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THE MICHIGAN HOME SELLER'S GUIDE

A straight, easy walk through selling your home, from figuring out your next move to the day you hand over the keys

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HOW SELLING A HOME ACTUALLY WORKS

Selling a home can feel like a stack of decisions with a lot riding on getting them right. The reassuring part is that it follows a clear order, and most of the outcome is set early, in the pricing and the prep, long before an offer ever comes in.

This guide walks the whole thing start to finish, in plain language: what each step is, why it matters, and where the work goes into getting you the best price and terms. By the end you will know what selling actually looks like and where the leverage really is.

STEP 1: START WITH WHERE YOU ARE GOING

Before you spend a dollar or a weekend getting your home ready, get clear on where you are headed. Are you buying next, and if so, can you carry both for a stretch or do you need to sell first? Are you relocating, downsizing, or renting for a while to figure it out? Your next move drives your timeline, your pricing strategy, and how hard you push on the prep.

We have watched people pour energy into squeezing top dollar out of a home before they had any real plan for the other side of the move, and it makes the whole thing harder than it has to be. Figure out the destination first, and every decision after it gets simpler.

STEP 2: WALK THE HOME WITH A PRO AND BUILD THE PLAN

Once you know where you are going, have your REALTOR® walk the property with you and look at it the way a buyer will. This is where you build the actual plan for what happens before it lists.

Sometimes that is a dumpster and a hard declutter. Sometimes it is a storage unit to thin out rooms so they feel larger. Sometimes it is fresh paint, swapping a tired appliance, or handling a repair that would otherwise scare a buyer off.

The reason to have a professional in the room is honest triage: what is worth your time and money, and what is not. Not every improvement pays you back, and the right list looks different at different price points. A starter home and a luxury home are prepped to different standards, and matching the effort to the market is how you avoid sinking money into things buyers will never pay extra for. A good walk-through saves you from both over-improving and showing the home before it is ready.

STEP 3: LAND ON AN HONEST NUMBER

With the condition and the plan in view, you can set a realistic price. A comparative market analysis, or CMA, looks at what comparable homes near you have actually sold for, adjusted for your home's features and condition. Online estimates are a starting point, but they miss the local detail that moves real dollars. And just as important as the list price is what you will actually net after costs, so you are deciding with the real number, not the sticker.

STEP 4: PRICE IT RIGHT FROM DAY ONE

Pricing is the single biggest lever you control, and the most common place sellers leave money on the table. A home priced above the market tends to sit, and a home that sits invites lowball offers and price cuts that quietly tell buyers something is wrong. The most attention your listing will ever get is in its first week or two. Price it to land in the range buyers are actually paying right now, and you pull real interest while the spotlight is brightest.

STEP 5: PREP IT, PRESENT IT, AND GET IT SEEN

Now you execute the plan from Step 2 and get the home in front of the right people. You do not need to renovate, you need it to show well: clean, decluttered, the small visible things handled, and

curb appeal that earns the click and the visit. From there it is exposure, strong photos, an accurate and compelling listing, and getting it to the right buyers and agents. The feedback in the first few days tells you fast whether the price and presentation are landing, and a good REALTOR® reads that and adjusts before momentum is lost.

STEP 6: OFFERS AND NEGOTIATION

When offers come in, the highest number is not always the best one. Financing strength, contingencies, the closing timeline, and how solid the buyer looks all affect whether a deal actually closes. With multiple offers, the work is comparing the full terms, not just the top line. The aim is the strongest combination of price and certainty, and there are angles to work in nearly every counter, which is where experience quietly earns its keep.

STEP 7: INSPECTION, APPRAISAL, DISCLOSURE, AND THE PATH TO CLOSING

Once you accept an offer, the buyer typically inspects and their lender appraises. Inspection items can come back for negotiation, a repair, a credit, or a price adjustment, and almost every home has a list, so one is not a reason to panic. If the appraisal comes in below the agreed price on a financed deal, that gap has to be resolved before closing. In Michigan you will also complete a seller's disclosure of the home's known conditions, and the honest path there protects you down the line. Your REALTOR® manages these steps and the deadlines so nothing slips.

STEP 8: CLOSING DAY

By closing, the buyer's financing is done, the contingencies are cleared, and the title work is complete. You sign, the funds transfer, and ownership passes to the buyer. If you are buying at the same time, this is where timing matters most, and there are tools like a rent-back to bridge a short gap so you are not moving twice in one day. Then you hand over the keys.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Selling well is not luck, it is sequence and leverage. Know where you are going, plan the prep with a pro, set an honest number, price it right, present it well, and negotiate on more than price. The decisions you make early, before the sign ever goes in the yard, set up everything that follows.

If you want to know what your home would realistically sell for and net today, and what is actually worth doing before you list, that is a quick conversation.

WHERE TO START

START THE CONVERSATION

Tell us where you are and what you are trying to do. We will bring the plan.

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