



Turn-Key Relocation Specialist

A GUIDE FROM AMY JACOBS, REALTOR®

The Home Seller's Guide

How to sell your home for top dollar in today's market.



Moving you forward, to move you home.

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Welcome to Your Home Selling Journey



Selling a home is a project with a clear order of steps. This guide walks through all eight, so you know what to expect and what I am doing for you at each one. I am Amy Jacobs, a REALTOR® with [Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices PenFed Realty Texas](#). I guide sellers across Plano, Frisco, Prosper, Celina, and McKinney, and I have guided relocating families since 2012.

Read it straight through, or jump to the step you are on. The details of your own sale come from your listing agreement and your contract, so treat this as a map and call me with any question.

1. Set your goals and choose your agent
2. Price it right
3. Prepare for market
4. Go on the market and show the home
5. Negotiate offers and accept a contract
6. The buyer's option period
7. Pre-closing and escrow
8. Closing day

Step 1: Set Your Goals and Choose Your Agent

We begin with three questions. Why are you selling? Where are you moving? And when would you like to be done? Your answers set the timeline and the strategy.

Then we meet to plan: staging and photography, price, the timing of going to market, and a net sheet that shows what you can expect to walk away with. To get the most from that meeting, bring your latest mortgage statement, your interest rate, whether your taxes and insurance are in escrow, and your HOA dues if you have them.

Choosing an agent matters. Ask who will actually market your home, who will answer your calls, and how they communicate. Who you hire truly matters.



Step 2: Price It Right

Pricing is the most important decision in the sale. Buyers and their agents decide based on the market, and the market looks at a handful of things.

A home's price is based on: location, market conditions, competition, timing, condition, and how it looks. **It is not based on:** what you paid for the home, what you owe on it, what you spent on maintenance or repairs, how much you would like to net, or emotions. I know those last ones are hard to set aside, and that is part of my job.

I price your home with a comparative market analysis: recent sales of similar homes, size, condition, location, and what is competing with you right now.

Staging, photography, and marketing all help a home sell, and I recommend them. But in this market, a home that is not priced right will not sell, no matter how beautifully it is staged. Price comes first, and everything else builds on it.



Why the First 30 Days Matter, and the Risks of Overpricing

A home draws the most interest and the most showings when it first comes on the market. Buyers who are ready to move are watching for new listings, and a home priced at a realistic market value gets that attention while it is new.

Starting too high and lowering the price later misses that early excitement. Overpricing tends to:

- lengthen marketing time and lose the early momentum
- attract fewer buyers and fewer offers
- send buyers to look at your home and then buy a better-priced competitor
- risk an appraisal below the contract price, which can cost a buyer the loan
- end with the home selling below market value after all

Step 3: Prepare for Market

Preparing well makes the biggest difference in how your home shows in photos and in person. I give you written checklists, and this is the short version.

Before the staging consultation: have moving boxes and tape on hand, and declutter closets, rooms, and counters. The home does not need a deep clean, only tidy.

Before the photo shoot: clean the home professionally (and the carpets if needed), open the shades and curtains, make the beds, put the toilet seats down, store small kitchen appliances, put pets away, and move cars out of the driveway. Turn off the alarm, and plan to be out of the house about 15 minutes before the photographer arrives.

Exterior: mow, trim shrubs, pull weeds, power wash the driveway and siding, wash windows, clean gutters, and touch up paint or stain. **Inside:** deep clean the kitchen and bathrooms, repair major flooring damage, clear counters, remove personal photos, and declutter closets and the garage.

Gather these documents: your latest mortgage statement, your survey, utility averages, a list of features and upgrades, maintenance and repair receipts, and copies of any leases for equipment on the home, such as security systems. List anything that stays or goes with the home, such as light fixtures, curtains and rods, TV mounts, and built-in grills, so there is no confusion later.

Step 4: On the Market and Showings

Your home goes live with professional photography and online exposure on the major home search sites, plus targeted digital marketing, social media, and flyers. Most buyers start their search online, so the photos and the first week matter most.

Showing requests come through a showing app. You can approve a time, propose another, or decline. The more available your home is, the more buyers see it. I ask every showing agent for feedback and send it to you, and as offers arrive I send them to you with a clear breakdown.

Before each showing: tidy the home and kitchen, open the shades, make the beds, put pets away or take them with you, and leave the house about 15 minutes before buyers arrive. Open houses and private showings let buyers experience the space in person, and I attend to answer their questions.



Step 5: Negotiate Offers and Accept a Contract

An offer is more than a price. I put each one side by side for you: the price, the financing, the closing date, the option period, the earnest money, and anything the buyer asks you to pay for or repair. The strongest offer is not always the highest number.

You can accept, counter, or decline. Seller-paid items, often called concessions, are only part of a deal if they are negotiated into the contract. When both sides sign, you have a contract, and the buyer's option period begins.

What Changed with the NAR Settlement

You may have heard about the National Association of REALTORS® settlement. Here is what to know as a seller.

- The settlement took effect on August 17, 2024. It resolved a class action filed in Missouri federal court (Sitzer/Burnett) by home sellers against NAR and others.
- Real estate compensation is not set by law and is fully negotiable.
- Offers of compensation to a buyer's agent are no longer shown in the MLS. If you choose to offer any compensation to a buyer's agent, your listing agent must disclose it to you in writing and get your approval first.
- Buyers working with MLS-member agents now sign a written agreement before touring homes.

How all of this applies to your own sale is something I walk through with you one on one, in your listing consultation. For the latest national information, you can visit NAR's Facts page at facts.realtor.



Step 6: The Buyer's Option Period

Once the contract is signed, the buyer pays earnest money and an option fee to the title company and has a set number of days, the option period, to order inspections and decide whether to move forward. Inspections usually take four to five hours. Typically only the inspector, the buyer, and the buyer's agent attend, and I let you know when they are scheduled so they can get in.

After the inspection, the buyer may send a repair request. They usually focus on safety items and big-ticket items such as the roof, plumbing, water heater, foundation, and major appliances, and not on cosmetic items or normal wear. You have choices:

1. Agree to make the requested repairs before closing.
2. Offer a combination of repairs and a credit at closing.
3. Offer only a credit at closing instead of repairs.
4. Counter or decline.

If you cannot agree, the buyer can cancel during the option period. The buyer's earnest money goes back to them, and you keep the option fee. When both sides agree on repairs, the home moves to pending.

Step 7: Pre-Closing and Escrow

Now the buyer's lender orders an appraisal. You do not usually need to be there, and I tell you when it is scheduled and when it clears. The title company contacts you for your lender's information to prepare a payoff, and it searches the title to confirm ownership is clear. A survey may be ordered if needed. Respond quickly if the title company asks for documents, because delays here can move your closing date.

Finish any agreed repairs and send me the receipts and proof. Then the buyer's lender takes the loan through final underwriting, and when the title company and lender give a clear to close, you have a closing date.

Step 8: Closing Day

A few days before closing, the title company sends the initial Closing Disclosure, which should line up with the net sheet we reviewed. The buyer may do a final walkthrough, and you schedule utilities to turn off the day after closing.

On closing day, I go with you to the title company, answer your questions, and check that the paperwork matches the contract. Everyone on the deed must be present unless there is a power of attorney. Bring a current government-issued photo ID and your keys and garage remotes. You can have your proceeds wired or take a paper check.

Protect yourself from wire fraud. Do not wire or change any funds until you have spoken by phone with your title company at a number you already know is real. Instructions should come only from the title company.



Buying Your Next Home and Selling This One

If you are buying again, you have two main paths. Buying first gives you a place lined up, but if your offer depends on selling your current home, a buyer without that condition can beat you to it. Selling first puts you in a stronger position to negotiate on the next home, but leaves the question of where you will live in between. In that case, a rent-back, where you stay in the home for an agreed number of days after closing, can sometimes be negotiated. We choose the path that fits your timeline and your lender.

If you are relocating, my [relocation plan](#) coordinates both ends of the move.

How I Guide You Through the Sale

I price with evidence, prepare your home with you, market it, and manage every showing, offer, inspection, and closing document, keeping your lender payoff, the title company, and the buyer's side on the same schedule. To talk about your own home and timeline, [book a free consultation with Amy Jacobs](#) or call [214-529-2641](#). See also [selling your home](#), [Plano real estate](#), and [Frisco real estate](#).

This guide describes the general process for selling a home in Texas. It is not legal, tax, or financial advice. Your listing agreement, contract, and title company set the specifics for your sale.

Frequently Asked Questions

How should I price my home?

Amy Jacobs prices with a comparative market analysis: recent sales of similar homes in your area, along with size, condition, location, and current competition. A price based on evidence draws the most buyers in the first weeks on the market.

How long will it take to sell my home?

It depends on the price, the condition, the market, and how well the home is presented. Once a contract is signed, closing commonly takes about 30 to 45 days.

What improvements should I make before listing?

Usually the best returns come from cleaning, decluttering, minor repairs, fresh paint where needed, and curb appeal. Amy Jacobs walks your home with you before listing and recommends what is worth doing for your situation.

What is the option period when I sell in Texas?

It is the set number of days, negotiated in the contract, during which the buyer can order inspections and cancel for any reason. The buyer pays an option fee for that right. If the buyer cancels during the period, the earnest money returns to the buyer and the seller keeps the option fee.

Who closes the sale in Texas?

The title company handles closing. It confirms the title, pays off your mortgage, collects and disburses funds, and records the documents. Never wire funds until you speak with the title company at a phone number you know is real.

Let's talk it through

Book a free consultation, or call or text me. It is never too early to ask a question.

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