that you might not even notice them. Consider inviting an unbiased third party in to try to detect any pet smells or lingering odors from your kitchen. If the smells are pervasive, prepare to do some cleaning as many buyers are on to the seller's "masking techniques" such as candles or plug-ins.

B U Y F R E S H F L O W E R S

If the weather allows, plant flowers in pots, window boxes, or right in the ground to add color and pump up the curb appeal. Inside the house, fresh flowers in vases add color, life, and the feeling that you, as the home seller, are putting your best foot forward.

STAGING

your home

When a buyer walks through your house, how will they feel?

Buying a home is a very emotional process. People rely on gut feelings more often than logic. This is where staging comes in. For a few hundred dollars a professional stager can give you a full consultation on how best to position the existing furniture and what accessories can be bought and added to give it the “pop” it needs. Many For Sale by Owner’ home sellers want to save money, so if you opt-out of using a professional, pretend that you are having the governor and his family over for dinner. What would you do to make your home look as presentable as possible?

Would you go out and maybe buy a few flowers? Maybe you’d hide ‘that oversized chair’ that you’ve had just a few years too long. Another trick is to have someone over who doesn’t come often and ask them to be HONEST about what they like and what is a bit distracting. (For best results, find someone who can be honest!)

The staging of your home is crucial to make the entire marketing package of your home better, which happens to be what we talk about next.





Part *Two*

Pricing Your Home

If you want to sell your home by owner, you need to know how to price it correctly and fairly. That means finding a listing price that is neither too high nor too low for your market.