

GUIDE TO

Selling A HOME




Windermere
Real Estate



GUIDE TO
Selling A HOME

- 3 Using a Windermere agent to sell your home
- 4 Preparing your house for sale
- 6 Showing your home
- 7 Purchase and sale agreement
- 8 It's more complicated than just finding a buyer
- 9 Home inspections
- 10 Worksheet: Calculating your net proceeds
- 11 Moving tips
- 12 Packing tips
- 13 Settlement—who pays what
- 14 Glossary



Using a Windermere agent to sell your home

Your home may be your single biggest investment and one of the largest financial transactions you'll ever make. So when you sell, you want to get the best price and the most favorable terms. But there's much more to marketing a home than placing a classified ad in the newspaper and anchoring a "For Sale" sign in the front yard. There are many marketing options, legalities and details that go into the sale, from the time you set the price to the final closing.

The best way to make sure you sell your home for the best price, and in the shortest amount of time, is to work with a professional Windermere agent. I'm educated in every aspect of the transaction, from writing an offer to negotiating the price, to arranging financing and following the transaction through to escrow.

- ❖ I know the market and will help you set the right price.
- ❖ I also know what buyers are looking for and the financial incentives that will encourage them to buy.
- ❖ I am a member of the Multiple Listing Service (MLS), a service that enables me to provide detailed information about your home to the thousands of other agents assisting buyers.
- ❖ In addition to the MLS, I interact with other agents on a daily basis. We trade information about new properties and match eager buyers with the right homes.
- ❖ Windermere's nationwide referral system provides me access to the large number of people who relocate each year, increasing the pool of qualified buyers for your home.

I can quickly separate the qualified buyers from the rest of the pack. This saves you time because your home is only being shown to serious buyers.

Preparing your house for sale

A clean, neat home in need of few or no repairs will sell faster, and at a higher price, than one that is run down. To give your home its best possible presentation, perform a mini-makeover before your home is shown to potential buyers. Then, do a final walk-through with your Windermere agent to make sure no details have been overlooked. Here's a list of tips that will help you make your home more attractive. Some of the items below will be part of a buyer's inspection and may need to be repaired or replaced as part of the transaction. As your agent, I will discuss these important items with you.

Repair and cleaning checklist:



Exterior:

- Remove peeling and chipped paint; replace with a fresh coat.
- Clear gutters and downspouts.
- Make sure there is good exterior lighting and all walkway lights and front door lanterns work.
- Remove any moss from the roof.

Yard:

- Mow and trim grass; re-seed and fertilize where necessary.
- Prune all overgrown trees and shrubs.
- Remove or replace dead or diseased plants, shrubs and trees.
- Clean grease and oil stains from driveway.
- Weed flower beds.

Decks/Patios:

- Paint or stain worn areas in wood decks.
- Remove grass growing in concrete cracks; sweep off debris from shrubs and trees.
- Clean all fencing and make sure it's secure; replace missing slats or posts.

Front door:

- Polish the hardware on the door until it shines.
- Add a fresh coat of paint to get rid of nicks.
- Clean the glass on the storm door; make certain the screen is secure.
- Make sure the doorbell operates properly and there are no squeaks when the door opens and closes.

Windows:

- Clean all windows—inside and out.
- If needed, add a fresh coat of paint to the window trims and sills.
- Make sure all windows open and close easily.
- Replace cracked windowpanes and those with broken seals.
- Make sure window screens are secure; replace any screens with holes or tears.

Repair and cleaning checklist
(continued):



Entry:

- Clean entryway floors and area rugs.
- Downsize clutter in entry closet to give the appearance of spaciousness.
- Double-check entry lighting to make sure it is operating.

Living room/dining room/family room:

- Give the room a fresh coat of paint, if necessary.
- Repair cracks and holes in ceiling and walls.
- Make sure all wallpaper is secure.
- Repaint any woodwork that is worn or chipped.
- Clean draperies and blinds; open them to maximize light.
- Make sure draperies and blinds open and close.
- Wash windows.
- Steam-clean carpets. Clean rugs and wood flooring and remove any stains or odors.
- Position the furniture to showcase the size and space of the room.
- Remove and replace any attached items, such as chandeliers and draperies, that you wish to move with you.
- Put away toys and hobby supplies; remove extra magazines and books from tables.

Kitchen:

- Make sure countertops and sinks are clean and stain-free.
- Fix dripping faucets.
- Organize pantry and cupboards so they appear clean, neat and spacious.
- Make sure the refrigerator and freezer are defrosted and free of odors.
- Clean the oven and cook-top thoroughly.

Bathrooms:

- Make sure sinks, tubs, showers and countertops are clean and free of stains.
- Repair any leaky faucets.
- Remove grout and soap stains from tile.
- Replace any missing or cracked tiles or grout.
- Make sure all joints are caulked.
- Make sure all fixtures, including heat lamps and exhaust fans, are operating.
- Install a new shower curtain.
- Store all supplies like toilet paper, shampoo bottles and cleansers.

Repair and cleaning checklist
(continued):

Bedrooms:

- Repair cracks in ceiling and walls.
- Apply a fresh coat of paint if necessary.
- Make sure wallpaper is secure.
- Clean draperies and blinds; open them to maximize light.
- Put away toys, clothes.
- Neatly make up the beds.

Basement:

- Check for water penetration or dampness; call for professional repairs if necessary.
- Get rid of musty odors.
- Clean furnace and drains.
- Make sure light fixtures are operating.
- Arrange storage area in a neat and organized manner.
- Sweep floor.
- Make sure stairway handrail is secure.

Tidy extras:

- Plant flowers to brighten a walkway and enrich the entry.
- Remove any indoor houseplants that are brown or losing their leaves.
- Remove all fixer cars, campers and boats from the property.
- Discard the clutter of magazines on the coffee and end tables.
- Hide or get rid of worn-out throw pillows.
- Replace shower curtains and invest in a matching set of towels in the bathroom.
- At night, turn on porch light and outdoor lighting. Buyers often drive by homes they are considering at various times of day.

Showing your home



Once your home is ready to show, your Windermere agent will begin marketing it to potential buyers and other sales associates. If possible, leave the home when buyers are present so they feel comfortable asking their agent candid questions. Other helpful tips include:

- Remove pets. Take them with you or keep them penned in the yard or garage.
- Open shades and curtains to let in light.
- Turn on enough lights so the home is well lit.
- Remove clutter from tables and bookshelves. Neatness makes rooms seem larger.
- Put away items in the yard such as garden tools, bicycles and toys.
- Light a fire in the fireplace to create a cozy atmosphere.
- Grind up part of a lemon in the disposal to add a fresh smell to the kitchen.
- Keep radios and TVs off, or on low volume.
- Keep money and other valuables, as well as prescription drugs, out of sight.

Purchase and sale agreement



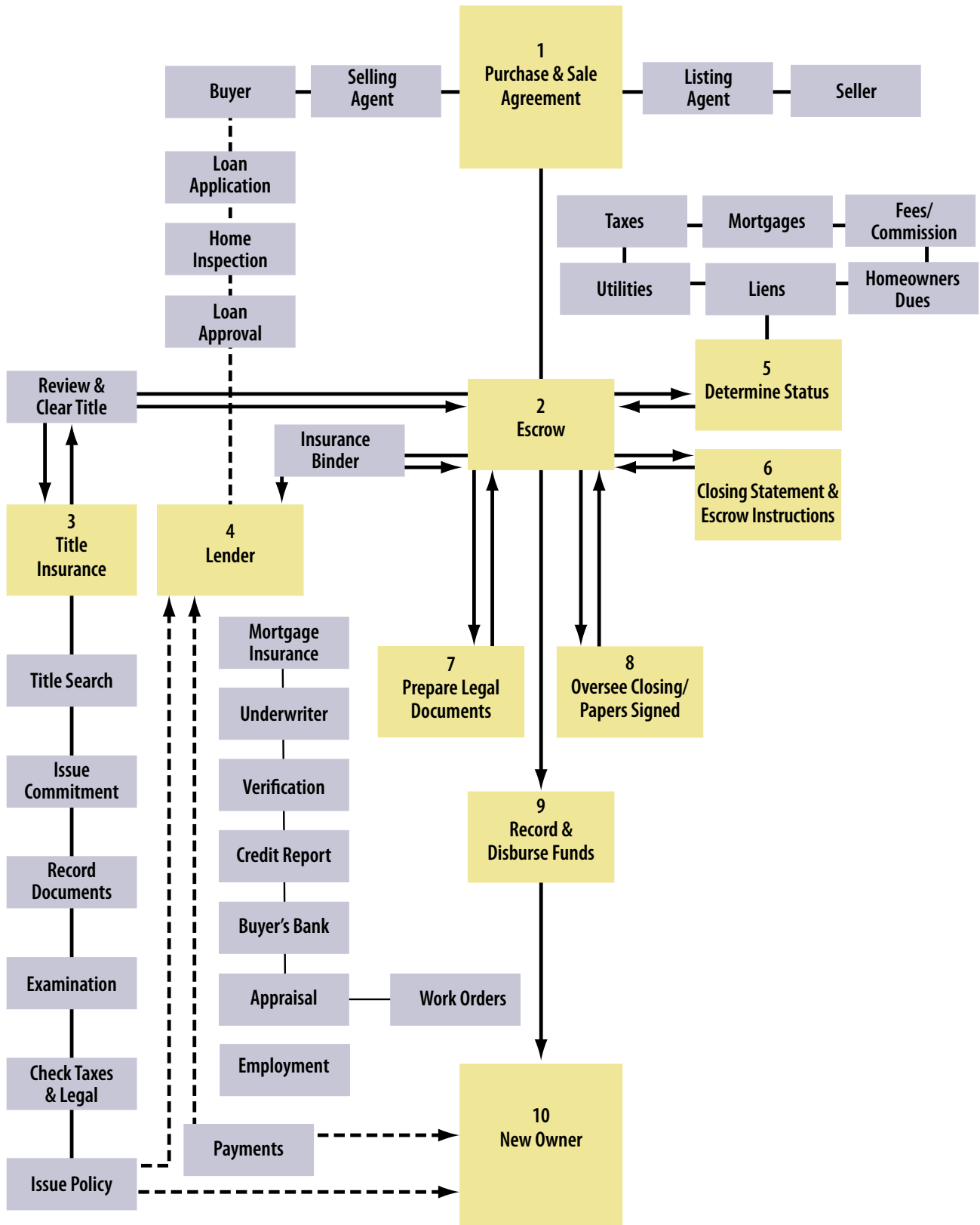
Once you've found a buyer for your home, I will work with you through the purchase and sale agreement. This is the contract in which you and the buyer outline the details of your property transfer. The purchase and sale agreement usually consists of the following pages:

- ❖ Earnest money receipt
- ❖ Financing addendum
- ❖ Inspection addendum
- ❖ Conditions/disclosure addendum
- ❖ Contingency addendum—when appropriate
- ❖ Addendum outlining special conditions
- ❖ Lead-based paint notification—when appropriate

In selected areas, the following forms will also be a part of your agreement:

- ❖ Agency disclosure
- ❖ Property disclosure form completed by the property seller

It's more complicated than just finding a buyer



Home inspections



Once a buyer has decided to make an offer on your home, it will usually be contingent upon a professional inspection of the entire property—including improvements. The home inspector looks beyond the cosmetics to make sure that the home's general systems operate properly. The inspector will also look for large repairs that are needed and report on the condition of the home.

The standard home inspector's report will review the conditions of the home's heating and cooling system; interior plumbing and electrical systems; the roof, attic and visible insulation; walls, ceilings, floors, windows and doors; foundation, basement and visible structure. The inspector will also look for cracks in cement walls, water stains that indicate leakage and any indication of wood rot.

A home inspection also points out the positive aspects of a home, as well as the maintenance that will be necessary to keep it in good shape.

As your Windermere agent, I'm familiar with home inspection services and can provide you with a list of names from which to choose. Another good way to find a home inspector is to ask a friend, or perhaps a business acquaintance, who has had a home inspection and can recommend a home inspector they were satisfied with.

Remember, no home is perfect. If major problems are found, I will help you negotiate through the process.

Worksheet:
Calculating your net proceeds

Your net proceeds, simply put, equal the sales price of your home minus any disbursements you make during the closing process. As your Windermere agent, I can help you determine the following costs.

Estimated disbursements:
(add items for total)

Existing home loans	\$
Other liens	+ \$
Standard title insurance ¹	+ \$
State excise tax	+ \$
Loan discount	+ \$
Escrow	+ \$
Brokerage/service fees	+ \$
Proration of interest	+ \$
Recording	+ \$
Inspections (pest, roof, septic, etc.)	+ \$
Miscellaneous	+ \$
Total estimated disbursements	= \$
Sale price of home	\$
Estimated disbursements	- \$
Estimated net proceeds²	= \$

¹ Many title companies will offer a discount to sellers who have a copy of the title report received when purchasing or refinancing a property. Let me know if you have a copy at the time of the listing, and I will request a discount.

² This figure is an estimate based on our experience and reflects current rates and charges. Actual proceeds will be calculated by the escrow officer and will vary according to the specifics of the final sales transaction.

Moving tips

Six to eight weeks before:



- Use up things that may be difficult to move, such as frozen food. Get estimates from professional movers or truck rental companies if you are moving yourself.
- Once you've selected a mover, discuss insurance, packing, loading, delivery and the claims procedure.
- Sort through your possessions. Decide what you want to keep, what you want to sell and what you wish to donate to charity.
- Record serial numbers on electronic equipment and take photos of or videotape all your belongings.
- Change your utilities, including phone, power and water, from your old address to your new address.
- Obtain a change of address packet from the post office and send to creditors, magazine subscriptions and catalog vendors.
- Discuss tax-deductible moving expenses with your accountant and begin keeping accurate records.

Two to four weeks before:

- If you're moving to a new community, contact the Chamber of Commerce and school district and request information about services.
- Make reservations with airlines, hotels and car rental agencies, if needed.
- If you are moving yourself, use your inventory list to determine how many boxes you will need.
- Begin packing nonessential items.
- Arrange for storage, if needed.
- If you have items you don't want to pack and move, hold a yard sale.
- Get car license, registration and insurance in order.
- Transfer your bank accounts to new branch locations. Cancel any direct deposit or automatic payments from your accounts.
- Make special arrangements to move pets and consult your veterinarian about ways to make travel comfortable for them.
- Have your car checked and serviced for the trip.
- Collect items from safe-deposit box.

One week before:

- Talk to your pharmacist about transferring important medical prescriptions.
- Arrange for a baby sitter on moving day.
- Return library books and videotapes.

Two to three days prior:

- Defrost your refrigerator and freezer.
- Have movers pack your belongings.
- Arrange to have payment ready for moving company.
- Set aside legal documents and valuables that you do not want packed.
- Pack clothing and toiletries, along with extra clothes in case the moving company is delayed.
- Give your travel itinerary to a close friend or relative so they can reach you as needed.

Moving day:



Old home:

- Pick up the truck as early as possible if you are moving yourself.
- Make a list of every item and box loaded on the truck.
- Label each box with the contents and the room where you want it to be delivered.
- Let the mover know how to reach you.
- Double-check closets, cupboards, attic, basement and garage for any left-behind items.

New home:

- Be on hand at the new home to answer questions and give instructions to the mover.
- Check off boxes and items as they come off the truck.
- Install new locks.
- Confirm that the utilities have been turned on and are ready for use.
- Unpack your “first day” box.
- Unpack children’s toys and find a safe place for them to play.
- Examine your goods for damage.

Packing tips

Essential packing materials:

- | | | |
|------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| • furniture pads | • newspapers or packing paper | • felt-tip markers |
| • handtruck | • scissors | • cornstarch |
| • dolly | • utility knife | packing “peanuts” |
| • packing tape | • labels | • plenty of boxes |
| • bubble wrap | | |

Pack a “first day” box with items you will need right away.

Handy items include:

- | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • scissors | • instant coffee or tea, soft drinks | • shelf liner |
| • utility knife | • pencil and paper | • paper plates |
| • local phone book | • soap | • snacks |
| • coffee cups | • bath towels | • toilet paper |
| • tea kettle | • trash bags | • children’s toys and books |

Settlement—who pays what

During the negotiation stage of the transaction, a mutually agreed-upon date for closing is determined. “Closing” is when you and the buyer sign all the paperwork and pay your share of the settlement fees, and the documents are recorded. Settlement obligations vary widely due to specific contract language, local laws and customs. Prior to closing, the closing agent (usually an escrow or title company or attorney) will complete a detailed settlement statement for both buyer and seller. As your Windermere agent, I can help you understand which of the following typical settlement fees apply to you.

The seller receives:

- Utility deposits held by gas, electric, cable, telephone and other companies
- Prorated portion of pre-paid property taxes
- Prorated mortgage interest from payments made during the current month
- Fuel rebate for oil or propane remaining in storage tank
- Net proceeds after seller’s share of expenses is paid

The seller pays:

- Brokerage commission (the sum or percentage of the sale price previously agreed upon by the seller and real estate agent)
- One-half of escrow or legal fees paid to the attorney or escrow company for preparing the closing (In California, the party paying escrow fees varies from county to county.)
- Document preparation fees
- Recording and notary fees
- Title search and title insurance (paid by either the seller or the buyer)
- Local transfer taxes, if any
- State taxes, if any
- Repairs or inspections seller has agreed to pay for



Glossary

ADJUSTABLE RATE MORTGAGE (ARM)	interest rates on this type of mortgage are periodically adjusted up or down depending on a specified financial index.
AMORTIZATION	a method of equalizing the monthly mortgage payments over the life of the loan, even though the proportion of principal to interest changes over time. In the early part of the loan, the principal repayment is very low, while the interest payment is very high. At the end of the loan, the relationship is reversed.
ANNUAL PERCENTAGE RATE	the actual finance charge for a loan, including points and fees, in addition to the stated interest rate.
APPRAISAL	an expert opinion of the value or worth of a property.
ASSESSED VALUE	the value placed on a property by a municipality for purposes of levying taxes. It may differ widely from appraised or market value.
BALLOON PAYMENT	a large principal payment due all at once at the end of some loan terms.
CAP	a limit on how much the interest rate can change in an adjustable rate mortgage.
CERTIFICATE OF TITLE	a document, signed by a title examiner, stating that a seller has an insurable title to the property.
CLOSING	the deed to a property is legally transferred from seller to buyer and documents are recorded.
CLOSING COSTS	see “Settlement” or refer to “Settlement—who pays what” in this guide.
COMMISSION	a fee (usually a percentage of the total transaction) paid to an agent or broker for services performed.
COMPARATIVE MARKET ANALYSIS (CMA)	a survey of the attributes and selling process of comparable homes on the market or recently sold; used to help determine a correct pricing strategy for a seller’s property.
CONTINGENCY	a condition in a contract that must be met for the contract to be binding.
CONTRACT	a binding legal agreement between two or more parties that outlines the conditions for the exchange of value (for example: money exchanged for title to property).
DEED	a legal document that formally conveys ownership of a property from seller to buyer.
DOWN PAYMENT	a percentage of the purchase price that the buyer must pay in cash and may not borrow from the lender.
EQUITY	the value of the property actually owned by the homeowner: purchase price, plus appreciation, plus improvements, less mortgages and liens.
ESCROW	a fund or account held by a third-party custodian until conditions of a contract are met.

FIXED RATE MORTGAGE	interest rates on this type of mortgage remain the same over the life of the loan. Compare to “adjustable rate mortgage.”
FIXTURE	a recognizable entity (such as a kitchen cabinet, drape or light fixture) that is permanently attached to a property and belongs to the property when it is sold.
HAZARD INSURANCE	compensates for property damage from specified hazards such as fire and wind.
INTEREST	the cost of borrowing money, usually expressed as a percentage rate.
LIEN	a security claim on a property until a debt is satisfied.
LISTING CONTRACT	an agreement whereby an owner engages a real estate company for a specified period of time to sell a property, for which, upon the sale, the agent receives a commission.
MARKET PRICE	the actual price at which a property sold.
MARKET VALUE	the price that is established by present economic conditions, location and general trends.
MORTGAGE	security claim by a lender against a property until the debt is paid.
MULTIPLE LISTING SERVICE (MLS)	a system that provides to its members detailed information about properties for sale.
ORIGINATION FEE	an application fee(s) for processing a proposed mortgage loan.
PITI	principal, interest, taxes and insurance, forming the basis for monthly mortgage payments.
POINT	one percent of the loan principal. It’s charged in addition to interest and fees.
PREPAYMENT PENALTY	a fee paid by a borrower who pays off the loan before it is due.
PRINCIPAL	one of the parties to a contract; or the amount of money borrowed, for which interest is charged.
PRORATE	divide or assess proportionately.
PURCHASE & SALE AGREEMENT	see “Contract,” or refer to “Purchase and sale agreement” in this guide.
SETTLEMENT	all financial transactions required to make the contract final. See “Settlement—who pays what” in this guide.
TITLE	a document that indicates ownership of a specific property.
TITLE SEARCH	detailed examination of the entire document history of a property title to make sure there are no legal encumbrances.



Windermere offers you an unsurpassed network to help you reach your real estate goals. As the largest regional real estate brand in the West*, our agents annually participate in twice as many transactions as the industry standard. Our associates are up to date on the latest market trends, thanks to Windermere's nationally renowned education program.

Windermere prides itself on being an industry leader with innovative marketing programs. Our sales associates are knowledgeable in diverse marketing approaches, to help them effectively meet the needs of both buyers and sellers.

If you would like more information about Windermere or any of its programs, please ask your Windermere sales associate or visit our Web site at www.windermere.com.

**REAL Trends magazine, May 2005*

©2005 Windermere Services Company. All rights reserved.