



The Informed Home Seller's Guide



8 Steps to Becoming an Informed Seller

Planning to sell? If you're like most home owners, you're struggling with a few questions. After all, you're about to sell the single biggest asset you've ever bought.

You might have questions like, *What's my home worth? Should I use an agent or go it alone? What can I do to make my home as attractive as possible?*

And of course, the big one: ***How do I get the most for my home?***

The best way to start answering those questions is to be informed.

If I've done my job right, then this guide should:

- a) Give you answers to many of those questions and
- b) Make you feel a lot more confident about the whole process.

And if you still need more information? **My job is to make things easier – just ask.** That's what I'm here for. You can learn more about me and my services at the end of the guide.

Welcome aboard,

Elizabeth Robertson

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8 Steps to Selling Your Home

Steps

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STEP **01** | **Choosing the Best Agent for the Job**

Most sellers use a real estate agent. You certainly don't have to, but there are good reasons why most people still do:

1. Pricing is a real art.

The biggest factor in determining how quickly your home sells is the price, and deciding that price is trickier than it seems. It takes experience and even 1% more for your home can mean thousands to your bottom line.

2. Negotiating is hard.

Not just hard to do, but it can feel uncomfortable. If you want someone to negotiate fearlessly on your behalf, you need an agent.

3. Marketing is more than MLS.

To get the most for your home, you need as many buyers interested as possible. According to REALTOR.com, 82% of real estate sales are the result of agent contacts.

4. Showings and paperwork are a pain.

There's more to the legal side of a home sale than you might think, and showing your own home is not only awkward, it can really complicate your schedule.

An agent takes away the burden of all these things, and works to get your home sold for the best price in the fastest time. After all – you've got a life to live!



STEP 02 | Price Right to Profit More

Setting the price for your home is challenging. Too low, and you leave money on the table. Too high, and you scare away buyers to other properties. To complicate all this, your home is an emotional asset—it's hard to see it objectively.

Pricing is something agents spend their careers refining and mastering. They combine intimate local and national market knowledge, an exhaustive study of similar homes for sale, and an analysis of past sales to come up with the optimal list price. And then they combine that with your unique needs to pick a price that fits you.

It's no easy task, but it's a critical one. Pricing your home right the first time results in more exposure, more showings, more offers, and ultimately, the highest price for your home.

If you want to get as much for your home as possible within a reasonable time frame, you need to get the price right.

First, it is important to understand that only the market can determine the ultimate value of your home. That said, choosing the optimal list price is essential to maximizing your home's value. If you price too low, you risk not getting as much as you can for your property, but price too high and you risk losing potential buyers who may think your property is out of their price range and you help your competition sell faster.

Pricing your home right the first time results in:

- ✓ **More exposure**
- ✓ **More showings**
- ✓ **More offers**
- ✓ **BEST price**



STEP 03 | Prepare to Amaze

After price, the condition of your home is the single biggest factor determining how fast—and for how much—your home sells.

REALTORS® repeatedly find that people cannot visualize the potential of a home. They have to see it. That means that *how your home shows now is how people see themselves in it*. They can't see past the chips, leaks, clutter and stains—in fact, they tend to focus even more on those things. Luckily, you can dramatically improve how your home sells with few quick steps:

Clean – Inside and out. It matters. A lot.

De-clutter – Give it away, throw it away or store it away, but get it out of your house.

Make minor repairs – Chipped paint, cracked tiles, squeaky hinges, leaky faucets – Fix everything you can.

Consider staging – According to the National Association of REALTORS®, staged homes sell 49% faster, and for 7-11% more money.

Clean again – Really. It's that important.

Sound overwhelming? You don't need to do it overnight. Your agent can point you to someone who can help, or you can break it down into just one small task a day. Think of it this way: ***everything you remove from the house, clean or repair puts money in your pocket. You're getting paid to do it!***



STEP 04 | Maximize Exposure to Buyers

Once you've found a price for your home and put it in showroom condition, there's one more critical piece of the puzzle before buyers begin flocking in to see your masterpiece: their attention.

Getting the word out about your home matters for two critical reasons. First, buyers can't be interested if they don't know your home exists. But more importantly, the more buyers you have interested in your home, the higher the potential sale price, and the faster the sale.

Marketing your home to the biggest audience possible takes more than a sign on the front lawn. The best and fastest home sales use a combination of many of the following:

MLS Listing

The largest online database of available real estate.

Video Tour

A behind-the-scenes, online look at your home and neighbourhood.

24-Hour Online Ads

On major online sites from Craigslist to Kijji.

Property Website

Your home's very own website with all the info a buyer needs. Online Exposure on nationally ranked real estate websites such as century21.ca

Proactive Prospecting

Reaching out directly to people who might be interested.

Facebook Ads

Targeted Facebook ads to those most likely to purchase a home like yours.

Property Brochures

Great photos, vibrant descriptions in professional take away form.

Print Marketing

Print ads, just listed cards and more.



STEP 05 | Show it Off!

As interest in your home rises, so will interest in seeing the real thing. It's time to show off your masterpiece to prospective buyers. A REALTOR® will take care of almost all of the details, but here are a few tips to maximize the showing experience.

You should leave.

Buyers want to be able to look around and discuss your home candidly. They won't be comfortable if you're there.

Is it inviting?

In addition to the usual tidying, make sure your home is inviting. Turn up/down the temperature. Leave the lights on. Open the blinds where appropriate. Leave inside doors open or slightly ajar.

Any Information is good information.

Set additional information that's helpful—property brochures, floor plans and contact information.

Flexibility is key.

Be as flexible as you can – try to accommodate the buyer's schedule.



STEP 06 | Negotiate Like a Master

Now this is where things get exciting. You've got an offer or maybe two or three at once! In most cases, your home's list price won't be the selling price. When it comes to settling on that final magic number, you're going to be negotiating. That's something your REALTOR® is an expert at, but here are some key strategies for owners:

It's a conversation. *Don't be offended by low offers and conditions. No one is forcing you to accept them.* Think of it as a starting point to have a conversation.

Price isn't the only thing. You can negotiate on price, offer conditions, assets in the home. Don't get stuck on one thing. Remember, even 1% more for your home can mean thousands to your bottom line.

And once you agree, the buyer provides a deposit cheque to be held in trust until the conditions are met. The conditions usually have a set time for removal and usually include things like an inspection and financing. Once the conditions are met, the buyer signs a waiver and the deal is firm. If you've completed all these steps, then you are a successful home seller.

Congratulations!

Momentum matters. Just the act of moving a deal forward helps make the deal happen.



STEP 07 | Calculating Your Net Proceeds

The cheque is in! How much do you get to keep? There are a number of closing costs to consider.

Legal Fees. Lawyer's fees vary, but often have structured fees for the purchase and sale of homes posted on their websites. Sellers pay in the area of \$1000.00 for a lawyer to look after the legal details necessary to close their home.

Mortgage Fees. Check with your mortgage lender to determine if any costs will occur when transferring or releasing your mortgage. There is sometimes what is referred to as a discharge fee to remove the mortgage from title that can range from \$1000 to \$2500.

Disbursements. These fees cover additional legal expenses such as travel, copies, couriers, registration fees and preparing document transfers. Disbursements can range upwards of \$500, but can sometimes be built into your legal fees.

Adjustments. It's difficult for a home seller to calculate exactly how much money is owed to which utilities on closing day. Your lawyer will ensure that any overpayments or deficiencies on rents, mortgage interest, property tax and utility charges will be corrected, and the buyer and seller will be credited or charged accordingly.

Moving Costs. Moving costs vary based on location and the amount of possessions being moved. If you're moving yourself, you should factor gas, rental vehicles and moving supplies.

To estimate your net proceeds, see the worksheet at the end.



STEP 08 | Book a Meeting

Feeling more informed? I hope so! There's a lot to selling a home. If, after reading this, you feel like you want some help, I'd be happy to speak with you. I'll provide you with a complimentary market evaluation of your home and answer any other questions you have.

I've added some worksheets and other reference material after this page. I think you'll find it helpful for becoming even more informed and getting organized to get the most for your home!

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Robertson

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About Me!



Elizabeth Robertson

Sales Representative | Century 21 Leading Edge Realty Inc.

After graduating from Brock University with a Bachelor of Tourism Studies, Elizabeth began working on cruise ships to fulfill her passion for traveling and meeting people from around the world. She returned home when she landed a position at Tourism Toronto where she became an expert on the city. After purchasing her first home at the age of 26 and utilizing her love and knowledge of Toronto and the GTA, Elizabeth decided to pursue a career in Real Estate. Within a short time, Elizabeth became an award recipient and has continued to build solid relationships and execute consistent positive results leaving her clients happy and confident to refer her services to friends and family. She ranks in the top 5% of all agents in the Toronto Real Estate Board.

To her clients, Elizabeth is a trusted real estate advisor before, during and after every transaction. To her peers, Elizabeth is highly regarded as an integrity-powered professional and a firm negotiator. Elizabeth prides herself on educating her clients about the real estate market, negotiating the best possible price and terms for their sale or purchase of a home, and creating a positive and memorable real estate experience for each and every client.

A Few Words From our Sellers

Elizabeth is the obvious choice!

"Elizabeth is a true professional! She sold my condo at a terrible time of year to be selling and she was great through the whole process. She always kept me updated, was flexible and willing to help with everything, and most importantly discuss all decisions with you. We live in different cities so this made the co-ordination complicated but she was so willing to take everything on that I never even had to travel. If you want a pro who you know will get things done fast and do it properly, then Elizabeth is the obvious choice."

Dinko Harbinja | 212 - 51 Saddlecreek Dr

You will NOT be disappointed!

To any of my GTA/Durham friends looking to buy/sell a home....I sold this beauty last week for \$850k - FAR beyond my expectations and over \$100k over asking. If you are looking for a real estate agent, I would HIGHLY recommend Elizabeth Robertson. She was absolutely incredible from start to finish. She gave me perfect advice on everything from pricing, staging, bully offers, you name it - and all of her advice turned out to be right. Most importantly, I never felt pressured for a second to do anything i was uncomfortable with. She also rocked every step of the process for me while I was across the country (and not even in the country for offer date). Overall, I couldn't have asked for a better realtor - and I would encourage anyone to give her a shout if you are in the market, you will NOT be disappointed!"

Lindsay Donovan | 5 Dunstable Dr.

We highly recommend Elizabeth!

"When my husband and I decided to seriously start looking for a new home, Elizabeth was highly recommended by one of our family members. She listened to our concerns involving selling our old place, as well as our wish list for our new home. Elizabeth was always available to chat when we needed clarification about the process, and she always took the time to walk us through the paper work when signing an offer to ensure that we felt comfortable and confident with our decision. When looking at houses, Elizabeth would always provide insight on little things she would notice to help us with making a decision on whether or not to put an offer in on a home. Overall, Elizabeth is very knowledgeable, personable and committed to helping her clients find exactly what they're looking for. She really made us feel like family throughout the whole process, and we were so happy that we chose her as our realtor. If you're in the market for a new home, we highly recommend Elizabeth!"

Danielle and Tavier Gallardo | 19 Gentian Dr.

Describe 10 things you love most about your home or neighbourhood.

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
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7	
8	
9	
10	

Calculating Net Proceeds

Estimated Selling Price	\$
Less:	\$
Mortgage Balance:	\$
Mortgage Penalty: <small>(If Applicable)</small>	\$
Interest Per Diem: <small>(Interest from last payment to date of closing)</small>	\$
Property Tax / Utilities Adjustments:	\$
Real Estate Commission With HST:	\$
Moving Costs:	\$
Other:	\$
Estimated Net Proceeds of Sale	\$



Our Proven Multi-Media Marketing System

MLS (Multiple Listing Service)

MLS is the largest online database of available real estate, and it's where the majority of people begin their search. This website is accessible by over 39,000 real estate agents in the GTA, each with (on average) four clients potentially looking for a place just like yours. MLS listings contain complete and detailed information about the property and full colour images.

Website Marketing | 123AnyStreet.com

Your property will be featured prominently on its own personal website URL and featured on the nationally ranked website, yourwebsite.com, along with several other prominent real estate sites that combined garner over 300,000 hits per month. Our online marketing strategy gives your listing the best possible exposure to the most potential buyers worldwide.

Proactive Prospecting

There are only two ways to find a buyer. You can wait for them to find you, or you can proactively go out and find them! We do both, and that means far more potential buyers for you and your home.

Viewing Feedback

You will receive feedback directly to your e-mail inbox from all agents who take their clients through your property. We analyze all feedback and continually tweak your listing for maximum appeal.



Video Tours

In a sea of competitive listings, video-tours give potential buyers a behind-the-scenes look at your neighbourhood and home without having to leave their couch. Your custom video tour will be uploaded to its own website, and to YouTube, where hundreds of potential buyers have viewing access 24/7. This is an invaluable tool for today's tech savvy, educated consumer.

Property Brochures

Breathtaking photos and vibrant descriptions make up your customized home brochure, designed as a memorable take-away for visiting buyers and their agents. These professionally designed brochures leave a lasting impression and often lead to repeat viewings.

24-Hour Online Ads

Your property details and images are immediately uploaded to all the major advertising sites, such as Craigslist and Kijiji. Rest assured, your home is visible wherever buyers are looking.

Print Marketing

In most cases, we distribute 'Just Listed' cards in your area to let your neighbours know that your property is for sale. It's just one more way we widen the net to get your property the best possible exposure. Who knows who might end up buying your home?

Complimentary Home Staging Consultation

Studies suggest staged homes sell faster and attract more money, in a changing marketplace, a staged home can make the difference between selling your home or not. Staging can be as simple as removing some clutter or as detailed as redesigning or refurbishing rooms. The choice is yours and our home-staging professionals will provide you with a complimentary recommendation list that will create maximum buyer appeal for your home.

Social Media Campaigning

We actively maintain a blog, two Facebook pages, Twitter, Pinterest and LinkedIn. Check us out. Your home will be everywhere!



Checklist: Preparing to List Your Home

In preparation for listing your home, you will need to gather up a few things:

- ☐ A copy of your survey
- ☐ Your most recent annual property tax assessment
- ☐ The average cost of utilities (electricity, hydro, water)
- ☐ The age of your home
- ☐ Details of recent improvements or renovations
- ☐ A list of items you would like to exclude from the sale
- ☐ Pictures of seasonal features (i.e. gardens in bloom)
- ☐ A list of any easements or right-of-ways
- ☐ Receipts and warranties for recent home improvements
- ☐ “10 Best Features of Your Home” Worksheet
- ☐ Other relevant information (any upgrades, copy of floor plans, builder plans and/or model name)

For condominium owners:

- ☐ Maintenance fees and a list of maintenance/fee inclusions
- ☐ Parking and locker numbers
- ☐ Pass key to the building
- ☐ Status Certificate (if available)
- ☐ A list of by-laws and restrictions