

Listing Your House



Listing Paperwork, Preparation and Disclosures

The documents that are part of the listing agreement are standard templates provided by the California Association of Realtors. They have been revised over decades to protect both the buyer and seller and allow both parties to negotiate a purchase or sale on reliable, balanced contracts. Here are the forms to list a house:

Listing document package (These 5 Main Documents may arrive by email in one pdf file.)

- **Agency Representation** – Outlines my fiduciary duties to you as my client
- **Possible Representation of more than one buyer or seller** - Multiple agents work for the same broker making it possible that your buyer could possibly be represented by another HomeSmart Agent who, while independent of me, may technically reports to the same Homesmart broker.
- **Wire Fraud Transfer** - Applies mostly to buyers wiring money
- **Listing Agreement** - Main document allowing me to sell the property
- **Seller Advisory** - Details about disclosures, discrimination, etc

Other documents include:

- **Seller Instructions to Exclude Listing (SELM)** - Allows you to get your property ready and start the “for sale” time clock when you are ready to sell rather than when you sign the listing agreement.
- **Affiliated Business Agreement** - This one is specific to HomeSmart. You are welcome to chose who you want for services like escrow. HomeSmart has an in-house option that must be disclosed.
- **Arbitration Agreement** - This used to be part of the listing agreement and was removed last year. Signing is optional.

Choosing a Listing Price.

The listing price or range is included in the listing agreement above. We will work together to find an agreeable price by looking at the local market trends together for house sales in your price range. From there we will narrow our focus to comparable properties. The more similar, close and recent the home the better. We will analyze sold properties, properties that are in escrow and other competing properties for sale. Together we'll arrive at a marketing price that attracts buyer to tour and ultimately make an offer on your house.

Preparing for Sale

De-clutter and Depersonalize:

How you live in a house and how you stage a house for sale are very different. A rule of thumb is to mentally remove everything from the house and replace with a few select items of furniture and decorations that would appeal to a buyer. Generally less is more. A staging consultant can help to explain what items to retain.

Deep Cleaning: This is one of the cheapest and most effective ways to “remodel” your house. Cleaning serves two purposes: First is to clean visible surfaces to avoid any negative emotions associated with a dirty home. The second goal is to frame a buyer’s perspective about your property before negotiating repairs. Buyers tend to be more flexible with small repairs in a clean house rather than a dirty one.

Window Cleaning: Adds light and clarity for photos and showings. For between \$150 to \$200 a professional window cleaner is well worth the investment.

Light Bulbs and Window Coverings: Buyers love light. Any area that is dark would benefit from higher watt light bulbs. They are cheap and easy to change. Also look to remove heavy window coverings to let more light in.

Carpet Cleaning: Likely the cheapest way to improve/fix your floors. For \$200 to \$400 a professional company with a truck mounted steam cleaner can do magic to your carpet.

Painting: Depends on your situation. Bold wall colors with dings and dirt stains really benefit from a coat of a neutral color paint like "Accessible Beige". Pricing is around \$1 to \$2 a square foot depending on if the trim needs to be painted too.

Maintenance. It is cheaper to find and fix problems before a new buyer discovers them. This is because once repair negotiations start many buyers have no idea what a repair costs and estimate very high and /or request that a licensed contractor do work that a handyman could easily do much cheaper. If you are in a hurry to sell consider doing visible maintenance first (doors and cabinets and broken tiles) before listing. This may allow you to delay non-visible work until later (but before the inspection.)

Landscaping. Clean up what you have. Paying a few hundred dollars to mow the lawn and trim the plants and power-wash hard surfaces goes a long way. Increase your water cycle times on grass as early as possible in your preparation phase.

Front Entrance. Pay special attention to the first area your buyer will see. Make sure your front door is clean and bright with an attractive knob and deadbolt. A new doormat with a plant next to the front door is a good investment.

Carpet Replacement: This depends on the situation. Carpet costs around \$5 a square foot installed. For homes with hard surfaces and small areas of dirty carpet, replacing can be a great choice. But for large homes it can get costly and run the risk of not matching a buyer's floor preferences.

Staging: Whether you get advice from a stager and do this yourself or pay for a complete staging, intentionally presenting your home for sale is necessary to attract a buyer. It is helpful to mentally move out of your house before posting it for sale to separate your personal choices for furniture and items from staged home choices.

Photos: are scheduled to be taken at the end of preparations and will be paid for by me.

Termite/Pest Inspection: It is a good idea to get an evaluation completed early to have an understanding of how much it may cost to do any repairs. Nearly all buyers require a "Section 1 Termite Clearance" as a condition of the purchase so best to know what repairs it takes to provide this.

Calendar Timeline

It takes longer than you might expect to get your house ready for sale. Things like staging, photos and marketing pieces don't happen until the end and need some time to complete. Here is the sequence of events:

- 1st House is cleaned, fixed and prepared
- 2nd House is staged – 1 or 2 days
- 3rd Photos are taken – 1 or 2 day
- 4th Marketing Material is ordered – 2 or 3 days
- 5th Property goes live for sale on MLS – After photos.
- 6th Launch event is announced on the mls

- Note that Local agent caravans have specific dates and deadlines that we will be coordinating with

It can easily take 3 to 6+ weeks depending on your urgency and to-do list. It helps to put together a calendar together to coordinate the work and timing of prep, photos, launch event, etc. Here is a sample Calendar:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31	1 Before April 1st Meet with Stager to Decide what items stay and go	2	3 Organize Items for Thrift Store Pickup	4	5	6
7	8 French Door Replacement Bathroom Repairs Pressure Wash House	9	10 Paint Kitchen	11 Replace Carpet	12 Replace Carpet	13 Replace Carpet
14 Move Into Paseo De Linda	15 Paint, Clean, Carpet Clean/New Carpet, Additional Repairs Remove Unwanted Items Termite Inspection	16	17 Landscaping	18 Landscaping	19 Zillow Coming Soon Patricia to check in for staging	20
21	22 Staging Complete	23 Photos	24 Listing Live	25 92128 Caravan	26 Open House Invites	27 Launch Event Open House
28 Launch Event Open House	29	30	1	2	3	4

Access

Buyers need to see your home to buy it. They may want to see your home at inopportune times. It is helpful to consider your schedule and ability to keep the house in showing condition when making a plan to allow potential buyer's access to the house. For example, weekdays from noon to 6 pm.

Open houses are a great way to redirect what might be disparate visits into one single visit. You can finish cleaning your house and let everyone see it at once. This is a must for the **launch event** that happens right after listing the property and is designed to create a buzz and motivate buyers to move on your new home for sale.

Plan on a weekday morning open house as well. When your home is newly listed it is also eligible for an **agent caravan** which is a mini open house for agents that happens on a weekday. Not only will your home be viewed by many agents but those agents can also give feedback on how to improve price, staging or other bits of advice early on in the sales process.

Property Disclosures

Part of selling your home is sharing details about its condition with a potential buyer. You will receive two documents asking questions about your property. One is called the Transaction Disclosure Statement (TDS) and the other is called the Seller Property Questionnaire (SPQ) Each had directions and will ask what types of improvements and repairs have been done to the home over the years. Now is a good time to start collecting documentation related to repairs or improvements that may be shared with the new buyer. A number of other disclosures will be sent to the buyer as part of your listing by your transaction coordinator. They don't require your input and cover things like wildfire danger and earthquake risk as well as the property's title history.

Home Owners Association

If you live in a property governed by an HOA (or two) you will be requested to pay for a report(s) to be given to the buyer. They are not cheap (\$450 +). Escrow will order for you and request that you pay for the report after you have accepted an offer.

Ready to go live

At this point the bulk of the work is done and we are ready to officially put your house on the market!