



Are you Ready to Build, but Have to Sell Your Home First?

With today's changing housing market, home-buying opportunities are tremendous. Interest rates are low, prices are competitive, and many builders are offering fantastic incentives and financing options. But what if you have to sell your current home first? These tips will help you get your home sold and on the road to moving into your own new home of your dreams.

First, be realistic when setting a price. You may not be able to sell your home for what it could have sold for a few years back, but don't be tempted to wait until prices have gone back again. It's always better to trade up in a buyer's market.

For example, say your home value has dropped 10 percent from \$300,000 to \$270,000. A move-up home selling for \$500,000 in the past has also dropped 10 percent in value, and now sells at \$450,000. If you sold your home today for \$270,000 and purchased the larger house for \$450,000, the difference in price would be \$180,000. But if you waited to recoup the 10 percent value on your home and sold it at \$300,000, chances are that same move-up home would also move up in price to at least \$500,000. That's a \$200,000 price difference between the two homes. So by selling today, you would actually save \$20,000.

The price you set for your home is obviously the key factor in many buyers' minds. But don't forget that presentation is crucial. The potential buyer needs to be able to see themselves living in your home.

Keep personal items like photographs to a minimum. Address any clutter and either donate items to charity, throw them out or organize them neatly. Organize all of your closet spaces and kitchen cabinets. Clean off kitchen countertops and pack up small knickknacks. Your house will appear neater and you'll also get a head start on packing up for your own move.

Remove furniture that blocks walkways or windows. Leave just enough furniture to showcase the room's purpose. Rent a storage unit if you have to. A home that is too empty can appear lifeless, so if you've already packed your furniture, consider hiring a staging company that will rent you some for a short time period.

Do a thorough cleaning of your home. Wash your windows inside and out, wipe down baseboards and clear out cobwebs from ceiling corners and closets. Make any minor repairs.

Even small touches count. Hang fresh towels in the bathrooms and kitchen. Set the dining room table, and buy fresh flowers for vases throughout the home. Turn on all your lights during the open house to highlight the home's amenities.

Finally, don't forget the first impression: curb appeal. Make certain that your house number can be read from the street and remember to keep your sidewalks clear and your lawn mowed. Trim shrubs and trees and if possible, plant some flowers.

Selling your home doesn't have to be a headache. With a little preparation, your home will be sold before you know it and you'll be settling in to your new home.

For more information on buying and selling a home, contact the Brown County Home Builders Association or visit nahb.org/forconsumers.