



Selling a Home? Don't Go it Alone.

The emergence of flowers in the garden, the sound of lawn mowers, and the sight of children riding bicycles are not the only clues that spring is upon us. A leisurely drive around the neighborhood reveals that it is also the time of year when many homeowners sell their homes. The safest way for home sellers to protect what could be their largest investment is to enlist the help of a REALTOR®.

Homeowners who try to sell their home without professional help must overcome a number of hurdles, including making the appropriate disclosures, preparing the home for sale, pricing the home appropriately for a dynamic market and, most importantly, attracting qualified, motivated buyers. According to the 2005 *NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers*, only 17 percent of do-it-yourself home sellers used the Internet to market their home even though 77 percent of all home buyers used the Internet to look for a home.

Finding an interested buyer is only the first step toward a successful sale. The typical home sale today involves more than 20 steps after the initial contract is accepted to complete the transaction.

Most home sellers in today's market recognize the hazards inherent in do-it-yourself home selling, and rely on the expertise of a real estate professional to assist them when they sell their home. The percentage of owners who sell without representation is at a record low. According to the 2005 profile, only 13 percent of recent home sellers sold their home without professional help, and only half of those would do it again.

While the average homeowner may sell three or four homes in his or her lifetime, REALTORS® can sell hundreds over the course of a career. This experience is invaluable, and it's part of the reason why home sellers who use a real estate professional can expect to sell their homes for 16 percent more, on average, than sellers who try to do it themselves. Savvy sellers know to hire a licensed real estate agent to protect their interests and guide them through the selling process.

Information furnished by the Montgomery County Association of Realtors®.

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