



*Guiding you in  
all of your real  
estate needs*

## Residential Selling Guide

Selling a property can be exciting, but there are a lot of logistics to work through in the process. That is why we are here to help you each step of the way.

### How to Prepare for Listing

- If you have a lot of furniture in a room, take the amount down to a minimum. This will help to make the rooms look more spacious. It is more ideal to still have furniture in a house when selling, as this will help buyers make a mental picture of their own furniture and arrangement in the rooms.
- Make sure there are clear pathways to walk through the house.
- Replace any burned out light bulbs. If there are different colored bulbs in the same fixture, replace them all with new bulbs of all the same color. If you have a lot of personal pictures, you will want to minimize how many there are throughout the house.
- Buyers will look in your closets, kitchen cabinets, and refrigerator to get a feel for the space. Focus on de-clutter of these areas.
- In general, try to be as organized as possible. Think less is more. Try to de-clutter as much as possible. By doing so, it allows Buyers to see themselves in their new living space.
- Keep few items out on your kitchen countertops.
- Wipe up the stove and clean out the inside.
- Ensure windows are clean.
- Clean the ceiling fans (an effective way to do this is to put a pillowcase over each blade to catch all of the dust).
- Straighten up a garage and/or shed.
- Clean and touch-up walls that need to be cleaned or touched up with paint.
- If the exterior doors, especially the front, need painting, touch them up or give them a full fresh coat as applicable.



## How to Prepare for Listing, continued...

- If you have a yard, put out fresh mulch and pull weeds. If you have stones around your landscape, line them up if they've gotten out of place. Also, ensure the bushes are trimmed.
- If possible, pressure wash the house, driveway, and sidewalks.
- If possible, edge the sidewalks before the listing.
- If you have an eclectic pet, remove it for a while. Reptiles and spiders can alarm some buyers.
- If in Jefferson County, replace your smoke detectors with new 10 year non-removable lithium ion battery smoke detectors. A common misunderstanding is that buyers pay their agent. Buyers do not pay commission; the commissions are paid by the seller. That means that you do not pay an agent to represent you as a buyer.

## What to do for showings

- If possible, turn on all of the lights and open any blinds/curtains in the house before the potential buyers come to see the property.
- Keep the temperature at a comfortable setting.
- Keep floors swept, including a garage.
- Don't leave dirty dishes in the sink or dirty cloths out in plain sight.
- Take out the trash to ensure no odor.
- If you have a pet, do your best to clean up after it while the house is on the market.
- Keep the grass cut. In fall or winter, keep the leaves cleaned up and snow removed from the sidewalk.
- As a precaution, either lock up in a safe or remove any valuables, personal information, and/or medicine.

## How to Prepare for Inspection

- The inspection is scheduled and paid for by the buyer. Most inspections occur during weekdays; however, there are some exceptions for weekend inspections.
- Make sure that the water and electricity are on. Do not shut off or transfer any services until the closing date.
- Clear a path to heating and air conditioning units and electrical panel.
- Make sure that access is available to the attic and basement or crawl space, as applicable.
- You will want to vacate the property during the inspection for various reasons. A typical inspection is around three hours.
- Be mentally prepared. The inspector's job is to find issues with your property. When you receive the report, know that there will be always be items on it. If there are repairs, they are completed prior to closing.

## Commissions

Commissions are paid at closing. Nothing is owed until the closing, and the amount is taken out of the proceeds from the sale.

## Seller Closing Costs

Sometimes in a negotiation, the buyer will request for the Seller to pay some or all of the Buyer's closing costs. Those closing costs are the costs associated with closing the Buyer's loan. Even if the Seller does not pay for any of the Buyer's closing costs, there are still a few fees for a Seller at closing. There is a county transfer tax, which is typically \$1 for every \$1,000 of contract price (e.g. \$200,000 would be \$200 in transfer tax). In addition, there is a fee from the closing attorney to do title work to close the transaction. These fees vary but expect around \$400-\$500 in addition to the transfer tax.

## Appraisal

An appraisal is a third-party assessment of the value of a property. An appraisal is required by a lender. It is an option for a cash buyer. An appraisal is typically ordered after repairs have been negotiated. An appraised value needs to be at the contract price or above. Once the appraisal report is back, the transaction heads toward closing.

## Closing

After the appraisal report is returned, the underwriting department at the lender will review the file to get final approval. A clear-to-close is issued, meaning that the loan is ready to close. Once a closing date has been confirmed, the utility companies can be contacted to transfer services out of your name. In addition if you have not moved to your new residence already, you will want to coordinate your mail to go to your new address, change your address for your credit cards, driver's license, new checks, and any emergency contact information.

For closing, you will need a form of identification (e.g. driver's license or ID card). You will need to bring any keys to the property and any garage door openers. Closing typically takes an hour, on average. You will receive your check or wired funds at closing.