



SELLER GUIDE

for senior moves



Hello!

So... you're thinking about selling, and suddenly your to-do list is a mile long? Take a deep breath—you don't have to figure it all out on your own. Selling a home (especially one you've lived in for years) can feel like a lot. But that's where my team and I come in. With real-world experience, a team that actually *shows up* for you, and the strength of a trusted brand behind us—we've got your back. We're going to take this one step at a time.

You don't move every day. But I do.

This guide is here to give you a roadmap—but more importantly, to remind you that you don't have to do this alone. Selling a home you've loved for years isn't just about paperwork—it's about memories, milestones, and what comes next. My role is to help make this process feel a little less overwhelming and a lot more manageable. I'll be here every step of the way, adjusting to your pace and your needs.



1. Get Ready...Interior

Before you're ready for photography or for the first potential buyer to walk through your home...you've probably got some chores to do. Here are a couple recommended tweaks:

- **Deep Clean** - First impressions mean a lot. Before listing your home give it a deep clean, including wiping down walls and baseboards.
- **Declutter** - When a home is clutter-free, buyers are able to focus on the actual home instead of extra belongings and overflowing closets. Not sure what you'll want to use in your next home? Rent a storage unit and move all of the 'maybe' and 'can live without for now' items out. You can also use the garage as a holding space for extra furniture.
- **Finish that "Honey-Do" list** - As part of my marketing plan, you will have a consultation with **finEST Home Services**. Their 40 point checklist covers an array of maintenance items before listing your home.
- **Depersonalize** - Find a balance between depersonalization and creating a warm, welcoming home. This means putting away the majority of framed photos, bulletin boards, and personal items throughout the home. Then go back and stage areas with neutral decor and art and help your buyers envision their own lives in your home.
- **Cat? What cat?** - It's hard to believe that the whole world wouldn't love your furry babies...but pet smells, toys, litter boxes (and surprises in the yard) can be major turn-offs to buyers. Have an action plan ready for showings.
- **Patch & Paint** - It's usually not necessary to paint every wall and every room. But paint is an inexpensive and easy way to brighten your home. Homes won't usually "not" sell because of wall colors...but they will sell faster and for more money when buyers don't immediately see a long "must paint / replace / repair" list as they walk through.
- **Lighten up** - Replace old bulbs, remove bulky window coverings, open blinds, and move furniture that blocks windows. Light and airy rooms sell. Dark and cluttered rooms do not.

Downsizing Advice

1 Get Help

If the idea of even getting started is too much to handle, hire someone else to do it! Call a few professional organizing or senior move managers and find one that is the best fit for you. The investment of their expertise will absolutely pay for itself throughout the process. You'll still very much have an active role in making decisions on what goes or stays, but a professional who knows how to keep the process moving smoothly and efficiently can be worth their weight in gold. If you still want to handle it all yourself, at least consider hiring help to handle heavy boxes or move items up and down stairs or the attic.

2 Think About Your Next Move

If you are downsizing because of a move, take a good look at the floorplan, the closets, and the storage areas. Quite simply, if it won't fit, you can't take it! If you were attracted to a certain house or apartment because of how open and organized the model was, keep that in mind as you plan for larger pieces. If someone else has taken over hosting the family holiday gatherings, is it necessary to have a dining table that seats 12? Even if your new space can accommodate what you currently own, one of the fun things about moving is getting to discover new styles and update older furniture.

3 Plan for Your Future

Hobbies and lifestyles change over time. If you haven't used these things in the past year, it's time to sell or donate:

- Sports equipment - especially if it's something that can be easily replaced (tennis racket) if you decide to play again later.
- Exercise equipment - older equipment may not be equipped with necessary safety features, and many senior centers have fully stocked (and free) gyms to use.
- Hobby supplies - senior centers, schools, and even libraries would be thrilled to have fabric, paints, sewing materials, old cameras, telescopes, musical instruments, etc.
- Home maintenance equipment (tools, mowers, etc.) - if you've used a lawn service for years already, keep a few tools for small jobs and let go of the rest.

4 Go Digital

Books, old papers, drawings, school work, cookbooks, recipes...these things can all be so precious and instantly evoke memories and experiences. But they can also be heavy and take up so much space. Consider hiring someone (a savvy teen) or using your own smartphone to take photos of as much paper as possible and only keeping the truly treasured pieces. Once photos have been taken or items scanned, you can easily create albums (online or printed if you must) to keep your items in mind but with a fraction of the storage space. Books can be so hard to part with, but do your best to keep only a small percentage of your favorites or the most valuable and pass the rest to a library or younger booklover for safe keeping. Learning to use a digital reader (like Kindle) can keep your favorite authors at hand, and allow for easier reading with larger font and brightness options.

5 Start with the Easy

Do yourself a favor and gain momentum by starting with the 'easy' stuff. That might mean a guest room or bathroom, unused holiday decorations, or the portion of your attic that is storing your children's grade-school belongings. Start making the calls and setting a 'claim by' date for their stuff. Schedule a day when family is home for the holidays and let them know that their keepsakes are now theirs for the keeping. Consider only keeping a few sentimental items that you're saving for special occasions (birth of a grandchild, college graduation, etc.). Take photos of items that you want to be able to 'see' again from time to time.

6 Shred Some

Consult with a tax attorney or your financial advisor (or just google 'what to keep'), but there's a big chance that you have a large amount of paper that you can toss or securely shred. What to do with what's left? Aside from a few original documents that are best kept as paper, scan the rest to a secure digital file on your computer or to a dedicated storage device. Tip: Once you have your most important paperwork organized, tell your power of attorney or a trusted friend where these are stored in case they're needed during an emergency.

7 Don't Tackle it All at Once

Starting early and going room-by-room, or even a closet or a drawer at a time, can keep the process from feeling overwhelming. Starting 'fresh' a few times can also help avoid decision fatigue and keep you focused on the goal. And it's okay to go back to the same area a few times. If you have 15 minutes to sort through a drawer, do it--don't worry that you don't have time to tackle the whole kitchen. Designate an area in the garage or an unused bedroom to keep ongoing donate/sell/toss boxes for quick cleanouts or if you come across an item that you know immediately can go.

8 Establish

Do you love it? Do you need it? Do you use it? For areas with a lot of items (closets, kitchens, collectibles, jewelry), use the OHIO method: Only Handle It Once. Hold it up, ask yourself those first three questions and then immediately sort into Keep / Donate / Sell / Toss boxes.

9 Acknowledge

Downsizing can come with a lot of emotions, including sadness and guilt. Allow yourself (and your loved ones) to acknowledge how the process or an item makes you feel. Try to keep in mind the reason you're downsizing, focus on the positive outcomes, and know that you'll still have the memories and the sentiments even after the objects themselves are gone. As you take photos of items, or pass them along to loved ones, write down or share some of the stories and memories that they represent. You'll not only have a record for yourself later, but you'll help to create important new memories and sentimental attachments for younger generations.

10 Celebrate

Celebrate along the way--each cleared room, each excited person or organization that you donated to, or the travel money you earned by selling something valuable. Take pride in your newly organized spaces and enjoy the relief and calmness that you created. You did it!



Get Ready...Exterior

- **Lawn** - If you're selling your home in the winter, there's not much you can do to have nice green grass...but in spring and summer, it needs to be mowed neatly, watered, dead/bald spots repaired, and edges kept tidy. In the fall and winter, keep it as neat as possible with leaves removed, limbs/sticks picked up, and landscaped beds filled with fresh mulch.
- **Front Door** - A fresh coat of paint is an easy project. Add new house numbers and make sure the locks work easily. Add a new rug and a potted plant (real or faux) and you're set.
- **Windows** - If screens are damaged, remove them. Clean windows inside and out, and make sure they still open easily. If trim is dirty, wash it. If it's rotted or damaged, replace it and repaint it. Some loans will not pass appraisal if the inspector sees rotted wood, so go ahead and take care of it.
- **Siding** - Rent a power washer (or hire someone) and clean the siding, soffits, around windows, sidewalks, and porches. Get rid of mildew and dirt. If you're left with damaged wood or peeling paint...get to work!
- **Patio / Porches** - Declutter extra toys, furniture, old grills, etc. Arrange furniture in an inviting way and showcase this area as an extension of living space. If there are handrails or steps, make sure they are secure and stable.
- **Driveway** - Move cars out for photos, and keep them out as possible. If you have extra cars that you don't use daily, ask a neighbor or friend if you can borrow their driveway at least during showings, or store them temporarily off-site.
- **Gutters / Roof** - Stuffed and leaky gutters make buyers nervous! Clean them out (or hire a pro) and tackle any repairs that need to be made in the process. If your roof is still in good shape, leave it. But if you know that you have leaks or that it's had weather damage, it's a good idea to go ahead and repair/replace it.
- **Holiday Decor** - Tastefully decorating for the holidays is okay...trying to win the neighborhood award for best and brightest is not. This goes for indoors and out. Holiday decor is fun and can make a home feel 'homey', but if it gets out of hand it can be too distracting to buyers. Save the big stuff for next season in your new home.



2. Photography

Over 95% of home buyers start their search online, so professional photography is imperative to selling a home! We hire top professionals to take the best photos (and video, drone, and 3D tour when needed), and they are all completely edited to make sure your home is shown perfectly and its best features are prominently on display.



and then...

Your photos and videos are displayed everywhere! We know the secret formulas to getting the most attention on MLS websites, social media, and with e-blasts to other agents. We aim to create scroll-stopping images that will drive attention (and showings...and offers) right to your door.



Did you know...

homes with professional photos:

- Receive an average of 87% more views than their peers across all price tiers.
- Have a 47% higher asking price per square foot, and sell up to 3x faster.



Pricing

It's hard to put a price tag on the home that you made yours. You've probably spent years carefully making improvements, definitely making memories, and most likely making plans within those walls. It's easy to let emotions try to factor in the "value" of your home. But at the end of the day, it's all about the numbers. We will do a careful market analysis of your home, the area, and look at what makes your home stand out above others. We will agree on pricing and terms before you sign anything--no surprises!

THE MARKET VALUE of your home is based on a combination of factors including:

- The current market
- Comparable listings
- Location
- Neighborhood
- Age of the home
- Condition of the home
- Improvements

PRICING STRATEGY plays a key role in the home selling process, and can mean the difference between selling right away or sitting on the market for months. It's important to understand that the amount you want for your home may not be a realistic price for the market, and the amount of money you have spent on it does not determine the market value.

A HOME THAT IS PRICED at a fair market value will attract more buyers, and is more likely to get multiple offers and sell faster.



As your Senior Home Coach™ I will:

- Help you determine the highest possible selling price for your home
- Present a list of suggested repairs, if necessary
- Recommend reputable repair companies
- Advise on staging and cosmetic upgrades
- Hire a professional photographer/videographer for marketing purposes
- Share your home with our extensive global network
- Enter your home in the local listing service
- Advertise your home to ensure the greatest exposure to buyers
- Be available to answer questions and show your home to unrepresented buyers
- Answer our phones! If you have questions, need advice, or just have a random thought about something we didn't talk about...call, text, or email me. We'll be there.





How we Find Buyers

ADVERTISING



Your home will be put on the MLS where it can be seen by other real estate agents who are searching for homes for their buyers. Your listing will also be posted on websites like Zillow and Realtor.com where potential buyers will be able to find your home.



SIGNAGE

A For Sale sign will be placed out in front of your home, as well as Open House signs before an open house takes place.



LOCK BOX & SHOWINGS

A lock box will be put on your door once your home is on the market. It's best for sellers not to be present at the time of showings, and a lock box allows agents who schedule showings to access your home with interested buyers.



OPEN HOUSE

An open house will be strategically scheduled your first week on the market. Open houses are a great way to generate interest and get more potential buyers to see your home.



VIRTUAL TOUR

We will create a virtual walkthrough to give your listing an advantage over other listings by allowing buyers to see your home in more detail online.



EMAIL MARKETING

Your home will be featured in our email newsletter as well as sent out to our active buyers list of clients who are currently looking for homes.



NETWORK MARKETING

Your listing will be shared with our extensive network of real estate agents to increase your home's visibility.



SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

We use a variety of social media networks like Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter and LinkedIn to get the word out about your listing.





Negotiating an Offer

Accepting the highest price might seem like the logical choice, but there are many factors to consider when reviewing an offer, and knowing your options allows you to come up with a plan that works best for you. Some things to consider:

CASH OFFER

Some sellers accept a lower priced cash offer over a higher priced loan offer because there are typically less issues that come up, like for example a loan falling through. Consider your timeline and finances to evaluate if it is worth accepting a lower offer for a faster closing and often a much simpler process.

CLOSING DATE

Some buyers may be looking to move in as soon as possible, while others may need more time in order to sell their own house. You may be able to select an offer based on a timeframe that works best for you, or you might have to be more flexible in order to close the deal.

CLOSING COSTS

Closing costs fall under the buyer's list of expenses, but buyers may ask the seller to pay for a portion, or all of this expense, as part of the sale negotiation.

CONTINGENCY CLAUSES

A contingency clause is a qualifying factor that has to be met in order for the buyer to move forward with the sale. Contingency clauses often include details of financing, inspections and home sales, and the terms can be negotiated between the parties. The contingency allows the buyer to back out of the contract without penalty if the terms are not met.



Under Contract

Congratulations! Once you and the buyer have agreed on terms, a sales agreement is signed and your home is officially under contract! Up next...

INSPECTION

Property inspections are done to make sure that the home is in the condition for which it appears. If the property inspector finds any issues, the buyer can decide if they want to back out of the contract or renegotiate the terms of the sale.

POSSIBLE REPAIR REQUESTS

After an inspection, buyers may have repairs they would like completed before purchasing your home. Typically there is room for negotiation, but some of these items can be deal breakers. It is necessary for both parties to come to an agreement on what will be repaired and what will not, and if there will be a price deduction in order to accommodate for the repairs.

APPRAISAL

If the buyer is applying for a loan, the bank will request an appraisal to confirm that the home is worth the loan amount. The appraisal takes into account factors such as similar property values, the home's age, location, size and condition to determine the current value of the property.

FINAL WALK THROUGH

Before a buyer signs the closing paperwork, they will come to the home to do a final walk through. This last step is to verify that no damage has been done to the property since the inspection, that any agreed upon repairs have been completed, and that nothing from the purchase agreement has been removed from the home.



Closing Day!

Closing is the final step of the selling process. On the day of closing (typically at an attorney's office), both parties sign documents, funds are dispersed, and property ownership is formally transferred to the buyer.

CLOSING EXPENSES FOR THE SELLER CAN INCLUDE:

- Title insurance policy
- Home warranty
- Real estate agent commissions
- Recording fees
- Property taxes (split with buyer)
- Remaining balance on mortgage
- Any unpaid assessments, penalties or claims against your property

ITEMS TO BRING TO CLOSING:

- Government Issued Photo ID
- House Keys
- Garage Openers
- Mailbox Keys
- Check or wire transfer receipt for any funds owed at closing

Moving Tips for Seniors

Moving can be stressful, especially when it's a senior move that may involve downsizing, moving long distances to be near family, transporting a medically fragile family member, or other challenges. Here are 5 things to consider while planning your senior move that may help ease some of that stress.



1

Start Early

- As soon as you begin thinking about a move, start downsizing. Even if you're moving into the same size home, streamlining the contents of your home will create a calmer, less-cluttered, and even safer living environment for you. Doing a little bit over a long period of time can ease the stress (physical and mental) of sorting, selling, donating, and organizing a lifetime's worth of belongings.
- Start small. Make a list of your rooms, closets, and clutter areas and create a plan for how many you can reasonably handle each week. Start with a room with low sentimental value (like a bathroom or guest room) and that 'easy' accomplishment can help motivate you during more difficult areas.
- Donating to your favorite charities can make it easier to let go of items you no longer need. It's also easier to part with belongings if you know they're going to loving homes or their stories will be remembered. When gifting those items to family members or friends, take the time to share your memories with them to create a special connection.
- Keep a vision of your new home in your mind--if you loved it because of the open and clutter-free spaces, you may be less likely to overpack.

Build Your Team

Don't try to do everything yourself. Enlist family and friends to help with sorting, downsizing, cleaning, moving, getting your house ready to sell, and any of the other many tasks you'll encounter. Don't want to involve family or friends? Consider hiring a senior relocation service to help. The financial investment of a professional will be more than worth the cost and will help you be able to stay positive and excited about your move.

2

3

Make Healthcare Decisions Ahead of Time

If you're moving to a new city, do these things in the weeks before your move:

- Ask your current medical professionals for copies of important medical records, prescription lists, etc., and referrals for new providers.
- Make sure to keep these records and any prescription medicines packed separately and kept with you on moving day.
- Check with your insurance to make sure new providers are in your network, and go ahead and set appointments with new providers for shortly after you arrive at your new home.
- Ask your pharmacy to transfer your prescriptions to a new pharmacy near your new home.

Plan Ahead for Moving Day

4

- Consider staying at a hotel or with family for a few nights before moving day. You'll have a better chance at resting if you're not surrounded by boxes, and it will also ensure that you have your 'must-haves' (like medicines, toiletries, etc.) with you and keep them from being inadvertently packed away by movers.
- Take it easy. Give yourself plenty of time (and plenty of stops) if you're driving a long distance to your new home. Or if you're flying, contact the airline ahead of time to request boarding assistance, a mobility escort, or special seating accommodations if needed.
- If you'll be moving alone to your new home, consider asking a friend or family member to travel with you. They can assist with the details, your luggage, or just provide companionship during the trip.

5

Home Sweet New Home

- Don't downsize so much that your new home doesn't "feel" like home. Pack a few favorite photos, blankets, mugs, etc., in a special box that can be unpacked first to help you settle in.
- Take time to meet new neighbors. Whether you move into a new home, with family, or a senior community, don't put off meeting the new people around you. Find a new church, explore a new library, join in a community activity, or take a tour of the senior center.
- Before your moving help leaves, make sure someone tech-savvy has your internet, cable, wifi, etc. set up in your new home.

Sold!

SCHEDULING YOUR MOVE

AFTER ACCEPTED OFFER

- Gather paperwork/contact information for your current mortgage, home insurance policy, and details that the closing attorney may need to have (don't accidentally pack this!)
- Declutter! (Again!) Sort through every drawer, closet, pantry, and shelf, removing items you no longer need or like. Donate or sell items that are in good condition
- Get copies of medical records and keep them with your other important documents
- Create an inventory of anything valuable that you plan to move
- Get estimates from moving companies

4 WEEKS TO MOVE

- Schedule movers/moving truck
- Buy/find packing materials
- START PACKING

3 WEEKS TO MOVE

- If the buyer is using a loan, they will send out an appraiser to assess your home's value
- Complete any repairs that have been agreed to

2 WEEKS TO MOVE

- Choose Home Insurance Company (for new house, if applicable)
- Schedule Closing Appointment (Closing Attorney will do this)
- Apply for / arrange a start date for utilities at your new home (water, electric, cable)
- Change address: mailing, subscriptions, etc.
- Minimize grocery shopping so you have less food to move
- Keep packing

1 WEEK TO MOVE

- If applicable, arrange for closing funds to be wired to closing attorney
- Buyer will conduct a final walk-thru (to check repairs and expected condition of home)
- Finish packing
- Pack essentials for a few nights in your new home
- Confirm delivery date with the moving company
- Stay in close contact with your realtor and the closing attorney and be available to provide any needed documents or answers