

A GUIDE FOR THE HOME OWNER TO SELL YOUR HOME BY OWNER



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Dear Home Owner,

We want to share information that real estate agents typically do not share with their customers. In providing this useful information, we hope to earn your trust and should you ever decide to sell your home you would consider adding your home information on our website <https://www.WaterfrontWonderland.com>.

You may have heard comments, like these, from other agents:

"You'll never be able to sell your home without an agent." - Not true, selling your home without an agent is very possible, especially as the market recovers in Southwest Florida.

"You won't save any money on commission because Buyers will just offer you less." - You are not obligated to accept a lower offer, and if you receive an offer that is acceptable to you, then you have saved money without paying a commission.

"You'll never be able to complete the paperwork." - While the paperwork can be extensive, you can either be extremely careful or find someone like an attorney or trusted real estate agent who will help you for a flat fee.

"You can't get your home listed on the internet or the MLS." - These days you can list your home on [WaterfrontWonderland.com](https://www.WaterfrontWonderland.com), [Zillow.com](https://www.zillow.com), [Craigslist.com](https://www.craigslist.com), and [YouTube.com](https://www.youtube.com) for FREE. In addition, there are real estate agents who specialize in placing homes on the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) for a single low fee.

If at any time you have any questions regarding the home selling process in Florida, we would be happy to help however possible. Drake Bliss, the owner of the [WaterfrontWonderland.com](https://www.WaterfrontWonderland.com) is a Florida Broker-Associate at Sun Realty USA. There are many things for you to consider such as contracts, disclosures, financing, marketing, and pricing. You will also find that most home Buyers are working with an agent because there is no cost to the Buyer for these services, however, these Buyers will find your home on the above mentioned websites and may contact you directly.

We love selling real estate and helping people like you. If you ever have any questions, please contact Drake Bliss - no obligation, no pressure, and no nonsense.

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Sun Realty USA

Advertising Your Home

Letting as many customers as possible know that your home is available for sale is key to selling your property. Real Estate professionals refer to private Sellers as FSBO's, an abbreviation of **F**or **S**ale **B**y **O**wner. Many Buyers will see this as an opportunity to take advantage of an inexperienced Seller. They troll the roads looking for such an opportunity. They will assume they can offer you a lower than asking price since you, the Seller, will not be paying a commission to a real estate agent. Does that seem strange to you? Why accept the same net amount for the sale of your home, while doing all the work, which you would achieve with professional representation?

Excellent marketing of your property can alleviate some of the above issues. The internet age provides significant FREE resources for advertising your home. At a minimum, list your home on these FREE websites; WaterfrontWonderland.com, Zillow.com, Craigslist.com, FaceBook.com, LetGo.com, NextDoor.com and YouTube.com for to get your home widely advertised. You should also use these easy to do and low cost advertising opportunities include:

- A Posted Sign in your Front Yard to attract the road warrior Buyer.
- Create a listing flier listing the details and amenities of your property, use with your sign, as handouts for friends and an electronic version to use online.
- Social Media, like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn for letting your friends and family know you are selling your home, and don't overlook your local friends, neighbors and other contacts.
- Local Newspaper and Magazines – not used much these days, costly and limited in reach

Things to include in your advertising:

Indicate that you are For Sale By Owner or use FSBO for short. Tell the potential Buyer what type of structure your home is and its significant features. As an example: 3/2/2 indicates a three-bedroom house with two bathrooms and a two-car garage. Of course, list the price you are asking for your home, the age of the home and the square footage. You can check your tax record for the square footage if you are unsure. Include any pertinent neighborhood information of note, if you have an HOA or any restrictions. Include special features, such as, tile or wood floors, upgraded kitchen or bath features, hurricane shutters, shade and fruit trees, a pool and or spa, all add to the value of your home. Indicate the best phone number and times you may be reached. Try to paint a picture in the Buyers mind...

“Get ready to live in paradise in this 1995 built, 3 bedrooms, 2.5 bathrooms, 2 car garage home. Relax and unwind by the sparkling pool and enjoy the waterfront canal view.”

This sounds better than saying “3/2.5/2, pool with a canal view.”

Here is an example ad for a three-bedroom, two-bathroom home

FOR SALE BY OWNER: Exquisite, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 2-car garage home built in 2005 in a beautiful boating community. Enjoy your sparkling heated pool while overlooking the backyard freshwater canal! Light and bright, the master bath has two sinks, separate tub and shower, and spacious walk-in closet. A double-door entry; tile throughout, excepting the bedrooms; storm shutters; tile roof; and solid-surface counters in kitchen and baths. In addition, this 1800+ sqft home has easy access to multiple golf courses, shopping and beaches! Only \$179,900, call THE SELLER anytime at (555) 555-5555.

If you are using printed media, advertising should be short and simple, highlighting the best features of your property, while still painting a pleasant image in the Buyer's mind. Long ads cost more when you use printed media. Emphasize the great features, then provide price and contact information.

When posting ads on the Internet, your ads can be much longer and you can go into depth on describing the features of your home, most websites allow you to display maps and post multiple photos as well.

Signage on Your Property

Showing professionalism in your sales approach is the best way to get the maximum price for your home. Several local businesses will be happy to produce a professional sign, and the cost is well worth the cost. A handwritten or other type of unprofessional looking sign makes you look inexperienced and may lead to "sharks" trying to take advantage of you.

Be sure to include the words FOR SALE BY OWNER or FSBO, and your phone number on the sign. It is also a good idea to add "Showings by Appointment Only". Be aware that this will not prevent potential Buyers from knocking on your door, but it does tell serious Buyers you would appreciate communication before letting them into your home.

Finally, be sure to check the local sign ordinances before investing in your professional sign. If you have a Home Owners Association (HOA), check with them as well to confirm if there is a size or height restriction for signage in your community.

Preparing Your Home

You have decided to sell your home, and no matter what your reasons are for selling, preparing your home for sale is a necessary first step. Here is how to start:

Take a Fresh Look at Your Home

Your home looks great to you, but its how the Buyer sees it that is important. You need to take a fresh look at your home. Go outside; scrutinize your home, as a prospective Buyer will see it for the first time.

First, consider your home's "Curb Appeal". Your home's Curb Appeal sets the tone when selling your home. Take the time to maintain the outside of your property. Cut the lawn, trim the bushes and trees, run the weed eater where necessary and go around your house removing any spider webs, bug nests or other unsightly items on the exterior. Does your home need washing or painting? Does the driveway need repair work? Is the landscaping in good shape?

Remember, be very critical; your Buyer will be. The old saying is 'you get one chance at a first impression' and you want your potential home Buyer to have a positive first impression of your home.

Next, return inside, size up the interior as though seeing it for the first time. Is the front door and entry area clean? Are the walls and flooring in good condition? Tour your home and imagine what a Buyer might say about each room. Are the rooms "Bright" and "Roomy"?

Now, make note of the things that might put off Buyers, along with another list of the things that first attracted you to the home. Remember, your home has become a great place for you, but a new Buyer will see things that you do not.

Take care of minor repairs. Things like leaky faucets are easy to fix. While no one notices a faucet is not leaking you can be sure the potential Buyer will notice one that does! Do not invest in major repairs or upgrades. Adding a third bedroom or remodeling a bathroom will not return the value of your investment. Instead, focus on inexpensive upgrades that make your property shine. A coat of paint on your front door can make it look brand new.

Depersonalize and Clean Out the Clutter Before You Start to Sell

Before putting your home on the market, depersonalize and get rid of clutter in every room. Before you have a customer in your home, make sure it is in top condition. Start with the entryway. Remove any extraneous or personal items. Things like family photos, kids drawings, trophies, stuffed animals, shoes and coats that may be used regularly by you and your family need to be out of sight.

Creating an open and clutter free environment promotes your home to the customer. Also, remember that clean sells, so you will need to keep your home in a ready to show state at all times. Do not overlook closets or other readily visible areas.

Remember, this is no time to be sentimental: if you don't use it, lose it. Buyers are seriously put off by clutter, so be sure to remove papers, magazines, family photos, knick-knacks, and excess clothing in your closets. Also, do not forget the furniture and fixtures when getting rid of clutter. Having too much furniture in too little space makes a Buyer think your home is too small and crowded.

Then, if you want to be more industrious, have a moving sale with all the items you have removed and use the proceeds for paint or whatever other materials you need for repair projects. If you just cannot bear to part with some possessions, then store them in the attic or some other place that is out of sight to a Buyer.

To Sell, Sell, Sell - Clean, Clean, Clean

After you have cleared out the clutter, it's time to really clean. Have the tile and carpets professionally cleaned, scour the bathrooms, clean and polish furniture, wash the windows and window coverings, dust ceiling fans and shine kitchen appliances. In short, clean everything. In addition, Buyers will probably look in your closets and cabinets, so spend some time organizing those as well. Lastly, do not forget the exterior; paint or power-wash everything that needs the work.

Remember, this is a ceiling-to-floor, roof-to-foundation clean-up project.

Get More for Your Home: Repairs Pay Off

After you have cleaned your home, the next project is making all the repairs necessary to attract a Buyer.

So, patch up the roof and siding, touch up all the paint, repair the screens, spruce up the porch and front door, and make your entry area really shine. Do not neglect the lawn and landscape beds, take the time to trim, weed, mow, edge and get rid of sick or dying plants. Consider installing flowering annuals, in the beds or containers, to brighten your front entry.

Inside, repair the grout in the bathrooms and on tile floors, patch and paint any holes in the walls, be sure to fix any plumbing problems. Remember, do what your home needs before the first Buyer appears at your door.

There is an alternative to the total home fix-up - but it carries a price. An "As-Is" sale allows you to avoid doing all this work, but a Buyer will expect a significantly lower asking price for the home. But beware, the Buyer may still walk away if your home has too many repair issues. AND, in the end, you may need to make the repairs anyway.

It is typically a good idea to get all the cleaning and repairing done before advertising your home for sale. A trusted real estate agent can advise you if anything else needs doing. Also, if you have friends willing to be brutally honest about what your home needs prior to putting it up for sale, invite them to assess the fix-up needs.

What Repairs or Renovations Should I Make to My Home Before I Sell?"

I am often asked this question by customers. Typically, renovations or major improvements should not be made just prior to putting your home on the market. However, if the A/C, roof, plumbing or electrical system are faulty or completely shot, it might be necessary to have these repaired to get top dollar for your home. Many simple repairs and improvements can help your home show better and cost very little. Your budget should be no more than 1% of your expected home sales price. Lastly, keep your home clean and neat at all times, ready for any Buyer that asks to view your home. Below are some of our suggestions:

- [] Clean the front door and area outside the front door. Buy a new "Welcome" mat or doorknobs if needed.
- [] Clean the carpeting, floor tile and grout; wax vinyl and wood flooring.
- [] Clean the baseboards and walls. Be especially aware of vents, switch plates, around doorknobs and along corners.
- [] Clean the screens, windows and window coverings, including sills, sashes and tracks. Repair any broken or cracked windows and torn screens.
- [] Replace any burned out light bulbs, remember to check bulbs in closets, garage, range hood, outdoors and ceiling fans.
- [] Replace all inside A/C filters. Clean A/C vents.
- [] Remove some or all wall hangings, patch and paint holes in walls.
- [] Remove excess stored items from closets and garage, place these items in off-site storage, sell, donate or discard.
- [] If you have pets, keep their bedding, dishes or litter pan clean everyday. If your house "Smells", it will not "Sell"!
- [] Clean and repair appliances, if they stay with the home. Consider replacing appliances if they are in bad condition, or consider offering a home warranty to the Buyer that covers appliance breakdown.
- [] Repair any plumbing problems, especially leaking faucets or toilets and irrigation. Consider installing new fixtures for obviously worn old ones.
- [] Pressure wash roof, concrete walks and driveway, and lanai. Consider pressure washing the whole house. Patch and paint the outside of the home, as needed.
- [] Thin landscaping, weed and feed lawn, trim trees and add rock, mulch or wood chips in bedding areas.
- [] Treat dock, deck and fences with wood sealer and hammer in popped nails.

Putting You Home on the Market: Show It to Sell It

After you have cleaned, shined, mowed, and generally whipped your property into shape, it is time to attract a Buyer.

No matter whether you, or a real estate agent, markets your home, there are other, small things you must do to attract Buyers. For example, even if it is bright day, open the blinds and turn on the lights. Also, open all the interior doors to make the home appear roomier.

Be sure to remove all your kids and pets – they are cute, but a Buyer wants to see your home, not your pride and joy. In addition, make sure your pet's litter pan and bedding is clean so the home smells clean and fresh, not like your pet or air freshener.

Lastly, remember, you need to make your home available for showings with as little notice as possible. That means less than an hour or even five minutes, if possible.

Get a Sense of the Market

Before you put your home on the market, take a weekend day to check out the competition. These are homes with similar prices, amenities and in similar neighborhoods. Remember, you do not need to buy new furniture just to look like that beautiful new model home -- what you want is the feel of that new model – clean, uncluttered and fresh.

In addition, apart location, the most important item to a Buyer is a well maintained home. Buyers look for “Pride of Ownership” in homes. Buyers will overlook some flaws if they know they can move in without a lot of work and expense.

Pay a Commission to a Buyer's Broker

Are you offering a commission to the Buyers agent/broker? Doing so will increase the likely hood of selling your property. Commissions can be from 1% to 4 % of the sales price on the home.

The commission amount should be agreed upon, **IN WRITING BEFORE** the agent shows your home. The agent can have you sign a commission agreement stating the expected commission due on your sale and limit the agreement to a specific Buyer.

Consider adding a rider to your sign and advertising that states “Courtesy to Brokers”. This will tell agents that you will pay a commission.

Handling the Offer

All offers should be in writing. This avoids issues down the road as to the exact agreement. You can obtain a real estate contract from a trusted local real estate agent. This form has fill-in the blank areas where you can specify the price and terms for your home sale. I suggest you contact a Title Company or a real estate attorney to assist you in completing the sale from this point forward.

Professional Help is Only a Phone Call Away!

As a Florida real estate professional, I can assist you in selling your home.

Contact **Drake Bliss** at **239-910-1948** or today to arrange a private consultation.

If your home is listed within my marketing area, I can get your home listed for a \$500 Flat Fee. Here are the details on this service.

- Exclusive Listing Agreement - You agree to pay a Florida Broker (including me) who brings you a Buyer a 1% to 4% commission. If you find the Buyer, (without an agent involved) you do not pay **any** commissions.
- **FREE** Florida Property By Owner Yard Sign with a direct link to your home online.
- Your home listed in two regional Multiple Listing Services (MLS). The Florida Gulf Coast (FGC) MLS and the My Florida Regional (MFR) MLS.
- I will provide you with all Florida Real Estate Forms needed to sell your home.
- A descriptive listing flyer you can reproduce as needed.
- I can help with you negotiating your Buyer offers, if requested.

Give me a Call, Text or Email Today!

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<https://www.WaterfrontWonderland.com>



Sun Realty USA - Licensed in Florida

The finest compliment I can ever receive is a referral from our friends and customers.