

Home Sellers Guide

A Guide to Selling Your Own Home
and Saving Thousands on Commissions

It's never been easier to sell
your own home.

DwellWell.com

DwellWell's Guide to Selling Your Own Home

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Introduction

Selling a home can at first seem overwhelming. Which is why there's such a strong temptation to turn everything over to a real estate agent and hope for the best. Don't do it! What you must understand is that regardless of whether a real estate agent is involved, the process still requires some effort on your part.

But by eliminating the middleperson, not only do you save money, you gain control over the entire process and you work under your own agenda and not that of a real estate agent. With your determination and our help, "For Sale by Owner" will be a rewarding experience.

This guide will help you sell your home on your own. We encourage you to print it and use it as a checklist, and refer back to it as you step your way through the process of selling your home.

Pricing Your Home

Pricing your home correctly is the most important part of selling it. If you price it too high, you'll lose buyers. Too low, and you'll lose money. To determine the right price, you must decide how soon you need to sell your home, and you'll need to research local housing prices.

A word of caution: Many sellers make the common mistake of not setting their emotions aside and placing too high a value on the wonderful memories and joy the house has brought them. Don't make this mistake. Remember, a buyer is looking for the most house for the least amount of money. They'll add their own memories later.

Deciding How Soon You Must Sell

First, decide how long you can wait to sell your home. If you need to sell it quickly, you'll set a lower asking price than if you have more time. Since you're selling your home without a real estate agent, you're not paying an average 6% commission, so you have a much greater degree of flexibility in pricing your home. If you need to sell quickly, you can price your home noticeably below the price of similar homes in your area to attract more buyers.

Finding the Prices of Similar Homes

Once you've decided how much time you have to sell your home, you'll need to know the asking prices of houses similar to yours that are in your general area. Finding these homes can be done easily on the Internet by going to any search engine, like Google.com, and typing in "houses for sale" plus the name of your city or town.

You'll see links to local and national real estate websites that show all types of houses, most of which are listed with real estate agents. Look through these websites for houses that are similar to yours and close to yours geographically. Compare the number of bedrooms, bathrooms and the house size. Other items to compare include acreage, setting, fixtures in the home such as lighting and appliances, and other amenities.

Setting Your Price

Once you've come up with a list of similar houses, compare the prices and the features of each home, then estimate what your home could sell for. The longer your list, the easier this will be.

Now remember, because the houses on most of these websites are listed with real estate agents, their prices reflect real estate commissions. This is something to take into consideration when you set the asking price for your home.

Buyers know that because you're selling your house on your own, you're not paying a commission. In fact, they're choosing to buy For Sale by Owner because they believe they'll get a better deal. And they've done the same research you have. Consider pricing your home just below the price of a similar home that carries a real estate commission. If you need to sell your house quickly, price it even lower. Remember, you're

not paying a commission, so you're still saving money. If you have more time, price your home a little higher and be prepared to wait longer.

House Appraisal

Another method of pricing your home is using a local real estate appraiser. They will inspect your home and create a detailed report that includes comparables (houses similar to yours and in your area that sold recently). An appraiser's findings are certified, which gives you solid proof that your asking price is fair. Appraisers charge between \$200 and \$400. You can find a list of local appraisers using [DwellWell's Home Seller Services](http://www.dwellwell.com/sellerServices.cfm) page (www.dwellwell.com/sellerServices.cfm). **Note:** Business listings on DwellWell.com are not paid endorsements. Always ask for references.

Pricing Summary

Your goal is to sell your house. To do this, your price should be fair and it should reflect the prices in your market area. By following the guidelines above, you should be able to get what you need for your home while at the same time attracting the greatest number of buyers. You can always change your asking price on DwellWell.com, but it's wise to price your home fairly from the beginning.

Advertising Your Home

Today, over 75% of people looking for a home start with the Internet. The Internet reaches millions of buyers and is the most cost effective way for you to advertise "For Sale By Owner." By listing your home on a site like DwellWell.com, you're putting the marketing reach of the Internet to work for you, reaching buyers locally, nationally, even worldwide.

Our site is designed to put buyers and sellers in direct contact with each other. And unlike other sites, DwellWell.com puts great effort into providing buyers and sellers with extensive listings of local businesses and professionals they'll need to successfully complete the real estate transaction. These listings are not paid advertisements and they're refreshed frequently. This service is driving more users to our website every day, giving you even greater exposure.

Let's look at some other forms of advertising you should consider using, including classified ads, which we'll cover in detail:

"For Sale By Owner" Sign

Here's another interesting statistic: out of all the people looking for a home, over 70% respond to yard signs. A yard sign is one of the most important elements of advertising your home. Buyers driving through actually see your home is for sale, but they're not the only ones. People in your area and people just passing through will see that your home is for sale as well, which creates word-of-mouth, one of the best forms of advertising. A yard sign is included at no cost for the term of your listing with DwellWell.com. It displays your phone number and your DwellWell listing ID number so potential buyers can reach you directly and view your home details online.

House Flyer

A flyer that lists the details of your home and includes a picture is something a buyer can keep and refer back to. And it's a good reminder of the features of your home. You should keep a few by the front door, and make sure there are always some in the brochure box that comes attached to your yard sign. Your DwellWell listing automatically generates a flyer based on the information you provide about your home. You can print the flyers yourself or a DwellWell representative will be happy to provide them.

Your Answering Machine

Since your phone number will appear on your yard sign and in your online listing, it's a good idea for potential buyers to hear a brief and descriptive message about your home if they call when you're not there. On the message, let them know that the home is for sale, tell them the size of the home and the price you're asking, and ask them to leave their phone number. Also, give them the listing ID number and direct them to DwellWell.com so they can see your home's details online.

Open Houses

Open Houses are the easiest and most comfortable way for buyers to see your home.

When buyers are present, offer them tours of your home, have a few snacks on hand, and be sure to leave plenty of house flyers laying around. You can promote your open house on DwellWell.com for free, and you should post announcements on bulletin boards in your community.

Spreading the Word

Tell everyone you come in contact with in your daily life that your home is for sale. Word will spread quickly, and word-of-mouth advertising can be some of your best.

Classified Ads

In addition to listing your house online through a service like DwellWell.com, a classified ad in the local newspaper is a highly effective form of advertising. Check with your local newspaper to find out the best days to run your ad. Typically, a newspaper has its best circulation on Sundays, and often newspapers publish a real estate section on a specific day of the week. Some papers recommend running a 10-day ad to cover at least one weekend, and the rates are usually reasonable. One pointer: refresh your ad as often as possible. Change it so that buyers don't see the same ad over and over. You don't want them to think there's anything the matter with your house.

A classified ad should contain the following information:

- Price
- Location
- Number of bedrooms
- A brief but intriguing description

The goal of your ad should be to attract serious buyers and to make them a little curious. Brief descriptions work best to draw buyers to your home. Some sellers don't want to mention price in their ad for fear of scaring off buyers. If you've priced your home correctly, you'll have nothing to worry about. Buyers are looking for homes within a specific price range, and since your goal is to attract serious buyers, it's important they know how much you're asking for your home.

Make your ad simple, direct and to the point. The best ads open with the price followed by the location, and both of these should be bold with the location in all capital letters, if possible. There are some examples below. When giving your location, be accurate, but try not to be too specific. Some buyers rule out certain neighborhoods and areas without giving them a fair chance. You want them to come to your area to see it for themselves. Besides, your house might change their opinion of the area. For example, instead of specifying Shady Village, be more general and say North Raleigh.

Place the phrase "By Owner" next. This should be bold and in all caps as well. Remember, when buyers see an ad for a home that's for sale by owner, they're drawn to it because it represents a better value.

Next, mention whether the price is negotiable or if financing is available. (See the section in this guide called "Pulling In the Pros" for more information on working with lenders.) Many buyers like to see that financing is available. It saves the time of finding a lender. If

you're working with a lender, you can send potential buyers to them to be pre-qualified, saving you time and keeping you from putting your house under contract too soon.

Now for the description. Mention the number of bedrooms; if there is a garage, say so; mention any remodeling, additions or renovations that have occurred; think of all the amenities your home offers and mention the top two or three, for instance, "sunny kitchen," "screen porch," "pool," or "private setting."

Finally, state that the home is for sale "by owner" and list your phone number along with the DwellWell listing ID and web address.

Here are some examples:

\$275,000, SUMMERFIELD, BY OWNER
negotiable, beautiful 3 bedroom home, garage, stone fireplace, quiet neighborhood, by owner. Call 555-1234 or view listing #XXXXXX at DwellWell.com.

\$450,000, NORTH RALEIGH, BY OWNER
financing available, gorgeous 4 bedroom home, garage, newly renovated kitchen, private master balcony, by owner. Call 555-4321 or view listing #XXXXXX at DwellWell.com.

\$595,000, NORTH CHATHAM, BY OWNER
stunning 4 bedroom home, 2 fireplaces, private backyard, large acreage, by owner. Call 555-9876 or view listing #XXXXXX at DwellWell.com.

Simple, direct and to the point. The buyer now has all the information they need, but not so much that they have any reason to cross your house off their list. Classified ads work well in combination with your listing on DwellWell.com. Together they give you exposure to a broader base of buyers.

Pulling In the Pros: Local Attorneys and Lenders

Even though you've decided to sell your home on your own, you don't have to do all the work yourself. Nor should you. There are some professionals you should bring in to help you: An attorney, a lender, and a property appraiser. These individuals will save you time. And because you're not using a real estate agent, they'll save you lots of money as well.

Attorney

An attorney is the most important resource you'll use as you sell your own home. He or she is the Swiss Army knife of real estate services and is the number one reason you don't need a real estate agent. They will review your sales contract and help you with all the required forms, and they're your best defense against being caught in any legally sticky situation. Attorney fees for a real estate transaction are usually between \$350 and \$500, a bargain for FSBO sellers.

Contracts and Forms Your attorney will review the sales contract to make sure it's been drawn up correctly and doesn't contain any errors or ambiguities. Remember, you shouldn't sign a sales contract until it's been reviewed by your attorney.

Your attorney will also prepare the documents that you as the seller must provide to the buyer. For example, you're required to make certain disclosures about your property. Your attorney will have a standard, bar-approved Property Disclosure statement as well as other forms and contracts you'll use in the sale of your property.

(Copies of these [Real Estate Forms](http://www.dwellwell.com/dwc_pages/RealEstateForms.asp) are available on DwellWell.com at http://www.dwellwell.com/dwc_pages/RealEstateForms.asp, but forms downloaded from our site should be used for informational purposes only between you and the buyer and should not be signed by you or the buyer until your attorney has had a chance to review them.)

Escrow Holder When a buyer makes an offer on your home, they will do so with a deposit, or earnest money. This money is to be held in escrow until the closing. Your attorney can act as the escrow holder of the buyer's deposit if the buyer agrees. However, it's perfectly acceptable to place the deposit with an independent escrow company.

Title Your attorney will examine the title search (which is typically ordered and paid for by the buyer), and if necessary will help you clear up any issues related to the title of your property.

The Closing Finally, your attorney will attend the closing with you, making sure you understand all of the documents that you must sign and looking out for your interest as the sale is finalized.

To find the right local real estate attorney, visit our [Seller Services page](http://www.dwellwell.com/sellerServices.cfm) (<http://www.dwellwell.com/sellerServices.cfm>). Note: Business listings on DwellWell.com are not paid endorsements, so please ask for references.

Lender or Mortgage Banker

As buyers begin to show interest in your home, you'll need to sort through those who can get approved for a loan and those who can't. You don't want to be tied up in a contract with a buyer who in the end will have trouble financing the purchase. A lender can pre-qualify buyers for you.

First, find a lender through your attorney. Real estate attorneys work with lenders every day and can refer you to the ones they feel can best work with your potential buyers. You can also find local lenders on our [Seller Services page](http://www.dwellwell.com/sellerServices.cfm) (<http://www.dwellwell.com/sellerServices.cfm>).

Meet with or call the lender and explain you would like to send buyers to them in order to be pre-qualified. The lender will appreciate the opportunity for business and will charge you nothing.

In return, the lender can help you come up with the financial specifics – financing options, down payment, interest rate, monthly payment – to include in your brochure and online listing information. As with the price in your classified ad, this information will help you attract serious buyers.

Property Appraiser

If you're not sure how much you should ask for your property, the most qualified individual in the industry to tell you what it's worth is an appraiser. Their findings are certified, giving you solid proof that your asking price is fair.

Appraisers are trained to assess the value and condition of the home, the value of the land it sits on, and to find comparables - similar properties in your area that have sold recently. Comparables give an indication of the fair market value of your home.

One thing to keep in mind is that appraisers follow strict guidelines when valuating your home. Often, these guidelines are not flexible enough to handle quick changes that can occur in the market. For instance, if in the last six-month period your market has experienced significant changes in housing prices, either rising or falling, and the appraiser uses a comparable that is older than six months, it won't accurately reflect the current fair market value. The only reason an appraiser would use such a comparable is that there are very few for your property.

This is rare, and it's usually safe to say that what you get back from the appraiser is a good starting point to determine what you should expect to get for your home.

Another thing to keep in mind is that the number one reason houses don't sell is that they're priced too high. Pricing your home too high can cost you time. And since time is money, an appraisal fee - typically between \$200 and \$400 dollars - is a sound investment.

You can find local real estate appraisers on our [Seller Services page](http://www.dwellwell.com/sellerServices.cfm) (<http://www.dwellwell.com/sellerServices.cfm>).

Summary

An attorney, a lender and an appraiser are the professionals that will help keep the sale of your home on track. The attorney is a must-have, and the lender and appraiser come highly recommended.

Getting Your Home Ready to Sell

Once you've advertised your home, buyers will ride by, some will call, and many will stop in to see it. When they do, the thing that will influence their buying decision the most is the house itself. That's why it's important to make sure your house looks the best it can.

Curb Appeal

The first impression a buyer has of your home is as important as any first impression. It can determine whether or not they buy your home. Anything they can see from the front when they drive up reflects all of the other aspects of the home. For this reason, you need to be sure that everything on the outside of your home, from a loose shutter to a torn screen to untrimmed shrubbery, is fixed and in the best shape it can be. Areas around the sides of the house, and the back yard in particular, need to be tidy.

Inside the Home

Once a buyer is in the home, they need to see as much of the home, and as few of your things, as possible. While it's a good idea for the home to have a homey feel, too many personal items, such as family pictures and collectible knick knacks, can detract from the buyer's ability to imagine what they can make of the home. It's a good idea to pack these items away for now; you have to pack them for your move anyway. One exception is books; books on bookshelves lend purpose and charm to those areas.

Tidying Up

Buyers are going to go through every nook and cranny of your home, including all the places where you might hide or keep all your clutter, so it's wise to tidy up. Closets and storage spaces are important to buyers, so they need to be able to see into them easily. It's especially important that you tidy up the two most important rooms in the home: the kitchen and the master bath. These two rooms, more than any others, determine whether someone will buy your home, so they should sparkle and their countertops should be free of things like toothpaste tubes and food processors.

Fixing Up

Now's the time to fix the small paint cracks, the toilet with the handle you have to jiggle, the broken dimmer switch, and anything else that buyers will be able to see and touch throughout your home. Many of these items that have become minor to you as you've lived in the home can be major indications to a buyer that other areas of the home are unkempt as well. Walk through your entire home and make note of the following:

- **Fixtures** Make sure all lighting fixtures have working bulbs; clean and polish all bathroom and kitchen faucets; fix any leaky plumbing fixtures; oil squeaky hinges and tighten loose door knobs.
- **Walls & Ceilings** Look for cracks, dings, and stains on your walls and ceilings and paint over them. Painting makes a room or hallway really stand out for very little money. Also, fill in any cracks in the moldings throughout the house. Your local paint or hardware store will have the right materials.

- **Floors** Carpets should be vacuumed, or cleaned with a professional cleaner if they're badly stained. Unless your carpeting is really worn, it's not a good idea to replace it; new owners will want to choose their own color. Keep hardwood, tile and vinyl floors clean, polished, and dust free.
- **Doors & Windows** Make sure all doors close properly and that their hinges don't squeak. Windows should be clean and easy to operate. Replace any broken panes of glass.

If you need professional help with fixing up your home, you'll find lists of local tradespeople on our [Home Seller Resources](http://www.dwellwell.com/sellerResources.cfm#trades) page (www.dwellwell.com/sellerResources.cfm#trades). For help with interiors, visit [Seller Décor](http://www.dwellwell.com/sellerDecor.cfm) (www.dwellwell.com/sellerDecor.cfm).

Renovations

Be careful when deciding whether you should renovate any parts of your home. While most renovations recoup some of their costs, few recoup them all. Renovations can add value to your home, but not dollar for dollar, so renovate wisely. If, for instance, your friends have joked with you about your ugly kitchen countertops, consider replacing them. You might not recoup the entire expense, but you'll keep buyers from joking about them as well.

The Outside

Getting back to curb appeal, it's the most important part of getting your home ready. People will drive by and decide whether or not to call about your home based on what they see from the street. In addition to repairing any loose shutters and torn screens, make sure anything that can be seen from the street looks pristine. A big part of this is your landscaping. Be sure to keep your lawn mowed, hedges and shrubbery trimmed, and get rid of all weeds. Also, keep your roof cleared of any debris, and if you have gutters, make sure they're cleaned as well.

Summary

You want your home to look its best. Be critical, which may be hard to do in the place you've lived in for a while. Do your best to identify and repair any imperfections you see. Remember, buyers will see the imperfections, and these imperfections give off an impression for the entire house.

Showing Your Home

Showing your home can be the easiest part of selling it. Little questions that aren't answered in the flyer always pop up when a buyer walks through. Often, these questions go unanswered because the seller isn't around. Since you'll be showing your own home, you'll have the opportunity to answer these questions, and as you do so you'll establish a rapport between yourself and the buyer. You don't have to become best friends, but remember, you could soon be negotiating with the buyer. The rapport you establish up front will help you during this process.

When a buyer calls to see your home, make sure they're genuinely interested in purchasing it. In a friendly and curious manner, ask them where they live and if they plan to sell the home they currently live in, and ask them why they chose your house. These subtle questions can help weed out nosy lookers. When showing your home, always stay with the buyers. If showing a couple, keep both of them with you. You want to answer any questions in front of both of them.

As a precaution, make sure you put away all valuables. If you have pets, it's best if they're outside or in a place where they will not be a distraction to the buyer. If you have cats, mention it to buyers before they come in. Some people are highly allergic to cats.

Negotiating With the Buyer

One thing to remember when you begin to negotiate with a buyer is that it's business and not personal. Sure, there are personal aspects of the sale of the home for both buyer and seller, but keep in mind they're separate from the deal itself. Your objective is to sell your home at a fair price. Do your best to keep feelings and emotions to the side, even if the buyer is not as good at doing so.

A quick word on Fair Housing: As a seller, you must know that when selling your home, it's illegal to show "any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, family status or national origin or an intention to make any such preference, limitation, or discrimination."

The Starting Point

When the time comes to negotiate, have the buyer make an offer. This is the starting point. They know how much you're asking for your home; it's up to them, now, to tell you what they want to pay. Part of negotiating is never letting the buyer, or anyone for that matter, know what your lowest acceptable price is. This seems obvious, but it's surprising how many sellers let slip their lowest price. Buyers will start there and try to work the price down further.

DwellWell provides [real estate forms](http://www.dwellwell.com/dwc_pages/RealEstateForms.asp), including an Offer to Purchase form (www.dwellwell.com/dwc_pages/RealEstateForms.asp). In addition to the purchase price, there are provisions on the form for items such as fixtures that will remain in the home, financing contingencies, closing expenses and more. All of these are negotiable.

As mention earlier in this guide, the real estate forms provided by DwellWell should be used for informational purposes only between you and the buyer and should not be signed by you or the buyer until your attorney has had a chance to review them.

Considering an Offer

When you receive an offer on your home, your options are to accept it, reject it, or make a counteroffer in which you negotiate the price or make some other concession, such as offering to pay the buyer's closing costs or pay for the cost of a repair to the home. When an offer comes in, study it carefully. You should consider any reasonable offer made on your home. An offer that at first appears ridiculously low may bounce up to something close to acceptable after you make your counteroffer. Buyers often test the seller to see how much they'll budge. With your counteroffer, you'll get a sense of how much the buyer will budge.

When considering an offer, calculate your bottom line. The price a buyer offers may appear acceptable, but they may want you to pay their closing costs, which could cost you thousands more. Carefully go through the offer and add up everything.

Closing Date

Another consideration is time. Even if you're not in a hurry to sell your house, a closing

date several months away can be risky because it in effect takes your house off the market. If the buyer backs out for any reason, you've lost valuable time.

Earnest Money

An offer will come with an earnest money amount. This is the amount of money the buyer will give up front as good faith money once the offer is accepted. The check will go to your attorney and will be held in an escrow account until the closing. The amount of the earnest money will be applied to the purchase price of the home. The larger the earnest money check, the more serious the buyer. A buyer stands to lose this money if they back out of the deal for any reason not specified in the contract.

Look at the earnest money amount in the offer. If it appears low – for instance if you feel it wouldn't hurt the buyer too much to lose it if the deal fell through – ask for more. Instances in which you would want an even larger amount of earnest money include a contract with a far out closing date or a contract that requires you to make modifications or repairs to the home that you would otherwise not make.

Pre-qualified Buyers

Before accepting an offer in writing, make sure the buyer is pre-qualified and can afford to purchase your home. You don't want to tie your house up for any period of time only to find out that the buyer can't afford it. If the buyer hasn't been pre-qualified, send them to your banker before accepting the offer.

Another option is to qualify the buyer yourself, though this does not give you the same security of a lender's certified pre-qualification. To do this, the buyer will have to share some of their financial information with you. For an idea of the information you'll need from the buyer and for help pre-qualifying them, use [DwellWell's Pre-qualifying Calculator](http://www.dwellwell.com/dwc_pages/bank_calcMortQual2.cfm) (www.dwellwell.com/dwc_pages/bank_calcMortQual2.cfm).

Accepting an Offer

The most important statement of this guide is this one: Don't accept an agreement until your attorney has reviewed it first. He'll identify any shortcomings that otherwise could cost you time, money and possibly even litigation. In addition, he'll provide all of the other necessary paperwork to complete the sale of your home.

Writing Up the Purchase Contract

At this point, you should already have a real estate attorney. Your attorney will provide the necessary services required to complete the sale of your home. Visit our [Home Seller Services](http://www.dwellwell.com/sellerServices.cfm) page (www.dwellwell.com/sellerServices.cfm) to find a list of attorneys in your area.

Sales Agreement

Once you and the buyer have agreed to the terms of the sale, use the Offer to Purchase form. If you've been using one as a working copy, print a new one and fill it out from scratch. If necessary, use a separate sheet of paper to outline terms such as the selling price, the amount of earnest money, the closing date and any contingencies before committing them to the form. Once you have everything written down, take it to your attorney.

After your attorney has reviewed the Offer to Purchase agreement, you and the buyer will sign it and it becomes your sales agreement.

Property Disclosure

As a seller, you're required by law to disclose any defects that exist in your home prior to selling it. A buyer can sue for damages and even force you to take your home back if you fail to disclose problems with your home. A Property Disclosure Statement will be given to you by your attorney, or if you prefer, you can find it with our [Real Estate Forms](http://www.dwellwell.com/dwc_pages/RealEstateForms.asp) (www.dwellwell.com/dwc_pages/RealEstateForms.asp). Again, after filling it out, have your attorney review it.

The buyer will almost always have the home inspected, and this inspection could identify problems with your home that you're unaware of. For peace of mind, it may be a good idea to have your own inspection done ahead of time so you're not caught by surprise. As you walk buyers through your home, don't be afraid to point out any problems. They'll be discovered soon enough, and they can be used in negotiation. If a problem is identified that would cost \$2,500 to repair, you can negotiate a portion of this amount, say \$1,250, off the price of your home.

Now that the sales agreement is signed, several things need to take place before the closing. They will take a little time, and some of them will need to occur before certain dates which have been specified in the sales agreement. Here's a general chronological list:

- Buyer applies for a mortgage
- Buyer's bank orders an appraisal of the home
- Buyer provides seller with a mortgage approval letter
- Buyer orders an inspection of the home
- Seller sees to it that any repairs to the home required by the buyer are performed
- Seller or the seller's attorney clears any issues related to the title

- Just before the closing, the buyer and seller do a walk-through of the house to make sure everything is as it should be

To search for local title services companies, please visit our [Home Seller Services](http://www.dwellwell.com/sellerServices.cfm) page (www.dwellwell.com/sellerServices.cfm).

The Closing

Just before the closing - usually the morning of - the buyer will do a final walk-through of the home to make sure it's still in at least as good a condition as it was when the sales agreement was signed.

The closing involves the formal transfer of the title of the property from the seller to the buyer and the signing of all the final legal documents that execute the sale of the home. The closing is attended by you, the buyer, the closing attorney (usually the buyer's attorney), your attorney, and in some instances a representative of the lender.

Your attorney's role is to make sure you understand the documents you will sign. These documents have been prepared either by your attorney or the buyer's attorney.

Usually, the first document you'll see is the closing statement. This document details all of the closing costs and adjustments between you and the buyer. Your attorney will go over this with you thoroughly to make certain there are no errors or omissions.

You'll be asked to sign various other documents, including an affidavit stating the property is free and clear of liens, judgments, assessments or any other encumbrances, all of which will have been determined by your attorney. Once you've signed your documents, you're free to leave. The buyer will have more documents to sign related to their mortgage.

Once the buyer finishes signing their documents, the closing attorney will file the deed at with the Registry of Deeds or the County Recorder's Office. Then it's official. You'll be able to pick up your check at the closing attorney's office.

Congratulations! You've sold your own home.

Disclaimer: DwellWell, LLC makes no guarantee that the advice offered in this guide will result in the sale of your home. DwellWell.com is a "For Sale By Owner" listing, marketing and advertising service. We do not provide real estate, legal or any other professional service, nor do we represent any party to any transaction that may result through the use of this website. Users of this service should read our Terms and Conditions at http://www.dwellwell.com/dwc_pages/legal_statement.htm.

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