

# The Home Selling Process Getting Started

Millions of homes are sold each year and, while each transaction is different, most owners want the same thing: the best possible deal with the least amount of aggravation or hassle. Selling a home is not as easy as it was five or ten years ago. Today's real estate world requires experience and training in fields such as real estate marketing, financing, negotiating and closing.

## Contact a REALTOR®

You may be tempted to face this task on your own, but enlisting the help of a REALTOR® can help you at every stage, from setting a price to marketing the property to closing the sale.

## Prepare Your House to Sell

Your property will be competing against others in the area, so you will want to make sure that it is in the best shape possible. Take inventory on the age of some of your big items such as your roof, HVAC system, water heater, and gutters. A general idea of average life span for these items provided by the National Association of Home Builders is: 15 to 30 years for wood shingle and shake roof, 15 years for a central air-conditioning unit, 14 years for an electric water heater, and 30 years for gutters. Go through each room in your home and look for signs of damage that might bring down its value, such as wood rot, water stains on the ceilings or near windows, leaks under sinks or around toilets, or bulges or discoloration of carpet or hardwood floors. Look at the property through the eyes of a prospective buyer and determine what needs to be cleaned, painted, repaired and thrown out. Your REALTOR® will be able to help you determine what needs to be done in order for your home to be ready to sell.

## Setting the Price

Your REALTOR® will be able to provide you with up-to-date information on your local marketplace, and the terms and conditions of competing properties.

## Marketing and Showing Your Property

This is another area where having the expertise of a REALTOR® is beneficial. They will market your property to the public as well as to other real estate agents through several marketing networks, open houses, and so on. Not only do they know where and when to advertise, but also have contacts from previous clients, referrals, friends, and family that could produce a buyer.

## Negotiating, Monitoring, and Closing

When an offer comes in, your REALTOR® can help you objectively evaluate the proposal and write a legally binding, win-win agreement. After the initial sales agreement, your real estate agent will help you resolve any questions that may arise, as well as the process of appraisals, inspections, financing, and closing.