

YOUR GUIDE TO

# SELLING A HOME IN

## THE BOZEMAN AREA

### Getting Started

This guide will walk you through the process of selling your home in the Bozeman area. We will discuss how you can prepare your home to get the highest price possible, how to choose the right real estate agent for you, how your property will be marketed to the public and much more!

## Step 1: Find the right listing agent

There are over 1,200 real estate agents in the Bozeman area. That's a lot of realtors for a town of Bozeman's size! How does one possibly decide who to work with? Chances are you know someone who is an agent or have a friend of a friend who is one. However, that doesn't necessarily mean you should work with them. When making the decision to buy or sell a home, it's important to make sure you are working with the right person. You want an agent who is looking out for your best interests, is willing to answer your questions and will offer helpful advice throughout the real estate process.

## Step 2: Determine your price and marketing plan

Your real estate agent will provide you with a comparative market analysis to determine the best listing price for your home. Once you have settled on a price, they will go over their strategy to market your home (keep reading to find out how our company would market your home). This is when you will schedule photography, videography and 3D tours of your home so that it is ready to go as soon as it hits the market.

## Step 3: Get prepared for showings & open houses

Once your home is listed, showings can begin. You want to be as flexible as possible so your home is easy to show. Let your agent know ahead of time if you have conflicts or if there are things visitors should know, such as not letting the cat outside or there's a dog in the backyard. It is common practice for the homeowner to not be present during showings, but this up to your discretion. If you list with our office, you will have the option to put your home on "Tour" which will allow real estate agents to come tour your home on a specific day and time.

## Step 4: Bring on the offers

Your agent will present all offers to you as they come in. This is your opportunity to negotiate the details such as price, contingencies, inspections and closing dates. Work with your agent through this process to accept the best possible offer.

## Step 5: Escrow period

Once you have reached an agreement you will enter the escrow period. During this time before the closing date, final details will be completed such as ordering a title report, scheduling the appraisal and inspection and determining the move-out date.

## Step 6: Appraisal

If the buyer is using financing to purchase, their lender will require an appraisal to make sure the purchase price is accurate with property value. If there were any appraisal contingencies, this is when those will get finalized.

## Step 7: Inspection

Inspections help ensure the buyer is purchasing a home that is in the condition in which it appears. If they discover a serious issue, the buyer has the opportunity to negotiate or get out of the offer altogether. As a seller you will have the opportunity to participate in the negotiation. Once an agreement is reached, the inspection contingencies can be lifted.

## Step 8: Closing

It can be quite the process, but you will finally reach the closing date! Your agent will walk you through the signing of the closing documents and it will be time to hand over the keys.

# — THINKING OF SELLING YOUR HOME ON YOUR OWN?

We understand the reasons for trying to sell your home on your own. Homeowners believe nobody can represent their home the way they can and are often worried about the costs of hiring a professional. But, there are many factors to keep in mind when deciding to sell your home as a for-sale-by-owner.

***In 2023 For-Sale-by-Owner (FSBO) sales hit an all-time low of just 7% of home sales\****

***The majority of FSBO sellers, 57%, knew the buyer of the home\****

***FSBO homes sold at a median of \$310,000 last year, significantly lower than the median of agent-assisted homes at \$405,000\****

For-sale-by-owners will face a number of challenges when selling on their own. There are piles of paperwork, scams to look out for, and liability concerns. Most importantly, it takes time to sell a home. Rather than spending your nights and weekends scheduling showings, filling out paperwork, or negotiating with buyers, your time should be spent doing what you love, and what you do best. Hiring a real estate professional means that you will spend less time, fewer resources, have less liability, and can make more money on the sale of your home.

## PRICING RIGHT

Montana is a non-disclosure state, which means that no one has access to the sold prices of a home other than members of the MLS. How can you set an appropriate price for your home when you have nothing to compare it with? Even in a market like Bozeman's, pricing is everything. If you list your home too high, buyers and agents will overlook your home and head to the more affordable option down the street. If you price too low, well, you are giving up money that could have been headed straight for your pocket.

## ALL THAT PAPERWORK

According to the National Association of Realtors, understanding paperwork is one of the most difficult tasks for homeowners. Required paperwork in a real estate transaction varies state by state which makes it difficult to track the property disclosures, sales contracts, counter offers, and other forms required for a transaction. Sure, you may find many companies offering ready-made contracts, but can you be sure that you've covered all requirements for your state? Do you fully understand what all the contracts mean and what to transmit to lenders and title companies?

## SPENDING MORE TIME ON THE MARKET

As a FSBO, your property will not be listed on the MLS system. This is the system that syndicates properties for sale to all of those 3rd party websites like Realtor.com, Homes.com, Zillow, brokerage websites etc. While you can now advertise your home on Zillow, your home will be displayed separately from the other homes. You will not have the option to list your home on Realtor.com or other important websites. This means your home will likely spend more time on the market.

## THE LIABILITY IS ON YOU

Everyone makes mistakes. But selling your home on your own means you are responsible for those mistakes, miscommunications or misunderstandings that occur in the course of your transaction. If you mistakenly misrepresent a feature of your home and the buyer later discovers it, chances are you will be liable for any and all costs involved. While you may think working with an attorney is the solution, the truth is that while an attorney can close a real estate transaction they aren't trained to handle the intricacies of a real estate transaction.

## SCAMS

Moving through a real estate transaction without a professional can be risky. Unfortunately, scams targeting for-sale-by-owners are widespread and often well executed. Selling a home on your own means you may come across fraudulent legal documents, buyer deposit scams or set-ups with the intention of stealing your personal information. If you market your home online, you will be especially at risk for scams meant to take advantage of people in your position.

## HOW WILL BUYERS FIND YOUR HOME?

One of the greatest benefits of working with a REALTOR® is access to the Multiple Listing Service. This is where more than 1,500 real estate agents in the area find properties for their clients. Not having your home on the MLS system is essentially ignoring the 1,500+ agents who represent the potential buyers for your home.

\*According to the National Association of REALTORS 2023 Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers



## CHOOSING A REAL ESTATE AGENT

*When it comes to successfully selling your home, it is so important to make sure you are working with the right person. You want an agent who is ethical, educated, and professional. Finding an agent who prioritizes your best interests, who is able and willing to fully address your questions and concerns, and who will offer helpful advice throughout the process of selling a home couldn't be more important. Here are the top qualities to look for in an agent.*

**Communication** Having open lines of communication and an ongoing dialog with your real estate agent is critical. Real estate is a personal experience, you want someone who will listen (actually listen!) to you and is able to open up with you, even if they are telling you something you may not want to hear. Often you can tell if this person is someone you can communicate with, but if you are unsure, ask previous clients or check their reviews. Getting perspective from someone who has worked with the agent firsthand would give you some valuable insight.

**Knowledge** A successful agent needs to understand the market and the legalities and processes that come with selling a home. A well-educated real estate agent can offer valuable insight to help you make the right decisions. They know how to properly price a home based on the current market, and can advise you when it comes to negotiations, inspection items, navigating your closing and so much more.

**Honesty** You want to know that the real estate agent you choose to work with is making decisions that are in your best interest. It can be hard to know what your trust level with someone will be based on an initial meeting. We recommend asking questions, checking their reviews and ultimately going with your gut feeling on this, it is usually right!

**Problem Solver** A real estate transaction can be complicated. Problems are likely to arise and you want to have an agent who is willing to work through these obstacles with you. Your agent should be the expert and should be working to make the process as smooth as possible. Often this takes someone who knows how to problem solve, work through issues, and not throw around blame when things get tough.



## OUR MARKETING

OUR WEBSITE HAS AN AVERAGE OF  
**800 VISITORS PER DAY, 24,580 PER MONTH, AND MORE THAN 295,000 PER YEAR**

WE ARE THE **HIGHEST RATED REAL ESTATE OFFICE IN BOZEMAN\***

OUR BLOGS ARE VIEWED NEARLY **26,000 TIMES EACH MONTH**

OUR SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS REACH AN AVERAGE OF **42,000 PEOPLE EACH MONTH**

## OUR AGENTS

OF THE HIGHEST PRODUCING REAL ESTATE OFFICES IN OUR AREA, WE HAVE THE  
**HIGHEST NUMBER OF TRANSACTIONS PER AGENT, PER YEAR\*\***

WE ARE THE **HIGHEST PRODUCING INDEPENDENT REAL ESTATE OFFICE IN BOZEMAN ,**  
**AND THE #5 HIGHEST PRODUCING OFFICE OVERALL**

BOZEMAN REAL ESTATE GROUP AGENTS HAVE **400 COLLECTIVE YEARS OF EXPERIENCE**



**Try this,** use Google to search for any keywords related to Bozeman Real Estate. You can try “Bozeman real estate offices” “Bozeman real estate agents” “Bozeman real estate companies” or just “Bozeman Real Estate”.

**You will find that** Bozeman Real Estate Group is almost always the 1st local office to appear organically on Google for these search terms.

**This benefits you** because if you work with Bozeman Real Estate Group, you can be confident that you are getting the most exposure possible in our local market. As a seller, you will benefit from our website traffic knowing that your property is being seen by thousands of people on our website each month. As a buyer, you can rest assured that you are working with an office that has the strongest presence in the local market.

# MARKETING

The level of marketing your home will receive depends entirely on who you decide to list your home with. Every real estate company approaches its marketing strategy differently, and it can also vary greatly depending on which agent you choose to work with. If you choose to list with Bozeman Real Estate Group you can rest assured knowing you are getting the highest quality, progressive marketing for your property.

## PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY

We have an in-house photographer who will take professional photos of your home to ensure that potential buyers see it at its best. We may also include drone photography and professional videography.

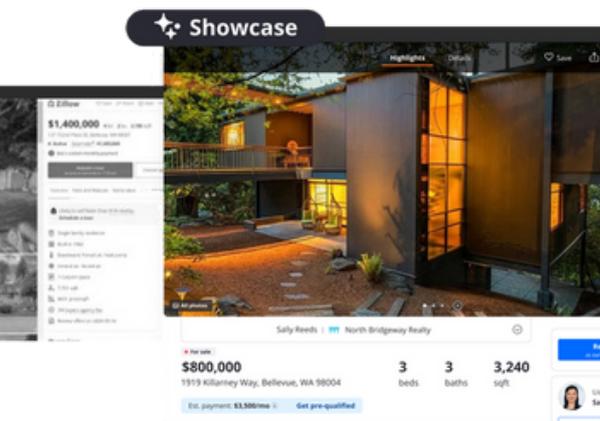
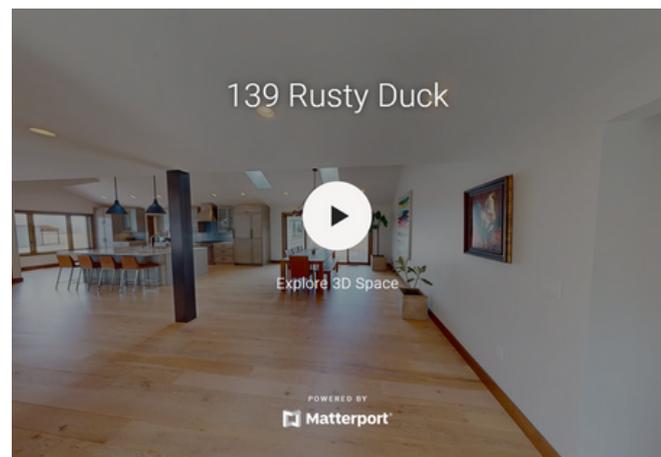


## FLYOVER VIDEOS

Flyover videos are a unique way to market your property. These videos use imagery from Google Earth to fly over your property, highlighting its proximity to schools, trails, parks, and other notable locations. This allows potential buyers to get a birds-eye view of your property and its location. This is especially valuable for any potential out of area buyers!

## 3D TOURS

Is your home the type that must be seen to truly appreciate? With a matterport tour, we bring that experience straight to potential buyers, while they are still in the comfort of their own home! It can create a realistic, fully immersive experience. Virtual tours bring your home to life, allowing all the home buyers out there to truly appreciate your property.

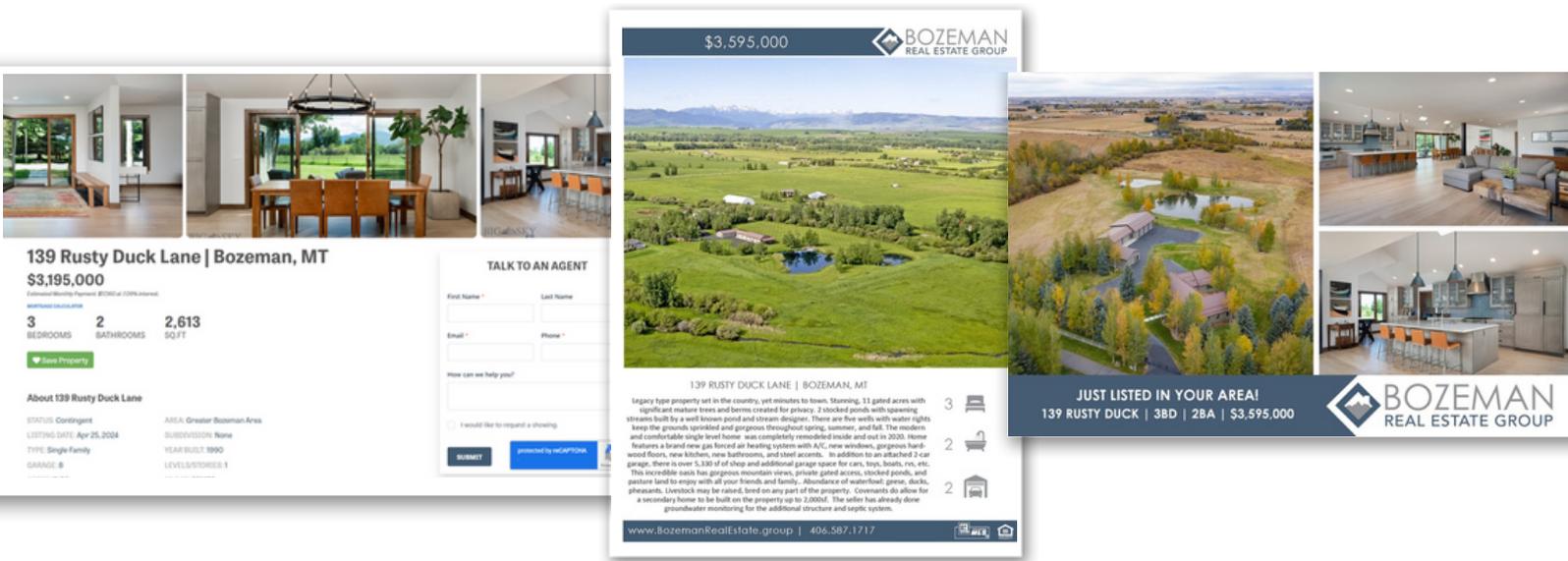


## ZILLOW SHOWCASE

Zillow Listing Showcase is available to only 10% of listings, and we are the only real estate office in our market taking advantage of this program. Your property will get amplified exposure in buyer searches on Zillow, email alerts featuring your property will go out to Zillow's customer database, and your property will be differentiated from all the other listings with AI-powered immersive visuals.

# MARKETING MATERIALS

- High-quality flyers and a property packet that includes utility/tax info, neighborhood details, etc
- A postcard featuring your home will be sent to other homeowners in the area
- When an open house is hosted, it will be advertised online and with an ad in the Bozeman Daily Chronicle
- A listing stand with a QR code that links to more property information will be at your property
- A sign rider with a QR code that links to more property information can be added to the yard sign
- A digital storybook can be created for your listing



## ONLINE EXPOSURE

According to the National Association of Realtors, the most used information source for all homebuyers under the age of 70 was websites. Homes listed with our office syndicate to more than 80 prominent real estate websites and are prominently featured on the **highest ranking local real estate website in Bozeman**, the Bozeman Real Estate Group website!

*Our company website often outranks national websites like Realtor.com, Zillow and Trulia in Google searches which means your home will get the best online exposure with our company.*

## OUR NETWORK

When working with a Bozeman Real Estate Group agent, you get a benefit that no for-sale-by-owner will ever have access to. The MLS system. **With a network of over 1,800 real estate brokers, agents, and affiliates in Southwest Montana this is the absolute best way to get your property in front of the people who can sell it.** No for-sale-by-owner website, sign-in-the-yard, or Craigslist ad can do this for you.

In many offices, you'll find that everyone is just looking out for themselves. That's not how we do things here! When a new listing comes on the market, the home is put on an office tour for our agents to preview so everyone can work together to get it sold.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Did you know that YouTube reaches more 18-49 year old's than any cable network in the U.S? Or that 71% of people aged 18-29 have active Instagram accounts? **We know where potential buyers are spending their time online, and our marketing strategy is to go to them rather than wait for them to come to us.**

What's even better? The online world makes it easy for us to target people we know will be interested in buying your home. We do this by posting photos, reels and stories of your home on our social channels.

# GETTING YOUR HOME READY TO SELL

Once you make the decision to put your home on the market, it's time to start looking at your home through a potential buyer's eyes rather than as a proud homeowner. First impressions are critical in real estate. Once you've decided to sell, preparing your home to hit the market is the first step. Taking the time to do repairs, updates, and cleaning along with depersonalizing and staging your home can make all the difference when it comes to selling your home quickly and for the best possible price.

## DECLUTTER

- ✓ EXTERIOR | Remove excessive lawn ornaments and furniture. Simplicity is best when it comes to showcasing your home. Organize pet areas and toss or store any toys, tools or trash.
- ✓ CLOSETS & CUPBOARDS | These are big ones to organize since they are often where things are hidden with the out-of-sight-out-of-mind mentality. Buyers will be checking everywhere so be sure to de-clutter and organize these spaces.
- ✓ LIVING AREAS | Less is more! Remove clutter, get rid of extra furniture and clean out the bookshelves. Buyers need to be able to picture their own furniture in the space and that's difficult to do if it's full of your personal stuff!
- ✓ KITCHEN | Clear the counters, remove magnets and photos from the refrigerator and tackle the junk drawer!
- ✓ LAUNDRY & MUDROOM | These rooms can end up with a lot of clutter, go through and toss what you don't need and organize the rest.
- ✓ GARAGE | Another spot that can fill with odd and ends. Clean it out! You'll thank yourself on moving day.

## REPAIR

If there are any repairs you have had on your to-do list, now is the time to get them done. All those little quirks that you've been living with could be a major turn off to potential buyers.

- ✓ EXTERIOR | Check doors, windows, screens, paint, siding etc. These are things buyers will notice before they even get through the door.
- ✓ INTERIOR | Repair any leaky plumbing, faulty appliances, hinges, knobs, light fixtures, flooring, outlet covers and check walls for cracks or patches that may be necessary.

# GETTING YOUR HOME READY TO SELL

## CLEANING

We don't just mean regular clean, we mean ready-to-sell-clean! You want to make your home sparkle like never before so that buyers can focus on all the wonderful features of your home. A clean home appears low maintenance and well cared for.

- ✓ EXTERIOR | Clean the windows, sweep off the deck and wash the patio furniture. If it's summer make sure you are on top of the landscaping and if it's winter, keep the sidewalks and driveway clear of snow.
- ✓ FLOORS | If you have carpet, a professional cleaning is the best way to deodorize and clean.
- ✓ WALLS/WINDOWS/LIGHT FIXTURES | Give them all a good scrub-down to make them shine.
- ✓ KITCHEN | Clean appliances, organize and wash out cupboards, deodorize garbage areas and use a garbage disposal freshener to get rid of any old food smells.
- ✓ BATHROOMS | Clean and polish vanities and mirrors, remove mold and soap scum from sinks, tubs and showers.
- ✓ PET AREAS | This is a big one! Just because you love Fido and Fluffy does not mean everyone will. One of the biggest turn-offs to home buyers are pet smells. Clean up the fur and use an odor neutralizer to help with any pesky pet smells.

## DEPERSONALIZE

You want buyers to walk in and feel like your home could be their own. This can be difficult when your home is decorated with personal belongings. Remove family photos and any bold artwork to neutralize the space. Keeping the décor simple is a great for buyers to be able to picture themselves in your home. This doesn't mean empty; a few neutral pieces can make your home appear welcoming.

## PREPARE FOR SHOWINGS

Once you have done a thorough cleaning and de-cluttering, you will be ready for real estate photographs. Before each showing a touch-up cleaning will be helpful to keep your home looking its best. Make sure there are no dishes in the sink, or clothes on the floor. Make the beds, close the shower curtains and lower the toilet covers. Turn on all the lights and if there's a fireplace, have it going. Adding some extras like fresh flowers on the table and music playing in the background. Bonus - if the weather allows, open the windows to bring in the fresh air!



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