



Leah REICHELT
 Results you'll love, Integrity you'll admire

Seller Guidebook

Information for Home Sellers



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So you're thinking about (or already have decided to) sell your home – how exciting!

When it comes to selling, most people know that hiring a professional Realtor is the best way to get the process started. But did you know there are other things you can do to ensure your home sells quickly and for top dollar?

This seller's guide offers tips and ideas to help you, the savvy homeowner, do everything you can to get what your home is worth. Whether you're a first-time or seasoned seller, the following information will give you an inside edge on how to sell your home quickly and get what it's really worth!

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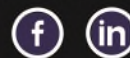


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Step 1: Pricing



How to price your home for the market

Be it a used car, an old turntable or the family home, we would all like to get the most we can get from a sale. Of course, if you set the price wrong on your record player you'll likely only miss out on a few dollars. Pricing your home is crucial...

There are some key ways to ensure you receive the maximum value the market will pay for your home. Remember, pricing is about knowledge and strategy. If the price is right, people will buy. Here's how to find that magical "right price":

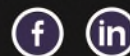


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1. Take the temperature of the general market and then think local

In a seller's market, well-priced desirable homes will get multiple offers, even overbids – so don't feel pressured to price at the top of the range. A buyer's market presents a few more challenges: too high a price can turn away initial interest, taking away the natural curiosity and energy that occurs during the first few weeks of a listing. You'll need to determine where the market is at.

It's pretty easy to take the pulse of the current market by looking at local real estate listings, either online, in your local real estate publication or even by just keeping your eyes open for sale signs. But to really understand what's happening, you need to think local – within the radius of a few neighbourhoods local. For that, it's a good idea to talk to a professional real estate agent. A local Realtor truly has the inside scoop. Not only do we know the history of your area, we have an understanding of where things are at presently and where they're likely headed.

2. Comparative Market Analysis (CMA) is key to pricing

A good Realtor will prepare a comparative market analysis (CMA). I always offer clients a free CMA, which gives up-to-date information on specific types of homes sold in a specific market within the last six to nine months. The CMA includes the price each home sold for, their condition and amenities. This information helps to determine the list price of a property.



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3. Have your Realtor conduct an in-home evaluation

Online price evaluations are convenient, but when you're serious about listing more information is needed. A home visit along with a CMA are necessary to come up with a list price. A Realtor not only has the experience and know-how, he or she comes to your home with no preconceptions or emotional attachment.

Typically, you need to be prepared to walk through the home answering some questions and providing a little history, but it's neither time-consuming nor onerous. This can go a long way towards determining the true value of your home.

4. Negotiate wisely

When you're thinking about your home's sale price, don't forget to consider other parts of the deal. Things like occupancy date, inspections, closing costs and even furniture, appliances and fixtures can all come into the mix.

Again, with these items, consulting an agent is key. Your Realtor will know how to use that information and incorporate it into the pricing decision.

Like so many things in life, when it comes to pricing your home you only have one chance to make a first impression. Do your homework and get advice from the right people.



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Step 2: Renovations



Add value to your home

Investing in your home is a good thing, deciding where to put your time and money requires careful consideration. If you know you're going to be listing soon, you want to make sure the investments made now will actually translate into a higher sale price down the road. After all, there's not much point in sprucing up a home that's already the nicest in the neighbourhood and at the top end of its price range.



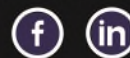
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With that in mind, here's a list of renovations that will give you the best return – along with some things to avoid.

Kitchen renovations RULE

Regardless of how much you have to spend, investing in the kitchen is always at the top of the list. The kitchen is the hub of any home, and buyers always make a beeline to it during any showing. If you have the opportunity, focus on layout rather than cosmetics. A great backsplash may have appeal, but if the sink is too far from the dishwasher or there's no counter space near the stove, "pretty" should take a back seat to "practical."

Bathrooms are number two

Like the kitchen, the main bathroom sees a lot of activity. Assuming everything is in good working order, these renovations can be skin deep. Keep it clean and fresh looking, reduce any clutter and brighten things up. New paint (no wallpaper!), a nice mirror and up-to-date fixtures can really make a difference.

Finish the basement

Add functional square footage by making this space more livable.



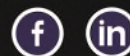
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Real wood flooring

Living on the West Coast, we love our hardwoods – and if they're local, so much the better. Laminate and carpet have their places in terms of function and price, but nothing has the same “wow” factor as real wood. It's pricey, but it pays off in the end.

Home “improvement” projects to avoid

Thinking about a pool? Don't! Or at least make it above ground. The work and hazards involved turn off a lot of buyers. Also, don't go crazy with landscaping. Buyers want to see a tidy yard, but it doesn't need to have a water feature and/or gazebo. And be careful of high-end upgrades. Your theatre room, exercise room or recording studio may appeal to some buyers, but most aren't prepared to pay extra for them.

When it comes to bang for your buck home improvement, there are plenty of things to consider. Think about your home's age and style, the current market and what you have to spend. And don't forget to get advice from your Realtor!



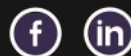
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Step 3: Staging



Five no-fail home staging tips

#1 – Clean, clean and clean some more

Start at the curb and work from there. Nothing turns off buyers more than a messy home. If someone told you a house should look lived in, that person wasn't in the market to sell! Pay the kids, hire a cleaner, but just do what it takes. Once it's clean, it's time to de-clutter and de-personalize! A few family photos are fine, but the reality is that buyers are trying to see the home as their own.



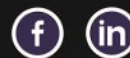
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#2 – Make a good first impression with a tidy exterior

Did I mention things should be clean? Wash windows, clean siding and tidy up the yard. Invest in some new plants, fresh dirt or bark mulch and maybe add a little color with a ceramic planter by the door. You don't need to go crazy here – in fact, more is often less – that first impression is important.

#3 – Pay attention to kitchen and bathrooms

Clean, de-clutter and then beautify. Get rid of stuff on the counters, think about a fresh coat of paint, maybe invest in new door pulls or handles, wash down the cupboards and make it smell good. There's no need to bake bread or go overboard with spray, a couple drops of a nice citrus essential oil works wonders.

#4 – Sweat some of the small stuff

Stains on rugs, burnt out lights, squeaky doors, leaky faucets – these are the kind of things we stop noticing, however, a prospective buyer certainly will. Take a closer look at each room in your home and start fixing these items. They may take a little time to remedy but this will show pride of ownership.

#5 – Lights and colour

New fixtures can update a room and a splash of colour can also impress. Generally, though, you want to keep things low key. Lights shouldn't be too flashy and palettes should remain fairly neutral.

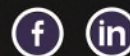


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The Final Step!

Are you inspired and ready to list?

Take the next step and get in touch with me today!

Hopefully this guide gave you an understanding of how the listing process works and what you can do to help achieve a higher price for your home.

If you are thinking about selling your home please contact me, I'll help you every step of the way.

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