



THE COMPLETE

Home Seller's Guide

Your complete guide to
a successful home sale

OR

Selling Your Home with Confidence

Expert guidance.
Personalized service.
A better home selling experience.

ELM STREET  REALTORS®

LET US SHOW YOU THE WAY HOME



LOCAL
EXPERTISE



PERSONAL
SERVICE



BETTER
DECISIONS



YOUR NEXT
CHAPTER



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hello.

We understand that selling a home in today's market can present challenges. We also know that there is no "one-size-fits-all" solution. What works well in one scenario may not be the right fit in another. And that's why a personalized approach matters.

Thank you for placing your trust in us to guide you through the process of selling your home. Our entire team is committed to ensuring that all of your real estate needs are not only met, but exceeded. Having been in the business, and the community since 2002, we have the know-how and tools to produce the best possible outcome. We take the time to analyze your property's distinct features, review local market data, and evaluate current trends to deliver data driven insights.

This guide has been created for your convenience, and we hope it proves to be a valuable resource.

While the steps of the process are outlined here, please know that we will maintain constant communication with you throughout. Your experience will be tailored to your specific needs and preferences, and we will adjust our services to meet you where you are. Our focus is on your complete satisfaction.

We hope this Home Seller's Guide provides you with answers to some of the questions you may have about getting your home on the market and sold quickly. We are here to assist with all of your real estate needs, so please don't hesitate to reach out to one of our professional partners.

SOLD

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ESRSYCAMORE.COM





Meet Your Elm Street Realtors® Team

Nancy Edwards Broker / Owner



Nancy Edwards, Broker / Owner at Elm Street Realtors®, has been in the real estate business since 1991. She began her career with a local franchise, and worked there until 1999. Shortly after, she obtained her broker's license and opened Nancy Edwards Realty. After years as a successful solo act, she then ventured to open Elm Street Realtors® in Sycamore.

Nancy and her husband, Randy, have a blended marriage with five children between them. She chose to open Elm Street Realtors® in Sycamore because, quite frankly, she and her family love the town. She believes that the community has strong family values and that everyone is friendly and caring.

Nancy opened Elm Street Realtors® because of her desire to share her knowledge and experience with new agents in an effort to help them learn and prosper as she has. She wants to give new agents the opportunity to feel that they are part of a family, rather than merely working under her name. With this concept in mind, she believes that all of the agents feel a sense of bonding, which in turn makes the group stronger.

Her business philosophy is to treat everyone the way she would want to be treated, educate her clients in every aspect of the transaction, encourage questions, and to make the overall process a smooth one.

Let's Connect!

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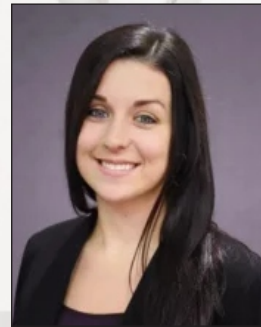
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The Five Principles that Guide Our Agents

truth

I promise to tell you the truth about your property

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respect

I promise to respect your confidence and confidentiality

advice

I promise to provide proven, solid advice that benefits you

transparency

I promise to thoroughly explain everything you're signing

follow up

I promise to always follow up and follow through

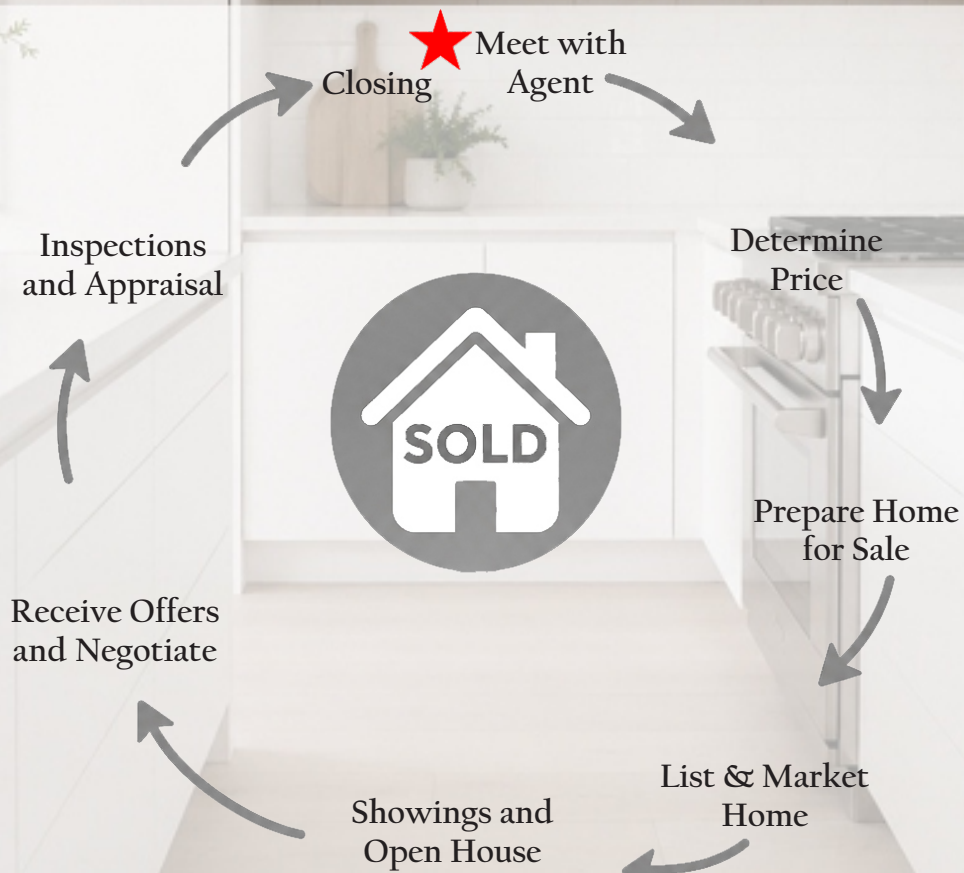


GET READY TO SELL

*Your Elm Street Realtors®
professional partner is here to
guide you every step of the way*



FROM LISTED TO SOLD



THE FOUR STAGES OF SELLING YOUR HOME

Pre-Listing

- schedule an appointment
- discuss staging approach
- discuss strategy
- property evaluation
- complete market study
- establish marketing price
- executed listing agreement

Prepare for Market

- marketing campaign begins
- professional photography
- signage installed
- listing submitted to MLS
- property brochures delivered
- open houses scheduled
- social media marketing blast

Active on Market

- showings begun
- curb appeal maintained
- house is kept show-ready
- showing feedback shared
- open house conducted

Offer & Closing

- offers received
- offer negotiated
- offer fully executed
- inspections completed
- attorney review period
- appraisal completed
- contingencies removed
- closing day



PRE-LISTING PREPARATION

- 1 Schedule a tour of your home with your agent
- 2 Discuss any potential repairs, upgrades, or staging to be completed before listing your home
- 3 Establish an asking price based on the current market and comparable property listings.
- 4 Prepare your home to be photographed and put on the active market



PRICING YOUR HOME TO SELL

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 weeks or 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.



FAIR 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.*



7 EASY CURB APPEAL TIPS

THAT WILL MAKE BUYERS FALL IN LOVE

1

FRESH COAT OF PAINT ON THE FRONT DOOR

Make a great first impression of your home with a freshly painted front door. Evaluate the condition of your home's exterior paint, as well as the front steps, patio, and railings. A fresh coat of paint can make all the difference.

2

ADD FLOWERS TO THE FRONT PORCH

Sometimes the simplest things can make the biggest difference. New planters on the front porch filled with beautiful, vibrant flowers will make your home appear more inviting, warm, and welcoming.

3

PRESSURE WASH THE DRIVEWAY

While a dirty, oil stained driveway gives the impression of a home that may need some work, a pressure washed driveway and walkway presents a clean, well maintained home.

4

UPDATE EXTERIOR LIGHT FIXTURES

Replace faded, builder's grade exterior lighting with new, up to date fixtures. Shiny new fixtures will brighten up your home at night, and look clean and polished during the day. Evaluate the front door handle and lockset, as well.

5

KEEP THE LAWN & GARDEN TIDY

An abandoned looking yard makes buyers think the home might be neglected, but a freshly cut lawn and well manicured gardens shows a well cared for home. Be ready for showings by staying on top of lawn mowing.

6

ADD OR REPLACE HOUSE NUMBERS

Clear, crisp numbers that can be seen from the street make your home easier to find, as well as giving the overall appearance a little boost. You may also want to evaluate the condition of your mailbox.

7

ADD A WELCOME MAT

Add a brand new welcome mat to greet buyers as they walk through the front door. Even the smallest details like these can make a home feel more inviting.



STAGING YOUR HOME

Home staging is the art of preparing your home to appeal to the widest range of buyers by highlighting its best features and creating a warm, inviting atmosphere. A well-staged home photographs better, stands out online, and helps buyers envision themselves living there. According to the National Association of REALTORS®, 83% of buyers' agents say staging makes it easier for buyers to picture a property as their future home, and nearly one-third of listing agents report that staging increases offers by up to 10%. It's a relatively small investment that can lead to a faster sale and a stronger sale price.

Many of Elm Street Realtors® professional partners are Certified Staging Professionals. A Certified Staging Professional® (CSP®) has received specialized training in preparing homes to appeal to today's buyers. They understand how to showcase a home's strengths, maximize its visual impact, and help create the best possible first impression both online and in person.

STAGING BY THE NUMBERS

83%

Of buyers' agents said staging a home made it easier for a buyer to visualize the property as a future home

67%

Of top agents said that home staging helps a seller fetch more money for their home at resale

40%

Of buyers agents cited that a staged home had an effect on most buyers' view of the home



PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY

Over 95% of home buyers start their search online, so professional photography is imperative to selling your home. We will be happy to invest in professional photography and expert editing to ensure your home is presented at its absolute best.

The photographs buyers see online are your first showing.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY THE NUMBERS

87%

Homes with professional photographs receive an average of 87% more views online than their competitors across all price tiers.

32/70

Homes with one photo spends an average of 70 days on the market.
Homes with more than 20 quality photos spends an average of 32 days on the market

47%

Professionally photographed homes have a 47% higher purchase price per square foot than homes with amateur photographs



PHOTOGRAPHY PREP

In today's market, professional photography is practically a requirement for every successful listing.

We've put together a checklist to help get your home photo-ready, as well as preparing to show to potential buyers



PREPARING FOR PHOTOS CHECKLIST

THINGS YOU CAN DO AHEAD OF TIME

INSIDE

- ☐ Clear off all flat surfaces - less is more
- ☐ Put away papers and misc. items
- ☐ Depersonalize; take down family photos and put away personal items
- ☐ Clear off the refrigerator; remove all magnets, photos, and papers
- ☐ Replace burnt out light bulbs and dust all light fixtures
- ☐ Deep clean the entire house
- ☐ Touch up paint on walls, trim, and doors

OUTSIDE

- ☐ Increase curb appeal; remove all yard clutter and plant colorful flowers
- ☐ Trim bushes and clean up flower beds
- ☐ Pressure wash walkways and driveway
- ☐ Add a welcome mat to the front door

PRO-TIP

Don't be tempted to shove things inside closets! Curious buyers look there, too.

DAY OF CHECKLIST

KITCHEN

- ☐ Clear off all flat surfaces
- ☐ Put away dishes, place sponges and cleaning supplies underneath the sink
- ☐ Hang dish towels neatly, remove rugs, potholders, trivets, etc.

IN GENERAL

- ☐ House should be very clean and looking it's very best
- ☐ Lawn should be freshly mowed and edged
- ☐ Move pet dishes, toys, and kennels out of sight
- ☐ Make beds, put away clothing, toys and valuables
- ☐ Turn on all lights and turn off ceiling fans

BATHROOMS

- ☐ Remove personal items from counters, showers, and tub areas
- ☐ Move cleaning items, plungers, and trash cans out sight
- ☐ Close toilet lids
- ☐ Hang towels neatly

PRO-TIP

A plastic tote can be your best friend. As the photographer goes from room to room, you can place needed but cluttering items in the tote and tuck it temporarily out of sight.



TOP FIVE WAYS TO PREP YOUR HOME TO SELL FAST

START WITH THE RIGHT PRICE

1

Homes that are priced strategically from the beginning are much more likely to sell faster than those that are priced too high for the market. Comparing similar homes in your area that have sold and that are currently for sale will help determine a fair market price to list your home.

DEPERSONALIZE & MINIMALIZE

2

To make your home feel more spacious, try to minimize as much of your belongings as possible. No clutter around the house lets buyers see your house and not your things. They need to be able to picture your home as their own, so put away the family photographs. Evaluate what you can potentially live without for the next several weeks and start packing. It all needs to be packed anyway, so you might as well get a head start.

CLEAN, CLEAN, & THEN CLEAN SOME MORE

3

Everyone loves a clean home, so clean yours like you've never cleaned before! Show your home at its very best with a spotless kitchen, super clean bathrooms, and shiny floors. You don't have to live like a clean freak forever, but buyers are sure to appreciate your efforts.

MAKE HOME MAINTENANCE A PRIORITY

4

Preparing to sell often requires some money and work into your home. When buyers see repairs that need to be done, they start looking for what else could be wrong with the house. This could cost you thousands off your asking price or even risk losing the sale. Being proactive and completing home repairs before listing will help selling go smoother and quicker. You can even have a pre-listing inspection done if you want to avoid the possibility of surprises later on. Please note that any inspection issues NOT addressed will likely need to be disclosed to potential buyers.

BE READY & WILLING TO SHOW

5

Showing your home is an important part of the selling process, and being accommodating to showing requests will increase the likelihood of finding a buyer. Keep your home as "show ready" as possible at all times so that you can quickly tidy up on short notice and leave your home (taking your pets with you) before the buyers arrive.



LISTING & MARKETING

*When we list
your home, your
listing will receive
maximum exposure.
utilizing our extensive
marketing techniques*



LISTING YOUR HOME



MLS LISTING

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, Redfin, and Realtor.com where potential buyers will be able to find it.



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 front door once your home is on the market. It's best for sellers to not be present at the time of showings, and a lock box allows agents who scheduled showings to access your home securely with qualified buyers.



OPEN HOUSE

An Open House will be strategically scheduled to attract attention to your listing. Open houses are a great way to generate interest and get more potential buyers to see your home.



VIRTUAL / VIDEO 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.



UTILIZING THE PLN

CHOOSING YOUR MARKETING STRATEGY

One of the first decisions we'll make together is how your home will be introduced to the market. There is no single approach that's right for every seller. Your goals, timeline, privacy preferences, and property readiness all play a role in determining the best strategy. Some sellers want maximum exposure from day one. Others prioritize flexibility or a more measured approach. Your Elm Street Realtors® professional partner will discuss all available options and help you choose the strategy that best aligns with your goals. We have access to two separate and distinct portals in which to launch your listing; the Public MLS, and the Private Listing Network. Let's look at the pros and cons of both:

Public Listing (MLS)

Best for: Maximum exposure

- ◆ Listed on the public MLS system
- ◆ Broad visibility to buyers and cooperating brokers
- ◆ Eligible for widespread online distribution
- ◆ Often reaches the largest audience in the shortest time
- ◆ Allows public advertising
- ◆ Allows for showings

Private Listing Network

Best for: Privacy and flexibility

- ◆ More private approach
- ◆ Limited distribution
- ◆ Shared with a smaller network
- ◆ May be appropriate for sellers who value discretion, or want to explore options before a public launch
- ◆ May allow public advertising
- ◆ May allow controlled showings

Our job isn't to fit your home into a marketing plan - it's to build a marketing plan around your home.



OUR MARKETING STRATEGY

EMAIL MARKETING

Your home will be featured in various email newsletters, as well as sent out to active buyer clients who are currently looking for similar homes. These emails are monitored through backdoor analytics to facilitate in person showings.

NETWORK MARKETING

Once your home is listed on the MLS, it is automatically shared across a wide network of real estate web sites, mobile apps, and participating brokerage web sites. This broad online exposure gives your home the best chance to sell quickly, and for top dollar.

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

We utilize a variety of social media platforms and networks to get the word out about your listing. This will include direct posts, video tours, Open House event invitations, and more.



facebook



Instagram



Zillow



PREPARING FOR SHOWINGS

CHECKLIST

Remember: Buyers are not looking for *your* home—they're looking for their future home. A clean, bright, neutral environment makes it easier for them to picture themselves living there.

First Impressions

- ☐ Turn on lights throughout the home
- ☐ Open blinds and curtains
- ☐ Make beds neatly
- ☐ Fluff pillows and straighten furniture
- ☐ Remove clutter from flat surfaces
- ☐ Empty trash cans if needed
- ☐ Sweep or vacuum visible floors
- ☐ Wipe down kitchen and bathrooms

Kitchen

- ☐ Clear dishes from the sink / dishwasher
- ☐ Put away small appliances
- ☐ Wipe fingerprints from appliances
- ☐ Store pet food and water bowls
- ☐ Take out kitchen trash

Bathrooms

- ☐ Close toilet lids
- ☐ Hang fresh towels neatly
- ☐ Remove personal toiletries
- ☐ Wipe mirrors and faucets
- ☐ Replace used hand towels if needed

Pets

- ☐ Remove pets from the home
- ☐ Pick up pet toys / beds / food bowls
- ☐ Clean litter boxes
- ☐ Remove dog waste from yard
- ☐ Remove any pet medications

Personal Items

- ☐ Store valuables / medications securely
- ☐ Minimize family photos
- ☐ Hide mail / bills / financial documents

Exterior

- ☐ Park vehicles away from the home
- ☐ Move garbage bins out of sight
- ☐ Sweep porches and walkways
- ☐ Remove packages from the front door
- ☐ Pick up toys, hoses, and lawn equipment

Final Touches

- ☐ Adjust the thermostat for comfort
- ☐ Turn off televisions
- ☐ Turn on a few lamps
- ☐ Ensure all rooms are accessible
- ☐ Lock exterior doors after leaving

Miscellaneous

- ☐ Remove magnets / notes from refrigerator
- ☐ Store toothbrushes, razors, etc.
- ☐ Straighten dining chairs / bar stools
- ☐ Open interior doors
- ☐ Put shoes and coats away
- ☐ Replace burnt-out light bulbs
- ☐ Turn ceiling fans on a low setting
- ☐ Pick up dirty laundry
- ☐ Secure jewelry, firearms, prescription medications

Pro-Tip

Before a showing, make sure there are no lingering cooking aromas, pet odors, or other strong smells. On the flip side of the coin, avoid using heavy air fresheners. This can be a deal breaker for some buyers.



SHOWINGS AND YOUR PETS

Pets are part of the family, and we love them—but not every buyer feels the same way. During showings, it's best to have pets out of the home whenever possible. Even the friendliest animals can become a distraction, make buyers feel uneasy, or create safety and liability concerns. Just as importantly, having unfamiliar people walk through the house can be stressful for your pets. Giving them a quiet place away from the activity helps keep everyone — buyers, homeowners, and your furry family members — more comfortable, allowing buyers to focus on what matters most: your home.

Whether your home is being held open, or having a showing, below are just some common sense reasons pets should be removed from your home during these times.

FEAR & NERVES

It may seem hard to believe, but the fear of cats and dogs is the most common animal fear. While many people may not outright fear pets, they may not be comfortable around them. Additionally, strangers in the home can cause real undue stress and anxiety in your furry friend.

UNPREDICTABILITY

Many homeowners believe their pets would never pose a problem during a showing, and in most cases that is true. However, even the gentlest cat or the quietest dog can react unexpectedly when unfamiliar people enter their home. We have seen friendly cats scratch prospective buyers and normally calm dogs become protective enough to bark, growl, or intimidate visitors, causing showings to end prematurely. Just as importantly, it is impossible to predict how a stranger may interact with your pet. For the safety and comfort of everyone involved—including your pets—it is always best to have them out of the home during showings whenever possible.

WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR PETS DURING SHOWINGS

- 🐾 Take them with you for a short walk, car ride, or errand
- 🐾 Ask a trusted friend or family member to watch them
- 🐾 Use a reputable boarding or daycare facility.
- 🐾 Hire a pet sitter or dog walker.
- 🐾 Schedule showings around your routine with your pets

Whenever possible, avoid leaving pets confined behind a closed door during showings. Curious buyers may unintentionally open doors, and confined pets can become anxious or protective.



HOSTING AN OPEN HOUSE

Many buyers like to look at homes without any pressure. Often, they begin their process by attending open houses first, and then follow up with their real estate professional.

OPEN HOUSE PROMOTION

We drive foot traffic to your open house in a variety of proven ways. Here are some examples:

Posted on all major web sites including Zillow, Trulia, Redfin, and more as well as local MLS



Several directional signs strategically placed around your neighborhood



Postcards / Announcements mailed to area



Posted on our social media accounts



Social media “events” created



Print media



OFFERS & NEGOTIATIONS

*Being flexible
will help the offer and
negotiation process go smoother,
moving you one step closer
to finalizing the
sale of your home*



FACTORS TO CONSIDER

Accepting the highest price offer may seem like the logical choice, but there are many factors to consider when reviewing an offer and knowing your options lets you come up with a plan that works best for you. Your Elm Street Realtors® professional partner will walk you through each offer, and discuss the nuances, pros and cons, and any trip hazards that potentially exist.

CASH OFFERS

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 time frame 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. Every situation is unique, and your professional partner will walk you through these scenarios.

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 or closings. The terms can be negotiated between the two parties. These contingencies allow both the buyer AND the seller to back out of the contract without penalty if the terms are not met.



UNDER CONTRACT

Once you and the buyer have agreed on terms, a sales agreement is signed by all parties and you are officially under contract.



ATTORNEY REVIEW

THE IMPORTANCE OF AN ATTORNEY IN A REAL ESTATE TRANSACTION

Selling a home involves more than marketing and negotiating an offer—it also requires careful attention to legal documents, title work, and the closing process. While your Elm Street Realtors® agent is your trusted advocate throughout the transaction, we are not licensed to practice law and cannot provide legal advice. Once a purchase agreement has been accepted, your attorney becomes an important member of your professional team, helping to review legal documents, address title matters, prepare closing paperwork, and advise you on legal issues that may arise. Together, we and your attorney work alongside one another, each within their area of expertise, to help protect your interests and guide you toward a happy and successful closing.

YOUR ATTORNEY WILL ASSIST YOU WITH:

- ✓ Reviewing the purchase agreement and related legal documents
- ✓ Preparing the deed and coordinating the transfer of ownership
- ✓ Resolving title issues and facilitating title insurance
- ✓ Advising you on legal questions throughout the transaction
- ✓ Preparing for and representing you at closing.

Your Elm Street Realtors® professional partner and your attorney each have a distinct role. Together, they help protect your interests and guide you through a successful closing.



STEPS BEFORE CLOSING

INSPECTIONS

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 renegotiate the terms of the sale, or terminate the contract.

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, if anything, and what will not, or if there will be a credit offered 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 paper work, 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.



CLEARED TO CLOSE

*Closing is the final step
in the selling process.
On the day of closing,
both parties sign documents,
funds are dispersed, and
property ownership is formally
transferred to the buyer*





CLOSING DAY



CLOSING EXPENSES FOR SELLERS CAN INCLUDE:

- › Title insurance policy
- › Home warranty
- › Real estate agent commission
- › Recording fees
- › Property taxes & prorations
- › Remaining mortgage balance
- › Any unpaid assessments, penalties or claims against your property

ITEMS TO BRING TO CLOSING:

- ✓ Government issued photo ID
- ✓ House keys
- ✓ Garage openers
- ✓ Mailbox keys



SUCCESS STORIES

“ Laura Lee was extremely responsive and responsible during the house purchasing process while being friendly and helpful the entire way. We initially connected with Laura while we lived out of state, started to look for houses remotely with her help, then decided to hold off on our search for a year and a half. She was ready and immediately responsive to us when we were ready to search and buy on relatively short notice - even over a holiday period. She stayed ahead of every deadline during the contract period while also remaining easygoing. I never had to ask her to do anything twice or prompt her to do anything. We highly recommend her. ”



“ Travis and Evangeline made the whole process of listing our home incredibly easy and stress free. Their input when staging and prepping the home for sale is top-notch and they get the best photos possible for the listing. They know the DeKalb county and surrounding areas very well. ”

“ Cheri has helped us sell two homes and purchase another over the last seven years. She is always professional and her attention to detail is outstanding. Cheri always makes the process smooth and enjoyable! We definitely recommend Cheri and will call her again if the need arises. Thank you Cheri! ”

“ Nancy and her team were very friendly and extremely helpful! They made the process so easy. I really appreciated their suggestions on how to improve the property to go on the market and that they offered staging of my home. Thank you Elm Street Realtors! Got an offer on the home in 48 hours for \$5000 above asking price!! ”

“ Thanks to Megan Martin we sold our old home and found the home of our dreams. From day one she shared the current market trends, spent time with us planning what we would need to do to prepare our home for sale, and with professional ease got a feel for exactly what we were looking for in our new home. Megan was there any time we had questions and always had options for us when we hit snags. We felt confident in the processes as she prepared us well. As stressful as home buying and selling can be Megan made it fun, and we will not hesitate to call on her again for friends, family, and our next home. ”



BUYER'S BROKER COMPENSATION

WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU

Understanding Buyer's Broker Compensation

One of the most common questions sellers ask is whether they should offer compensation to a buyer's broker. The answer is simple: *the decision is entirely yours*. Under current industry rules, sellers are not required to offer compensation, and any compensation that is offered is fully negotiable. As your professional partners, our responsibility is to explain your options, discuss current market conditions, and help you make an informed decision that supports your goals. There is no one-size-fits-all approach, and the right strategy will depend on your property, your local market, and your priorities. While offering buyer broker compensation is optional, it is important to understand how that decision may affect your home's marketability. Many buyers—particularly first-time home buyers—are already balancing a down payment, closing costs, inspections, and moving expenses. Industry research has found that a significant majority of buyers would struggle to pay their broker's compensation entirely out of pocket in addition to those other costs. As a result, offering buyer broker compensation may help make your home financially accessible to a larger pool of qualified buyers and can, in some cases, simplify negotiations by reducing the need for buyers to request compensation as part of their offer. Every transaction is unique, and we will discuss the advantages and considerations of each approach so you can make the decision that is right for you.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

- ✓ Offering buyer broker compensation is completely optional. You are never required to offer it
- ✓ Compensation is always negotiable and should be discussed before your home is listed
- ✓ Offering compensation may help expand your pool of qualified buyers by reducing their up front out-of-pocket costs
- ✓ If compensation is not offered up front, buyers may choose to include a request for compensation as part of their purchase offer
- ✓ The best strategy depends on your goals, your property, and current market conditions.





thank you.

Thank you for taking the time to read through our Seller's Guide. We hope it has provided valuable insight into the home selling process and helped answer some of the questions you may have along the way. At Elm Street Realtors®, we believe real estate is about more than buying and selling homes—it's about people, relationships, and the communities we are so privileged to serve.

As the longest-standing independent real estate brokerage in DeKalb County, and a woman owned business, we take great pride in remaining locally owned, locally operated, and deeply rooted in the place we call home. Because we are independent, our decisions are guided by what is best for our clients—not by franchise quotas or corporate directives. Every recommendation we make, every strategy we develop, and every relationship we build is centered around one goal: helping you achieve the best possible outcome with honesty, professionalism, and exceptional service.

Whether you choose Elm Street Realtors® or another brokerage, we sincerely hope this guide has been a helpful resource as you prepare for your next chapter. If we have the opportunity to earn your trust, it would be our privilege to guide you through the process and help you confidently navigate one of life's most important decisions.

Thank you for considering Elm Street Realtors®. *Let Us Show You the Way Home.*



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