

FIRST TIME HOME SELLERS IN CHARLOTTESVILLE

What's it like to sell a home?

Never sold a home in Charlottesville before? We'll get there. Selling is disruptive and invasive by nature — strangers walking through your home, your life scheduled around showings. My job is to represent and guide you through all of it.



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Listing and selling a home

Selling a house can be an uncomfortable experience. It's a necessarily invasive process. This is a bit of what to expect from start to finish.

PHASE ONE

Deciding

Decide to sell

This is so much more than a bullet point. Is this a discretionary move? Is it going to be worth the trauma? Where are you going? How long might your house take to sell? Can you afford to sell? And a whole lot more.

Determine what repairs and improvements you need to do, and which of the "should do" you're going to do

Yes, you likely need to spend money on upgrades that the next buyer will enjoy. You'll enjoy getting an offer. A reason I recommend spring sellers start in late summer/fall.

Interview agents — or, just call me

Evaluate market analyses — and ask questions

My valuations need to be defensible to me, to the seller, to the buyer, to the buyer agent, and the lender.

PHASE TWO

Preparing

First, your home is no longer "home;" it's a product

Staging? Virtual staging? We'll talk about this. If listing in the spring, take exterior photos in the fall — first to third week of October should be ideal. Listing in the winter? We'll do our best.

Upon listing

More of our work starts — custom website, signs, flyers, lockbox. The next pages break this part down step by step.

PHASE THREE

On the market

Wait. Patiently. (I know, it sucks)

Your last house might have sold 7 years ago in three days with multiple offers in a different market; lamentably, that means absolutely nothing with respect to your current market.

PHASE FOUR

Offer, contract, closing

Negotiations, holding things together

This is where stress, emotions, and calm heads come to play.

The Quiet Period

Once everything is done, and we're waiting.

Ask questions. About everything. And, be prepared to trust your representation.

Four things, before anything else

01

We'll find the right price to the market; the data will lead us, not emotions or what you want/need to make.

02

Clean and take pictures, floorplans, videos.

03

Sign, flyers, lockbox.

04

Market the home effectively and communicate throughout the process.

THE PREPPING TO SELL PROCESS

From signing to showings

- **Listing agreement signed**
Timing, goals, and whether to offer seller concessions to the buyer agent.
- **Walk-through video**
A quick video soon after signing — MLS data accuracy, plus a preview for other agents.
- **Clean, declutter, prep**
The projects you've meant to finish. HOA docs ordered now — they take time.
- **Photos, floorplans, video**
2–3 hours on site. Turnaround typically under 48 hours.
- **Sign installed**
About four days before showings. Watch for Miss Utility markings.
- **You approve the MLS and flyers**
Every description crosses your desk before it publishes.
- **Final pricing**
Set a few days out, against the most current market — not six weeks ago.
- **Coming soon → live for showings**
Typically Sunday/Monday as coming soon, live Thursday or Friday — but we activate when it suits you.

The prepping to sell process

- 01 Sign the listing documents, discuss timing, goals, whether to offer seller concessions to the buyer agent.
- 02 Photos / cleaning / activation.
- 03 I'd like to come by soon after signing listing documents to get a quick video for my purposes — so that I can refer to it to ensure data accuracy in the MLS. I'll do the video that I can send to other agents before we activate for showings.
- 04 Nail down timing to activate your listing. Typically we aim for Sunday/Monday as a coming soon, and activate as live for showings on Thursday or Friday. But — we activate when it best suits your needs and timelines, regardless of what “typical” timelines are.

I once activated three listings over a holiday weekend and traffic was abysmal. Was it that particular timing, or was it coincidence? I'm not sure, but either way, I'm inclined to not do that again.

- 05 Photos / floorplans / videos.

This usually takes about 2–3 hours for the photos/floorplans/Zillow Showcase, and turnaround is typically under 48 hours (I can often get them to send me a couple that evening for us to use in Coming Soon emails and for the MLS).
- 06 **Sign** — Once we have a target date for activation, I'll order the sign installation. Example: if we want to plan for showings on the 10th, I'd aim to have the sign installed on the 6th. Look for markings from Miss Utility as they come and mark underground utilities — no one likes surprises.

07 Order HOA docs — as soon as we sign the listing agreement. Warning: these are expensive — often several hundred dollars. I wish we could use the ones you can download from the neighborhood site or from when you purchased, but we need current ones so that we can deliver immediately to the purchasers as soon as we are under contract — I like to remove contingencies as fast as possible.

Note: in current vernacular as of 2025, HOA disclosure is now called “resale certificate” just as “HOA” is now “Common Interest Community.” Whatever. We need HOA docs, no matter what the legislature calls them.

08 Flyers — I tend to use the ones with the most data — the MLS sheets. I find that most of my buyer clients gravitate towards them as they have the most information and eschew the “pretty” ones that a) have pretty photos that the buyers are actually looking at right now, and b) the pretty ones are usually discarded first.

I'll send the MLS and all descriptions to you before going live to make sure no errors are published.

I also ask you to direct me to deny any buyer presentation letters. My thinking on this has evolved over the years. In 2022, I wrote about how my thinking changed to “no letters.” In 2018, I was still sort of advising them. In 2006, I was advocating for writing buyer presentation letters.

If you can fill out the seller scoop, that would be very helpful — it helps me add color to the description.

09 Final pricing — we'll nail down the price a few days prior to activation to ensure we are pricing the most current market. What we thought six months, six weeks, or even six days ago might not be the best pricing strategy. We listen to the data. Price matters; it always matters. If there are six active comps, we may need to price lower than expected. If there are five pendings and one or no actives, we might be able to go a bit higher.

10 Lockbox — I'll drop off a lockbox in the next couple of weeks; I'll need a key for that.

11 Showings — I'll set you up on the service we use, ShowingTime, so that you will be notified of any showings. If you are living there when we go live, I'll set it so that you can confirm/deny/reschedule appointments (around naptime, meetings, etc).

If you're not there, I'll set it so that you are notified when showings happen, and they will be confirmed automatically.



YOUR LIST

What's on you, and when

Check them off as we go. Anything you'd rather hand to me, hand to me.

- ☐ Sign the listing documents — and talk through timing, goals, and seller concessions
- ☐ Pick the activation date that suits your timeline, not the “typical” one
- ☐ Order the HOA docs / resale certificate — budget several hundred dollars
- ☐ Clean and declutter every room
- ☐ Be ready for the walk-through video soon after signing
- ☐ Block 2–3 hours for photos, floorplans, and Zillow Showcase
- ☐ Fill out the seller scoop
- ☐ Watch for Miss Utility markings before the sign goes in
- ☐ Read the MLS sheet and every description before we publish
- ☐ Leave a spare key for the lockbox
- ☐ Set your ShowingTime preferences — naptimes, meetings, anything off-limits
- ☐ Confirm final pricing a few days before we activate

Questions are the whole point. Ask me anything.

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