

FIRST TIME



First Time Home Buyer Guide



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For Sale By Owner?

Here are some helpful tips.

First, take a look at my **Pre-Listing Check List** (provided on next page)

- Get professional marketing photos taken
- Use the photos for your listing AND to market your open house.

Holding an **Open House**. This can be useful in getting the word out about your home sale. I recommend doing this on a Sunday (most people are off work), and marketing it about 2 weeks out. Since this is not a standard open house, you will need to market it yourself.

- Use the photos to create and send out a flyer to personal contacts and local agents.
- Post the event on all your social media pages (again, use the marketing photos)
- Running a Facebook advertisement to all the homeowners in the area who are "likely to move" (it's possible to find this audience on Facebook) is another great way to get the message out.
- You can also follow this up with phone calls to all your neighbors inviting them to your home. (You can get a list of all the local homeowners from a list broker like InfoUSA.com.)

On the day of your open house, make sure you have plenty of yard signs and balloons to provide direction from the main roads. (some dollar stores sell helium balloons, or try party city)

Here is a list of some common legal forms you may need and want to familiarize yourself with:



- Buyer Pre-Qualification Letters
- Sales Contract
- Sales Addendum
- Useful information about real estate transactions (NVAR K1297)
- Lead Based Paint Disclosure (NVAR K1034)
- Appraisal Contingency documents (NVAR K1349)
- Financing Addendums (VA, FHA, Conventional)
- Escalation Addendum
- Home Inspection and Radon Testing Addendum (NVAR K1342)
- Home Inspection Contingency Removal Addendum (NVAR K1343)
- Notice Removing Financing Contingency (NVAR K1331)
- Purchasers Acknowledgment of Receipt of Condominium Disclosures (If applicable)
- Purchaser's Acknowledgment of Receipt of Property Owners' Association Disclosures (if applicable)
- Purchaser's Notice of Potential Adverse Consequences
- Sale Contract Addendum Lead-Based Paint testing
- Sale Contract Private Well/Septic Addendum (NVAR K1360) (if applicable)
- Understanding your rights and responsibilities (NVAR K136)
- Useful information about real estate transactions (NVAR K1297)
- VA - Disclosure Statement for Residential Property (NVAR K1366)
- Walk-through Inspection (NVAR K1210)

I recommend creating an account with an online contract signing service like www.DocuSign.com so you can send the contracts to your buyer online for a signature rather than dealing with hard copies.

When it comes to getting these filled out, the title company will guide you through the most important parts of the legal process but you might want to consider hiring a Real Estate lawyer, between the documentation needed for the mortgage, title transfer and other legal requirements, the paperwork for home sales is extensive.

Get comfortable with negotiating. Much of the negotiation comes during the home inspection process when the buyer may want unreasonable improvements to your home. Try not to get emotional about this process and at least try to make the improvements you feel are fair and reasonable. Feel free to contact me for vendor recommendations. 703.727.2165

Pre-Listing Check List

Homes that are thoroughly clean with great curb appeal and pleasing decor usually sell faster and for more money than homes that are cluttered and unkempt. In order to sell your home quickly and at the highest price, let's make it sparkle and shine! Below are some simple steps we've come up with to help.

Whether you're working with us or not, we recommend printing this out and using it as a basic guide to get your home ready. While budget is different for everyone, most of the items below won't break the bank.

First, let's put yourself in the buyers' shoes and look around your property. Let's start outside.

Exterior/Curb Appeal: This is the first thing they will see when they pull up to the home. How does your lawn look? A lawn that is well manicured and full gives a great first impression. Fill in bare spots, make sure to edge along driveways, walkways and garden beds. Make sure all leaves and weeds are removed.

How about the exterior of your home? Maybe a fresh coat of paint isn't in your budget or time-frame so let's make sure it's clean. Keep your front entryway super clean and free of cobwebs and debris. The front door is the first thing they will see up closely, give it a fresh coat of paint if you can. Power wash concrete patios and stain decks.

Keep decks swept and clean. (Make sure that your patio furniture is clean, otherwise let's just remove it.)

How about those gutters and the roof? A good gutter cleaning and having the roof swept off if needed won't hurt! Make sure those exterior lights are working!



Let's step inside now. How does it smell? You can place lightly scented diffusers or air fresheners around the home to freshen it up. Consider something neutral and clean.

Appearance. This is a big one, some people can see past clutter and personal belongings but let's try and clean it up as much as possible. De-clutter, de-clutter, de-clutter! Buyers want to see the space they are going to be living in. Pack away everything that you are not going to need for the next few months. Neatly store in boxes and out of the way if possible. (Buyers look at closet size too, so try to keep them organized and looking their best.)

Let's look at your blinds and curtains. Are they old and dusty? Can they be cleaned? If they are in bad condition, we recommend replacing or removing them altogether. Just make sure to patch and paint those holes, then let the buyer install blinds of their choice once they move in.

Apply fresh paint where needed. If a paint is needed throughout an entire room, we recommend a neutral color be applied. Ask us our for our color recommendations.

Flooring throughout the home should be clean. Make sure you have had the carpets professionally cleaned if not replaced. Mopped, vacuumed and swept floors help add to the overall clean appearance of the home.



Cleanliness. Even clean the unfinished areas of your home including the garage, utility rooms, water heater, furnace (don't forget to replace furnace filters as needed). Keep these areas free of cobwebs and debris. The fireplace should be clean and empty as well. How about those switch plates around the house? Light switches are high traffic areas that can sometimes be discolored or smudged. A good wipe down or replacing them all together is a quick and inexpensive way to take care of that. While we're looking at high traffic areas, go ahead and give those banisters and railings a good wipe down!

Lighting. Replace all burned out light bulbs. Great lighting is a very important element to prospective buyers! Don't forget the little guys; make sure any lights under cabinets are working along with any appliance bulbs. (These can be ordered online using the model number if needed). Keep some spare bulbs on hand as well. If you can afford to update older light fixtures around the home, this would be a good idea. If you're trying to save money; purchase them yourself and just pay to have them installed.

Kitchen and bathrooms. Let's make these surface areas sparkle and shine! How about your faucets, are they clean? Any little leaks? If so, let's get cleaned up and repaired.

Appliances, if they aren't new, make sure they've had a good cleaning. Thoroughly clean mirrors, glass, chrome and porcelain surfaces.

Caulking is inexpensive and can make a big difference, especially in bathrooms. Make sure your grout is clean and re-caulk around the tub, shower and backsplashes as needed. This will give it a nice clean look.



Open the room. The more usable counter space you show, the more buyers will notice. Try to store all unused personal items neatly away.

Are your cabinets outdated? Give them a good wipe down and consider updating the hardware. Pull knobs and handles can be found at hardware stores or ordered online. (Make sure you measure your handles though, those come in different sizes)

Good luck!