



Bill Smithson
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Home Selling Secrets

Two Ways To Sell Your Home...

1

Get a real estate agent

Wait for an offer

Wait for an offer

Reduce the sales price

Wait for an offer

Wait for a **serious** offer

Get a new real estate agent

Wait for an offer

Reduce the sales price (again)

Wait for an offer

Wait for an offer

Take your home off the market

2

Hire Me
and
Start
Packing!

Ready to buy or sell? Call me today!





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Home Selling Secrets

Kitchens Are the Most Important Room

I have found kitchens are the most important rooms for buyers. If you want to sell your home fast for top dollar, this is where to focus first.

Look at your kitchen floor and countertops. Are yours old and outdated? If so, updating them now will almost always get you more money in a higher selling price than it costs to update them.

If you're concerned if you can get your money out of fixing certain things up, just call me and ask. I can tell you what will and will not get you a higher sales price.

The next thing to look at are cabinets and appliances. They should be as appealing as possible. You don't necessarily need to

replace older cabinets and appliances — after all, that can get expensive. But there are many inexpensive things you can do to make them look updated.

For example, instead of replacing old cabinets, re-face them with new doors and fixtures to give a more modern look at a fraction of the cost. If you can't afford that, paint them and update the knobs and hinges to a more modern style.

Or if your appliances have worn-out or scratched front panels, many times you can get replacement panels from the manufacturers for a small fraction of buying new appliances.

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Home Selling Secrets

Bathrooms Are the 2nd Most Important Rooms

While kitchens are the most important room when selling, bathrooms are the second most important. So pay special attention to them.

The key to preparing bathrooms when selling your home is making sure they are in "guest-perfect" condition.

Make sure all grout is clean and there are no stains or mildew *anywhere*. After you have lived in a home for a while grout gets chipped out and you may not have even noticed. So look closely at everything and re-grout or caulk as needed to make it look perfect. Make sure the bathroom walls are

freshly painted and all light bulbs work. While we're on the subject of light bulbs, replace all bulbs with the highest wattage bulbs allowed. You want the bathroom as bright and friendly as possible.

Finally, have fresh, matching towels that are "just right" for each bathroom, showing buyers how beautiful and elegant your bathrooms are.

It's these little touches that get buyers falling in love with your home ... and wanting to buy it!

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Home Buying Secrets



Check Your Credit *Before* Buying a New Home

I've learned that when buying a new home your credit score is one of your most important assets. A great score makes it easy to qualify for a loan. A bad score can make it impossible.

Even if you've paid everything on time, as soon as you start thinking about buying a home your *first* step should be to get a copy of your credit report.

By law, you are entitled to one free copy of your credit report every 12 months from each of the three nationwide credit reporting companies.

Once you get your report, here are the two most important things to look for:

1. Credit utilization: the more of your available credit you are using the lower your credit score; the less you're using the higher your score. Find out where you are and what you can free up to improve your score.

2. Damaged Credit: your credit can be damaged by late payments, creditor mistakes or identity theft. It's important to know what's going on. If your credit is damaged, repairing it takes time. Begin the process at least 6 months before shopping for a new home.

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Home Updating Tips

Thinking about
updating your home?

If so, let's have coffee!

If you plan to update your home, let me know.
I'd love to come over and guide you on what
updates will increase its value and keep it
current in the market. There is no charge for
this — I *love* helping friends! Call me anytime.

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Home Selling Secrets

Fresh Paint Breathes New Life Into A Home

Here's another tip on selling homes: **first impressions count!** If your walls are dingy, faded or "marked up" through years of use, the impression buyers get is your home is "worn out."

A fresh coat of paint breathes new life into any room. It makes old, worn-out walls look brand new. And frequently it more than pays for itself in a faster sale at a higher price.

Painting also makes your home appear larger. This is especially true if you have small rooms. For example, if you have a small kitchen with attached living area, choosing the right color and painting them both the same can make

them appear larger.

And lastly, when buyers walk through your home you want them dreaming how the home will become theirs.

If you have bright, vivid colors out of the norm, it can turn buyers off. Paint in neutral colors that fit any décor. As buyers walk through your home, they are met with a fresh coat of paint, a home that looks almost brand new, and colors they can see themselves with their own furniture and family living in!

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Home Selling Secrets



All agents are the same ... or *are* they?

Good agents consistently sell the homes they list. Others don't.

What kind of agent is best for you?

I've learned it's the one who *aggressively* looks for buyers to ensure your home sells ... and not the one who just places a sign in the yard, lists it in the MLS, and hopes a buyer shows up.

So when you plan to sell, know the kind of agent you hire. The cost of making a mistake is high.

FACT: A home that expires from

the market a *second* time sells for an average **8.2% LESS** than other homes. That can cost you money!

Perception is reality. When a home has failed to sell, buyers *perceive* it to be LESS valuable, so they won't pay as much for it ... and you lose.

When you are ready to sell your home, make sure it sells the *first* time. My homes **consistently** do. Call me and I'll show you why.

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Home Selling Secrets

Get Floors and Carpets Spotless Clean

Here's another thing I've learned about selling homes for TOP dollar...

When buyers start touring your home, you want them thinking how much the space has to offer. You want them dreaming of the possibilities your home has for their family. So the last thing you want is to interrupt their thoughts because of a large stain in the middle of the carpet or a dark track of dirt from the front door to the kitchen.

It may seem insignificant to you ... after all, you've lived with it for years. You hardly even notice it anymore. However, for a buyer it stands out like a sore thumb. To sell your home fast and get the most

money you must remove all obstacles that can keep a buyer from loving your home. The more they love it, the more they are willing to pay for it and the faster they'll make an offer.

So, take the time to clean your floors. Resurface or polish worn wooden floors. Professionally clean all your carpets and rugs. If you have stains or dark spots that won't come out consider replacing the carpet. Even if you invest in replacing your carpet you can frequently get it back in the sales price. And if you're not sure, give me a call and I can advise you on your specific situation.

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Home Buying Secrets

Planning to Buy a New Home? Learn About the Neighborhood *First...*

Thinking of buying a new home? Here are a few tips I teach my clients to keep in mind. When they do, their purchase is always much better!

1. Visit several times and “test drive” your commute. Many homeowners get frustrated after buying what they thought was the perfect home. Once they move in they realize how busy the street is, how far from work or shopping they are, and more. So don’t fall into this trap. When you find the “perfect” home, drive the commute to work and make sure it’s something you can live with each day. Find out where the grocery store and shopping is. The more you know, the happier you’ll ultimately be with

your decision.

2. Are there many renters in the neighborhood? If there are a lot of renters, all it takes is a few bad ones or lazy landlords to drive down prices in a area, and that can impact your selling later. So be aware before buying.

3. Research the schools. Even if you don’t have kids, find out about the school system. The school system can impact home values as much as 20%, affecting you when you try to sell. Knowing the school system helps you make a wise, long-term investment before you buy.

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Home Selling Secrets

Fix and Repair Everything

I've learned that when selling your home *every* detail is important. Let nothing grab your buyer's eye to say "this isn't right!" So pay close attention to fix each item.

For starters, take a screwdriver and go throughout your home. Make sure all the cabinet handles, knobs and hinges are securely attached. A loose cabinet handle can be enough to turn-off a buyer. Do the same with every door.

Next, go through each room and replace every burned out bulb. And don't go with the low-wattage, energy saving bulbs, either. You're trying to sell your home and buyers love bright, airy

rooms. So use only the brightest, highest wattage bulb recommended for its fixture.

And while we're on that note, go through and replace every bulb that isn't bright, even if it isn't burned out.

Finally, go through each room and look for anything that needs repair. Are there water stains on the ceiling? Fix it. Cracks in the tile or missing caulk around the bathtub? Caulk it. Do you have loose bricks on your outside front steps? Re-cement them. Fix and repair everything, every little detail, so the home shows in *perfect condition!*

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I LOVE Referrals!

**Do you know someone
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I love referrals! Please refer them to me (*pass this card to them*) or contact me and let me know who they are. And when you do I'd love to grab a cup of coffee with you and say "Thanks!"

P.S. If *you* are thinking about buying or selling a home, please let me know — I'd love to help!

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Home Selling Secrets

Don't dare try selling your home until you read this...



Aggressive pre-marketing of your home could gain you as much as 2% more sales price when it sells. That's extra money you get to *keep*.

Aggressive active-marketing once your home is listed for sale ensures more buyers see it. More buyers not only means a faster sale, it can determine whether your home actually sells ... or not.

and aggressively active-market them once they are for sale.

It's this *aggressive* marketing that ensures my homes sell!

So if you're ready to sell your home call me today. I will make it happen fast ... and for the most money!

I aggressively pre-market my homes

Ready to buy or sell? Call me today!



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Home Selling Secrets

Clean Everything ... Then Clean It Again

Here's another tip I've learned about selling homes: Buyers notice **EVERYTHING!**

It's the little things that make a big impression, so make sure *everything* is spotless clean.

Clean all windows and mirrors. Make sure there are no cobwebs on windows to block the sunlight for your prospects.

Thoroughly dust everything ... every surface and every blind in your home, even in the closets. You might even consider hiring a cleaning service to "deep clean" your home.

Take a broom and sweep all cobwebs from your doors and any outside lights. Sweep your porch and don't forget the corners (especially if you have a screened-in porch). Even sweep out the corners by your garage doors if you have them.

And then, just before each showing go back through and re-dust every surface again to make it spotlessly perfect. I know this may seem like overkill, but to sell your home in a competitive market *everything* must make a great, first impression.

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Home Buying Secrets

Hold Onto Your Money 6 Months Before Buying a New Home. Here's Why...

If you plan to buy a new home in the next 6 months, here's another tip I've learned: be careful what you do with your money.

Mortgage lenders want to see you are reliable with your finances. They want to see a complete paper trail on everything. And most importantly, they want to see a good credit profile.

So be careful what you do.

Don't open new credit cards or lines of credit. Don't buy new, big ticket items. And don't go spending the money in your savings account.

The more you do these things, the harder it will be to get a mortgage loan.

If possible, start paying down your lines of credit. If you have credit cards you no longer use, close them. If you can pay off that auto loan or any other loans, do it.

The more debt you can eliminate, the easier it will be to get approved for a new mortgage. Plus, you'll likely get it at a lower rate!

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Home Selling Secrets



What is the **most** important marketing decision you will make when choosing to sell your home?

80% of the marketing of your home is done the night we decide at what price you will offer your home.

Here's why...

If a stock sells between \$104 and \$108, it does no good to insist on selling at \$112. No-one will buy it. Likewise, your home must be priced *within* the market range or it won't sell. I'll do in-depth research for you and together we will determine the *highest*

possible price the current market will bear.

We'll then determine who the best targeted buyers are that will pay the most for your home.

I will then develop the marketing plan to attract those buyers & aggressively execute that plan to find them!

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Home Selling Secrets

On Average...

Buyers inspect 12
homes before deciding.

**That means 11 other homes will
be competing against YOURS!**

My aggressive pre-marketing *before* your home goes
on the market, plus aggressive marketing for buyers
once it's on the market, ensures your home wins!

Ready to buy or sell? Call me today!



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Home Selling Secrets

No other agent does as much
to get your home **SOLD** as **I** do!

*I work
harder*

In today's real estate market I've learned it takes an agent who ***aggressively*** markets your home to get it sold.

Most agents do "passive marketing." They stick a sign in the yard, list your home in the MLS, have an occasional open house ... and hope for a buyer to show up.

Passive marketing doesn't work in today's market. Passive methods frequently result in your home **not** selling. So don't hire a passive agent.

I implement "active marketing." I use many methods to *actively* search for buyers. Then I personally follow up with each one. I feel obligated to actively find buyers for my sellers each day.

If you're ready to sell your home and want an aggressive agent to sell it *fast* and for TOP dollar, call me today!

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Home Selling Secrets

Remove Excess Furniture

Another secret I've learned selling homes is: after a while we usually accumulate more things than our home really needs, and that can *kill* a sale.

You and I don't notice it at first because it's our stuff. We say things like, "I love great-grandmother's chair in our bedroom and that big, overstuffed lounge chair in the den is just perfect."

As we accumulate things we keep adding them to our rooms. Over time the rooms get smaller and smaller. But when buyers look at your home they don't want small, cramped rooms. They want LARGE, spacious rooms.

So a simple way to open rooms and make them larger and more spacious is get things out of your home. Sometimes this is one of the hardest things for the homeowner to do. After all, everything is personal and it all "fits" perfectly the way you want it.

But even though it's hard, it's critical you do it. If you're not sure what to take out, give me a call. I can show you which things to take out of a room to open it up and make your home look bigger. Then simply rent a small storage unit to store it until your home sells.

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Home Selling Secrets

Here's How I Work...

- 1. You list your home with me**
- 2. You Move!**

That's how easy I make it for you. For me ... well, it's a little more work, but I don't mind. I have a **detailed, proven process** of step-by-step preparation and aggressive target marketing to make sure you get moved! I even implement strategies before your home is ever placed for sale, so when it goes on the market, it sells fast and you move quickly!

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Home Selling Secrets



If you think hiring a **professional** to sell your home is expensive... try hiring an **amateur!**

The agent you hire can *determine* whether your home sells ... or **not**. So, when you list your home don't hire an amateur. Give *me* a call!

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Home Buying Secrets

The Best Time To Buy a New Home

Buying a new home is a long term investment. And as with all investments, most people want to buy low and sell high.

So how do you best time the market when buying a new home?

The answer might surprise you.

You don't.

Trying to anticipate the real estate market is impossible. Real estate prices constantly fluctuate. They go up, they go down. They are completely

unpredictable.

The most important investment you make is not the financial investment, but your personal enjoyment of loving the home you buy.

Because of that, the best time to buy is when you find the perfect home. When you do it this way, you'll make the *perfect* long term investment ... your happiness.

Everything else will take care of itself.

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Home Selling Secrets



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Odors Kill Sales

Here's another tip I've learned on selling homes for TOP dollar...

Most buyers are turned off by even the smallest amount of uncleanliness or odor when they walk into a home. Because of this, many owners lose thousands of dollars when they sell because they do not adequately clean.

If your home is squeaky clean you will sell it faster and get more money for it. And if you plan to move anyway, why not get rid of

that old junk *now* so your home will appear larger?

Odors must also be eliminated, especially if you have dogs, cats, young children in diapers or if you smoke. You may not notice the smell, but buyers do!

Most agents have a difficult time communicating to their sellers about odor. However, by hiring me to get the most money for you, don't take offense if I must confront you about odor problems.

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Home Selling Secrets

Get Rid of Clutter

When preparing to sell I've learned you *must* get rid of the clutter.

I'm not just talking about furniture. While getting out excess furniture is important, also remove all the knick-knacks and photos on the table, the over-crowded and stuffed bookshelves, and anything else that, when a stranger walks into a room, their eyes are immediately met with "clutter."

The old adage, "less is more," certainly rings true here. Within reason, the fewer things in your bookshelves, the better. The less furniture in the room, the better. The fewer knick-knacks on the table or mantle, the better.

Don't overwhelm buyers with a lot of clutter. Not only does it distract the eye but it creates a sense that your home lacks space ... and that is the *last* thing you want in a buyer's mind.

And while you are de-cluttering your home, don't forget about the basement. Help buyers visualize how much room they will have to store *their* stuff when they move in.

It's little things like this that sell a home fast and for the most money!

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Home Selling Secrets



Why PRICE is the *most* important part of selling your home...

I'm learning that buyers today are increasingly more educated than ever before. And with as many home selling websites on the market today, they know what homes *should* be selling for.

Because of this it's crucial you price your home properly.

Price it too low ... and buyers think something is wrong so they won't buy.

Price it too high ... and buyers know it's over-priced and won't even look.

The most important thing to realize when selling your home is it's the *market* that ultimately determines the price of your home, not you. This is why you must diligently research the market trends to determine the price you list your home.

When you hire me I'll do that research and guide you in this process. That way you'll be assured to get the *highest* price the market will bear.

Ready to buy or sell? Call me today!