



REALTOR® | 757.544.9619

# For Sale BY OWNER

PREPARATION

PRICING

MARKETING

CLOSING

We'll examine what FSBO includes, outline the documentation you'll need to submit. WE'LL PROVIDE advice on how to make the process as easy and potentially profitable as possible in this full guide to selling your home by owner.



# D E Davy Team

**YOUR LOCAL REAL ESTATE EXPERTS**

Meet David, or Davy, a dedicated realtor, Marine veteran, and the team leader of the D E Davy Team. With a mission to guide and coach clients through the process of buying, selling, and investing in real estate, Davy combines his leadership experience and passion for helping others achieve their goals. When he's not working, Davy enjoys dancing Bachata and Salsa on weekends and appreciating the simple pleasures of life.

## Why Choose Our Team?

The D E Davy Team is built on integrity, expertise, and a deep commitment to putting our clients' needs first. Whether you're buying, selling, or investing, each team member brings a unique skill set, from strategic guidance to personalized care. With diverse backgrounds, including military experience, project management, and passion for real estate, we offer unparalleled service and a seamless experience every step of the way. Choose us for our dedication to your success and a team that truly cares about you and your future.

## LET'S CONNECT

757.544.9619

DE DAVY TEAM



D E DAVY REALTY



DEDAVYTEAM@GMAIL.COM

# *questions* GUIDING

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
- 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 on the next page.

---

# 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 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.

# PREPARING *your home*

## MAKE REPAIRS

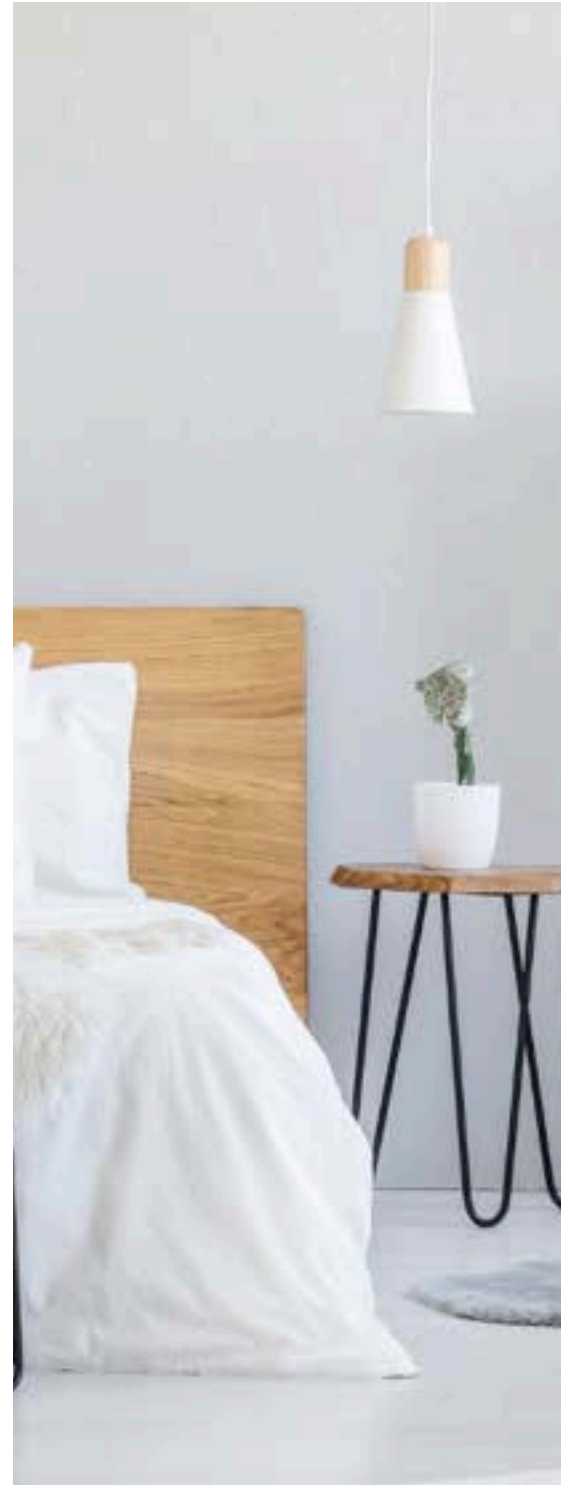
Now is the time to fix all of those nagging things that you just lived with. Inside the house, look for stained ceilings, missing tile, broken windows, doors, heavily scratched floors, and other signs of neglect. Outside, look for broken or missing shingles, patio pavers, and tuckpointing. If you have 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.

## FINISH PROJECTS

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.

## CREATE CURB APPEAL

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

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 between 100-200 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.



# 02

## The process of pricing.

*In this section, we will learn how to accurately price your home and all things to consider.*



The pricing of your home is the most important part of the entire process. A house that is priced too high will sit on the market for a long time. You'll lose money in carrying costs such as utility bills and property taxes while waiting for it to sell. Even worse, when buyers see a home sitting on the market too long, they assume something's wrong with it. You may have a hard time regaining foot traffic even if you cut the price.

On the flip side, FSBOs can also be prone to underpricing. Recent studies show that homes sold by owner typically sell for about 6% less than those listed with licensed real estate agents — meaning that these sellers came out at a loss even after saving on agent fees. This price difference isn't because FSBO homes are inherently worth less. It's because many sellers just don't price their homes high enough.

Remember, it's just basic economics. Your home will only sell for the price a buyer is willing to pay, no higher. When you set the price for your home, it must be based on similar or comparable homes sold (comps) in your real estate market. Depending on how soon you want it sold, you can price at market value or below market value.

Licensed real estate agents have the training and experience to market your home at the right price to the right buyers.

## Analysis

To do the research and analysis for pricing, you can use websites like [zillow.com](https://www.zillow.com) and filter results to be like your property and to see only sold properties. From there you can compare the similar properties that have sold, and adjust the price based on your added features or lack thereof. This isn't an exact science, and it works best in neighborhoods where owners buy and sell more often, and in homes that are similar in style and size to other nearby homes. If you have a unique home in a unique location (like a custom waterfront home for example), it becomes more difficult to price, but a proper analysis is still the key.



Consider:

- Does your house have the same number of bedrooms and bathrooms?
- Do you have less or more square footage?
- Has your house had any major updates or renovations in recent years?
- Is your home in a better or worse school district?

Honestly answering these questions will give you an idea of what you should charge.

# CMA Vs Appraisal

## *What's the Difference?*

CMA's and appraisals are both professional estimates of a home's value, but they fulfill very different functions in the home selling process.

A licensed real estate agent performs a CMA to recommend the best price at which a homeowner should list their property. To prepare a CMA, the agent takes into account both active and closed sales (and sometimes even pending and expired listings, too) for a holistic picture of the local market.

Usually, realtors perform CMA's free of charge.

On the other hand, an appraisal is typically conducted by a licensed appraiser to help a bank determine how much to lend for a mortgage. It's concerned mostly with the condition of the property and the final prices for sold homes in the area.

Banks won't lend a mortgage for more than the appraised amount. This can cause your sale to fall through unless you adjust your price accordingly or the buyer agrees to cover the difference out of pocket.

Licensed and/or certified appraisers carry out appraisals, and they're not free. Expect to pay \$250-\$450 for this service.





# PLACES TO RESEARCH *your homes value*

## 01.

### SOLD LISTINGS

Compare the original list prices of the homes to the final sales prices to determine any price reductions. Compare the final list prices to actual sold prices to determine ratios. Ideally, compare to at least three properties that sold at market value. Your county appraiser should have a list of comps to view.

## 02.

### PENDING LISTINGS

The ultimate sales prices of homes that haven't sold yet are obviously unknown until the transactions close. But that doesn't stop you from calling the listing agents and asking them to tell you how much a property is selling for.

Again, make note of the days on the market. That can have a direct bearing on how long it will take before you see an offer.

## 03.

### ACTIVE LISTINGS

Tour these active-listing homes so you can see what buyers will see when they visit. Make note of what you like and dislike about the properties, as well as the general feeling you got when entering the homes.

These properties are your competition. Ask yourself why a buyer would or would not prefer your home over any others, then adjust your price accordingly.

## S Q U A R E - F O O T C O S T C O M P A R I S O N S

The buyer's lender will order an appraisal after you receive an offer, so you'll want to compare homes with similar square footage to come as close to the eventual appraised value as possible. Appraisers don't like to deviate more 25%, and they prefer to stay within 10% of net-square-footage computations. Comparable homes are those that are 1,800 to 2,200 square feet if your home is 2,000 square feet.

Average square-foot cost doesn't mean that you can simply multiply your square footage by that number, at least not unless your home is average-sized.

# The Value of Photography

**S** When marketing any home for sale, the very first initial impression of a home for buyers is ALWAYS the photography. Trust me on this, you do NOT want to breeze over this part of your marketing package.

For best results, a professional photographer is needed for bright, crisp, and well-angled photos that feature the house well. If you would rather not hire a professional, then take the photos with the best camera available with the widest angle lens available.

Open all the windows, turn on all the lights (even the little lamps), and make the home as bright as possible. If there is a time of day that you get more natural light, take the pictures at that time. Don't take photos when it's dark or cloudy.

When taking photos, don't be creative with portrait orientation photos, stick with landscape photos that match more closely to what your eyes see. Get Wide! When taking photos, back up as far back as you can in order to get the widest angle possible. This makes the room appear at least as large as they do in person. The closer you zoom in, the smaller the room appears.

The most important photo is the front exterior of the home. It's vital that this photo is taken excellently. The best times to take this specific photo are early morning or late afternoon. Choose a time when the sun is shining on the front of the home as opposed to having the sun behind the house, causing unwanted shadows.

# 05

## *Yard* Signs

### DON'T LOOK LIKE A DISCOUNT HOUSE

Directional signs to your home could help get a few more people to it who are just browsing around neighborhoods. Use the biggest ones your community allows, and make sure you have your phone number on it too!

A professionally branded “for sale” sign can bring up the perceived value of the house much better than a store-bought sign. Think about sneakers that have the Nike brand on it compared to a generic brand, even if they are the same shoe, which is more desirable? It works similarly when selling a home. People expect higher valued homes to be branded better.



# PRIVATE SHOWINGS

# OPEN HOUSES

Before you show your home, make sure you create an inviting atmosphere. Turn on all of the lights, keep all of the interior doors open, and open blinds or curtains. Have your children at a neighbor's house, friend's house or with family so they are not distracting the buyers. Also, make sure pets are secure and not creating a nuisance with excessive noise. Some people are afraid of dogs and allergic to cats. Keep this in mind when showing your home. Cleanliness is of utmost importance and so is the lack of clutter. The smell of your home can be very important too. Make sure litter boxes are clean and the trash has been taken out. Get some potpourri or a nice smelling candle. Make sure it is not too strong and it is a light and pleasant scent. The smell of fresh baked bread or cookies can definitely help too.



# DO'S & DON'TS

## *of showing your home*

### DO

---

Stop talking and let them  
look at the property

Let your home sell itself

Be friendly

Have printed home  
information ready

Keep emotion out of the  
sale of your home

Remain physically in the  
background

Prequalify buyers before  
you spend time showing  
your home

### DON'T

---

Follow them around  
talking

Try to sell the features of  
the home

Give too much  
information about  
yourself

Discuss price other than  
the asking price

Be defensive about your  
home

Waste your time  
entertaining buyers who  
could never afford your  
home





# *The* CONTRACT *Guide*

To avoid wasting valuable marketing time, only negotiate price and terms with someone who can provide you with a pre-qualification letter. Most lenders can pre-qualify someone in a few hours. If the potential buyer is serious, they will be able to get this to you. If you are dealing with a cash buyer, they should be able to provide you with proof of funds such as a letter from their bank or bank statement.

The conflict between the buying and selling sides is quite common in a real estate transaction especially if you decide not to use an agent. The buyer obviously wants the lowest price possible and you obviously want the highest price possible for your home. The information listed below should help reduce the amount of possible conflict you may experience during the sale of your home.

# NEGOTIATING

## *Terms and Price*

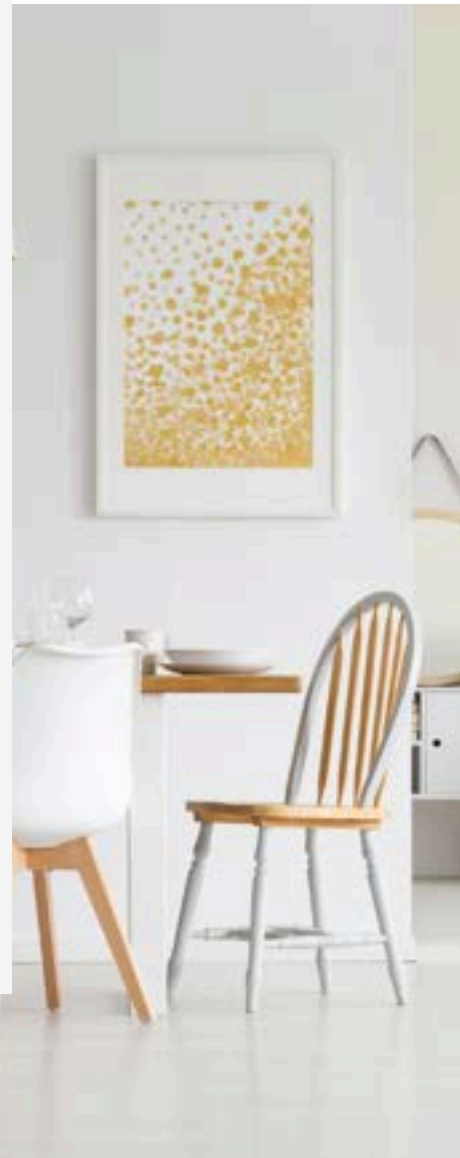
Once you find a potential buyer, get the help of an experienced third-party negotiator to negotiate the price and terms of the sale. An attorney or Realtor can save you thousands of dollars and lots of stress in dealing with unnecessary conflict.

If you choose to handle the negotiations on your own, start with features of your home that buyer seemed interested in and build on that. The buyer will start with the negative parts of the house and build on that with the hopes of reducing the price more than necessary. Do not get offended. Be patient, objective, and stay calm.

Create a temporary email address to conduct all communications regarding the deal. You don't want them to have your personal email in case the deal falls apart and they decide to be belligerent.

Everything agreed upon should be put in writing, even the little, insignificant details.

Oftentimes, the first offer is the best offer. The longer a house is on the market, the lower the offers become. Do not jump at the first offer but still take it very seriously.



# NEGOTIATING

## *Terms and Price*

Take your time in your decision-making process but not too much time. If you leave the buyer hanging too long, they will move on. If you do not make a decision and accept the offer or provide a counteroffer, the buyer can walk.

Contact a local title company to get title insurance. Without title insurance, the sale of the property will not close. Not sure where to start? Contact me for a referral. I have a few title companies I use for my clients.

Have the contract and any addendums written by an attorney or real estate professional. A little mistake could cost you everything.

Don't put all of your eggs in one basket. Keep a list of other potential buyers in case the deal falls apart.

Up to 48 hours before you close, perform a walkthrough of the property with the buyer. Exchange keys at the closing.



# CONTRACT

## *Inspections*

The signed contract will allow the buyer to inspect the property thoroughly. The buyers will normally use inspection companies that will go through the entire house from top to bottom looking for anything needing repairs or replaced—and unless your house is brand new, they will find things, trust me! If there are major repairs, you'll need to have those fixed and other findings may cause the buyer to want to renegotiate the price or cancel the sale altogether.

Inspections typically completed are:

- Septic – Is it clogged? Does the size match the number of rooms?
- Well, Water Test – Is it free and clear of bacteria, heavy metals, and other contaminants?
- Termite Inspection
- Full Home Inspection
- Radon Inspection
- Land Survey

Remember, any and all repairs are negotiable but issues with the property are normally taken care of by the seller (which is you).



# CLOSING

## *information*

### Expected Costs

- *Title insurance*
- *Escrow or attorney's fee*
- *Transfer tax*
- *Survey costs*
- *Home warranty fee*
- *Mortgage payoff*
- *Outstanding utility bills*
- *Recording fee*
- *Survey costs*
- *Inspection costs*
- *Buyer's agent commission*

During the closing, you will meet with your buyer and other necessary parties, such as your attorney, to transfer the ownership of your property. Sometimes closing is also referred to as a settlement. All paperwork is signed, agreements completed and details finalized at the closing. Normally, the whole transaction takes about an hour.

Exactly where and how your closing will take place simply depends on the customs used where you live. Quite often, the closing takes place at the closing agent's office. Make sure to stay in touch with this agent to make 100% certain that your sell doesn't get off track.

There shouldn't be any surprises at the closing. All expected costs should already have been covered and put into writing between you and the buyer. Following, you will find a list of items that are commonly paid for by sellers at closing, although this is not set in stone.



# Ready to Hire *a professional?*

---

While doing the work yourself can save you the significant commission rates many real estate agents command, for many, flying solo may not be the way to go--and could end up being more costly than a realtor's commission in the long run. Buying or selling a home is a major financial (and emotional) undertaking.

## 1. Better Access/More Convenience

A real estate agent's full-time job is to act as a liaison between buyers and sellers. This means that he or she will have easy access to all other properties listed by other agents. Both the buyer's and seller's agents work full time as real estate agents and they know what needs to be done to get a deal together.

## 2. Negotiating Is Tricky Business

Many people don't like the idea of doing a real estate deal through an agent and feel that direct negotiation between buyers and sellers is more transparent and allows the parties to better look after their own best interests. This is probably true--assuming that both the buyer and seller in a given transaction are reasonable people who are able to get along. Unfortunately, this isn't always an easy relationship.

## 3. Contracts Can Be Hard To Handle

If you decide to buy or sell a home, the offer to purchase contract is there to protect you and ensure that you are able to back out of the deal if certain conditions aren't met.