

A SELLER'S GUIDE

Questions to Ask Before You Sell Your Home

The questions that get you ready — for yourself, your home, and your agent — so you list with a clear head and avoid chasing busywork.



Prepared for home sellers across the greater Houston area



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Educational guide — current as of 2026. Market conditions and the costs of selling change over time and vary by home and situation; this is general information, not legal, tax, or financial advice. For specifics, talk with a trusted lender, title company, tax professional, or real-estate attorney. If your home is currently listed with a REALTOR® or broker, please disregard any solicitation — this is shared for education, not to interfere with an existing agreement. Equal Housing Opportunity.

START HERE

The right questions, asked early, make the whole sale easier.



What if? When? How much? You'll have plenty of questions as you get ready to sell — and that's a good sign. Whether this is your first home sale or you've sold before, every situation is unique, and the sellers who ask the right questions up front are the ones who avoid surprises later.

Good for you for thinking this through. Selling at the right time, for the right price, can be a great move — but the reverse is true too, which is exactly why a little homework pays off. The answers you gather now become the baseline for every decision that follows.

This guide pulls together the questions worth answering before the For Sale sign goes up: the six big areas to get your head around, then what to ask your agent, your home, yourself, and the closing table. Work through them and you'll list with confidence instead of second-guessing.

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SECTION 1

Six areas to settle first

Before you list, there are six areas worth wrapping your head around. Get clear on these and the rest of the process has a foundation to stand on. The first one comes first for a reason — it shapes all the others.

1

Home value and sale price

What is your home worth, and what could you list it for? Online estimates are a starting point, but what similar homes nearby have actually sold for — the comps — sets the real baseline for every other decision.

2

Your equity

How much of the home do you actually own, versus the bank? Market value minus your loan balance is your equity. It should be positive, and it tells you how much you'll have for your next move.

3

The cost of selling

Selling isn't free — commissions, repairs, possible overlap costs, closing costs, and concessions add up. Knowing the real total tells you whether the timing works for your budget.

4

Your timeline, improvements, and method

How long do homes like yours take to sell ('days on market')? What cosmetic updates might lift your price? And how will you sell — with a professional, or on your own? Settle these and you're ready to plan.

WHY VALUE COMES FIRST

Almost every other question — your equity, your costs, whether improvements are worth it — depends on knowing what your home is realistically worth today. Start there, and the rest gets a lot clearer.

SECTION 2

What to ask your agent

Your real estate agent is on your side and ready to field most of your questions. A commission check is headed their way at the end of the day, which gives you both the right and the responsibility to make sure they're the right fit. Don't be shy — a good agent welcomes these.

Questions worth asking up front



About their experience

How long have you been licensed? How many clients have you helped sell homes, and how many do you typically close in a year? Do you work full time?



About their focus

Do you have any specialties? What price range of homes do you usually help people sell, and how many sellers are you working with right now?



About how you'll work together

Will I work only with you, or with a team? Do you work with buyers as well as sellers? Knowing this sets expectations for communication.



About strategy

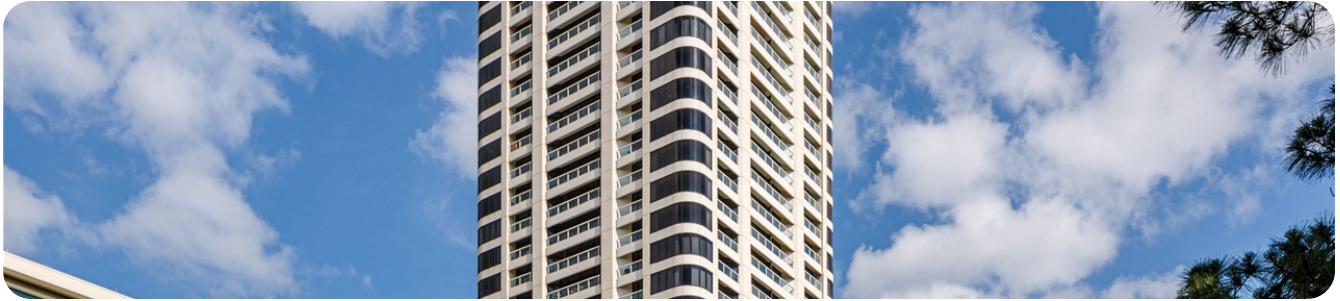
What's your plan for pricing, marketing, and showings for a home like mine? Their answer tells you how they think — and whether it matches what you want.

IT'S A PARTNERSHIP

You're choosing someone to guide a six-figure decision. Asking direct questions early isn't rude — it's how you find an agent whose communication style and approach genuinely fit yours.

SECTION 3

What to ask about your home



Condition and systems

Are any major repairs needed? How old are the HVAC, appliances, and roof? Would any of those be a barrier to selling — or worth addressing before you list?

Value and upgrades

How much is the home worth based on comparable homes nearby? Would any cosmetic changes or light renovations meaningfully improve the sale price for your timeline?

Selling points

What about your area, schools, or nearby amenities could be selling points? Knowing what makes your home attractive shapes how it's marketed.

Buyers and strategy

What kind of buyers do you want to attract, and what's the best marketing and showing strategy for this specific home? Your agent helps you match the plan to the property.

SMALL CHANGES, REAL IMPACT

Depending on your timeline, simple cosmetic updates or light touch-ups can noticeably improve your sale price. Whether they're worth it for your home is exactly the kind of thing to talk through with your agent before you spend.

SECTION 4

What to ask yourself

The last important set of questions happens with yourself — and your spouse, housemate, or anyone else selling the home with you. Getting aligned here, before offers arrive, keeps emotion from steering the decision and saves you from chasing rabbit trails later.

Settle these with everyone on the deed



Your numbers

What's the amount you really want for this home — and, just as important, the lowest price you'd genuinely accept? Decide both before offers start coming in.



Your non-negotiables

What terms aren't you willing to bend on? Knowing your firm lines ahead of time means you respond to offers from a plan, not a feeling.



Your flexibility

Are you willing to take on repairs or renovations? To cover some closing costs? To negotiate? Honest answers here keep your expectations realistic.



Your timeline

Does your moving date affect the transaction? Being clear on how time pressure (or the lack of it) shapes your choices keeps you steady when things move fast.

WHY THIS MATTERS MOST

Going into a home sale knowing what you want and what you have to work with is what keeps you calm and clear-eyed when the offers — and the emotions — start flowing. This step is worth the time.

What to ask before closing

Whether it's your first sale or your fifth, the closing stage raises its own questions — especially around your mortgage payoff, your responsibilities before the day arrives, and what happens if the numbers shift. Asking these early clears the path to a smooth finish.

Questions to ask about closing

- ✓ What are my responsibilities for the home before closing?
- ✓ What needs to be handled with utilities before closing?
- ✓ Do I need to complete any repairs first, and how is that proven?
- ✓ What am I required to bring, and roughly what will closing costs run?

Know what could shift the deal

If the appraisal surprises you. Understand ahead of time what happens if the buyer's appraisal comes back low or high. A low one opens a fresh, workable negotiation — it's common and manageable.

If contingencies come up. Ask what contingencies you might agree to during negotiation — like the buyer's financing — and how each one could affect your timeline.

Your mortgage payoff. Make sure you understand how your remaining loan is paid off at closing and how that figures into your net proceeds.

The final checklist. Confirm exactly what to bring and do, so you arrive ready. A short list keeps the last step from becoming a scramble.

NO SURPRISES

Asking these closing questions early is how you reach the table without a hitch. The clearer you are on the process now, the fewer last-minute surprises — and the less stress on what should be a good day.

PUTTING IT TOGETHER

Bringing your answers together

Once you've worked through the questions, getting ready to sell comes down to a few grounded moves.

1

Anchor everything to a real value.

Start with what your home is realistically worth today. Your equity, your costs, and your improvement decisions all flow from that number.

2

Choose your agent on purpose.

Ask the direct questions and pick someone whose experience and communication style genuinely fit you. It's a partnership for a big decision.

3

Get honest about your home.

Know its condition, its selling points, and which small improvements are actually worth making for your timeline.

4

Align with everyone on the deed.

Settle your target price, your bottom line, and your non-negotiables before offers arrive — together, not in the heat of the moment.

5

Clear the closing questions early.

Understand your responsibilities, your payoff, and what could shift the deal, so closing day is smooth instead of stressful.

LET'S TALK

Work with Allen



Full of questions about selling? That's completely normal — and answering them is exactly where I come in. My job is to give you clear, honest answers so you can plan from real numbers instead of guesses, with no pressure either way.

Have questions about selling your home?

Let's start with the question underneath most of the others: what is your home actually worth today? I'll put together a free, no-pressure home-value snapshot for your neighborhood and walk you through whatever else is on your list. When would be a good time to connect?

Reach out for a free home-value review

Call or text: (832) 709-2540 · allen@allenmarkel.com · allenmarkel.com

If your answers point to waiting, I'll tell you that honestly. My goal is to help you make the decision that's right for you — not just to list a home. TREC #0658294.