

Things To Consider When **Selling Your House**



SPRING 2025
EDITION



Michael Morales

Realtor
Keller Williams Sierra Foothills
Golden K Homes
(925) 337-3600
mikemorales@goldenk.net
www.goldenk.net

The background of the top section features a blue-tinted photograph. In the foreground, several tulips are in various stages of bloom. In the background, a white house with a gabled roof and a porch is visible, partially obscured by the flowers and a dark bush.

Table of Contents

- 3 Are You Asking Yourself These Questions About Selling Your House?**
- 5 How Home Equity May Help You Buy Your Next Home in Cash**
- 8 Expert Forecasts for the 2025 Housing Market**
- 11 The 3 Biggest Mistakes Sellers Are Making Right Now**
- 13 Home Staging FAQ: What You Need To Know**
- 15 A Checklist for Selling Your House**
- 16 Why More Sellers Are Hiring Real Estate Agents**
- 18 Key Reasons To Hire a Real Estate Agent When You Sell**

Are You Asking Yourself These Questions About Selling Your House?

If you're debating whether you want to sell right now, it might be because you have some unanswered questions. Here's some information that can help.



1. Is It Even a Good Idea To Move Right Now?

If you own a home already, you may be tempted to wait because you don't want to sell and take on a higher mortgage rate on your next house. But your move may be a lot more feasible than you think, and that's because of how much your house has likely grown in value.

Think about it. Do you know a neighbor who's sold their house recently? If so, did you hear what it sold for? With how much home values have gone up in recent years, the number may surprise you.

According to Lawrence Yun, Chief Economist at the *National Association of Realtors* (NAR), the typical homeowner has gained \$147,000 in housing wealth in the last five years alone. That's significant – and when you sell, that increase in value can give you what you need to fund your next move.

2. Will I Be Able To Find a Home I Like?

If this is on your mind, it's probably because you remember just how hard it was to find a home over the past few years. But in today's market, it isn't as challenging.

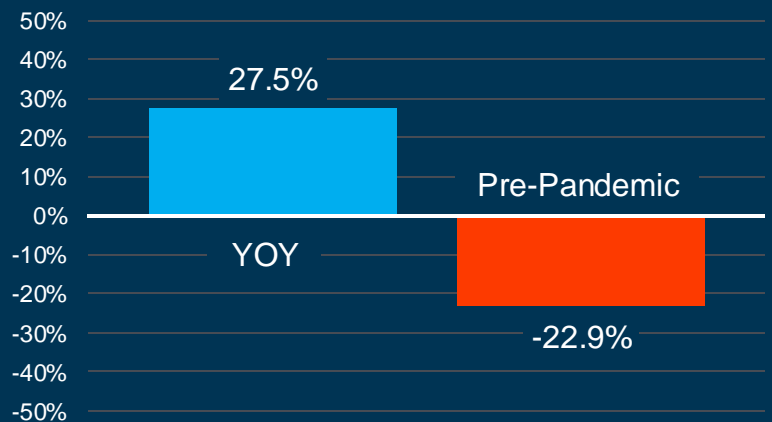
Data from *Realtor.com* shows how much inventory has increased – it's up nearly 28% compared to last year (see graph).

Even though inventory is still below normal, it's improved a lot in the past year. And the best part is, experts say it'll grow another 10-15% in 2025.

That means you have more options for your move — and the greatest chance in years to find a home you love.

The Supply of Homes for Sale is Growing, But Still Below The Numbers Seen in More Normal Years

Percent Change in Inventory Year-Over-Year vs. Pre-Pandemic (2017–2019)



Source: Realtor.com

3. Are Buyers Still Buying?

And last, if you're worried no one's buying with rates and prices where they are right now, here's some perspective that can help. While there weren't as many home sales last year as there'd be in a normal market, roughly 4.06 million homes still sold (not including new construction), according to the *National Association of Realtors* (NAR). And the expectation is that number will rise in 2025. But even if we only match how many homes sold last year, here's what that looks like.

- 4.06 million homes ÷ 365 days in a year = **11,123 homes sell each day**
- 11,123 homes ÷ 24 hours in a day = **463 homes sell per hour**
- 463 homes ÷ 60 minutes = **7.7 homes sell every minute**

Think about that. Just in the time it took you to read this, 8 homes sold. Let this reassure you – the market isn't at a standstill. Every day, thousands of people buy, and they're looking for homes like yours.

Bottom Line

If you want to talk more about these questions or need more information about what's happening in our area, reach out.

How Home Equity May Help You Buy Your Next Home in Cash

Building equity in your house is one of the biggest financial advantages of homeownership. And right now, homeowners across the country are sitting on near record amounts of it.

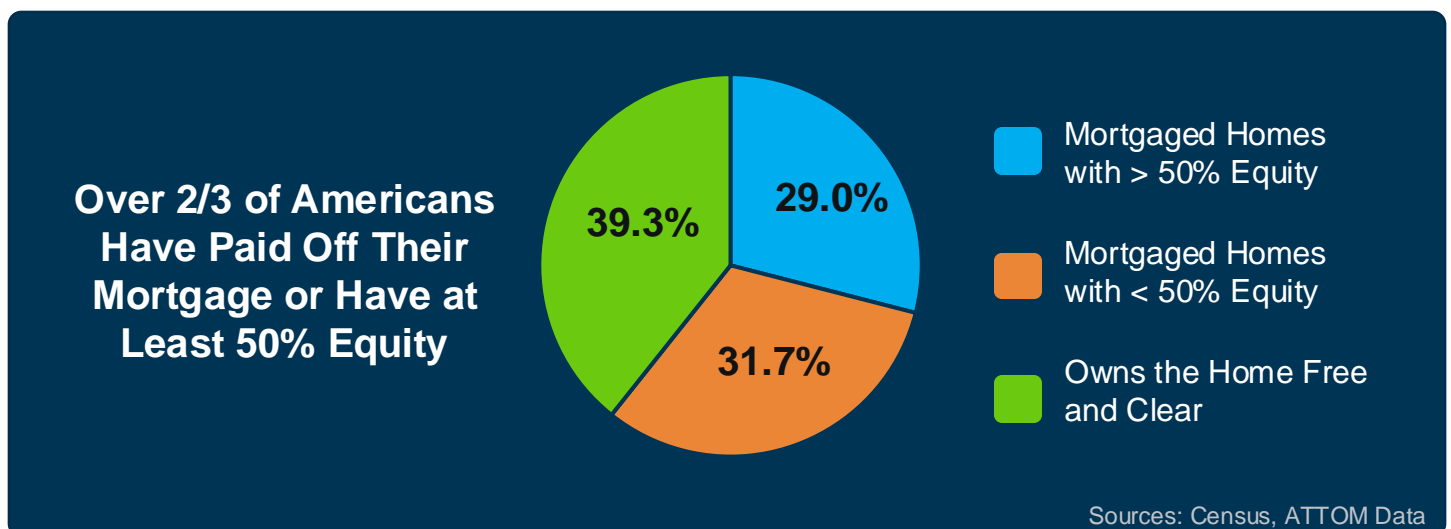
Here's a look at how that equity could be a game changer for you, and why it'll flip your perspective from "Why would I move right now?" to "Why wouldn't I?"

Home Equity: What Is It?

Home equity is the difference between how much your house is worth and how much you still owe on your mortgage. For example, if your house is valued at \$400,000 and you only owe \$200,000 on your mortgage, your equity would be \$200,000.

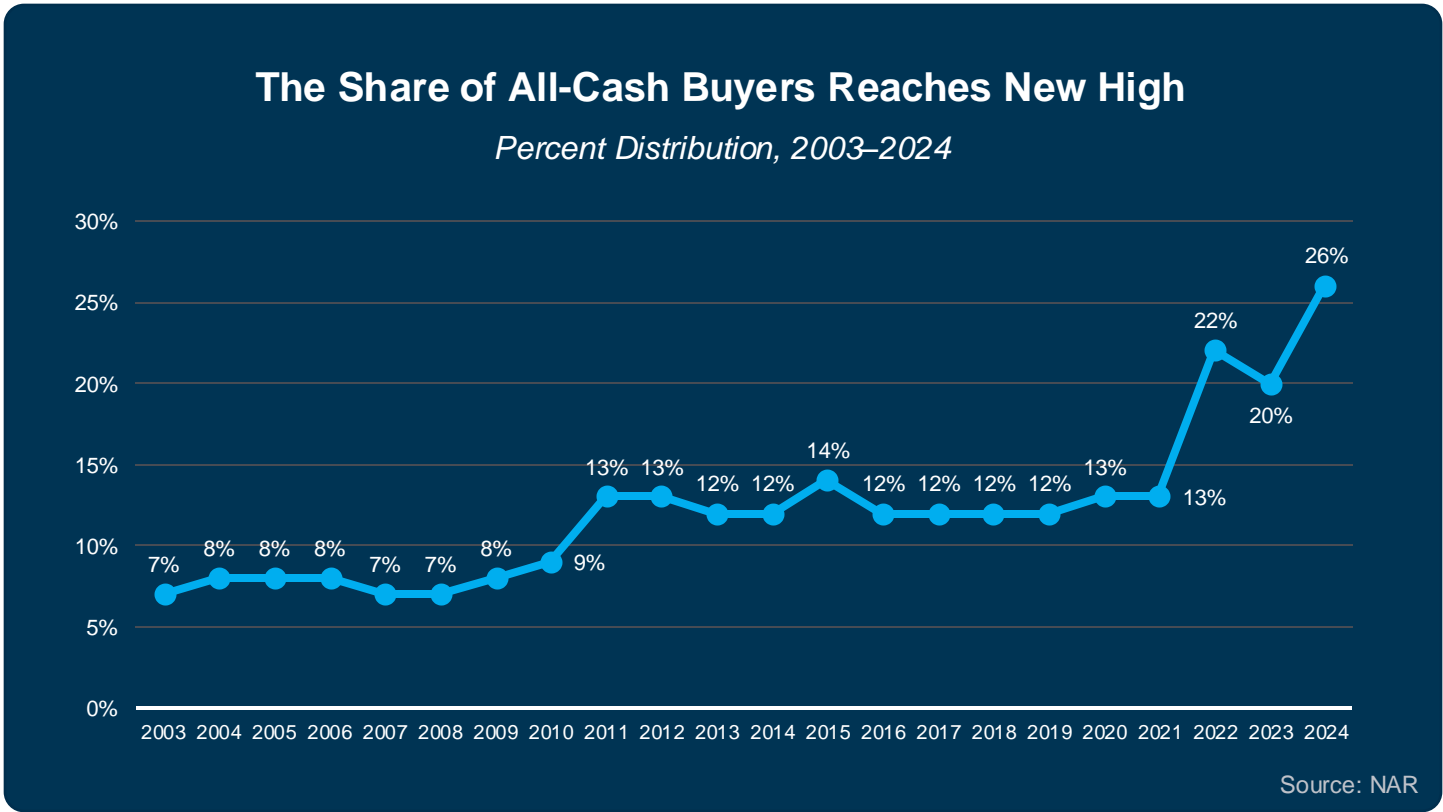
Why Equity Is Such a Big Deal for Homeowners Looking To Sell

Recent data from the *Census* and *ATTOM* shows how significant today's home equity really is. In fact, more than two-thirds of homeowners have either completely paid off their mortgages (*shown in green in the chart below*) or have at least 50% equity in their homes (*shown in blue in the chart below*):



That's a big deal. Think about it: 2 out of every 3 homeowners have at least 50% equity in their homes. To put a more tangible number on it, the *Intercontinental Exchange* (ICE) says the average homeowner with a mortgage has over \$319,000 in equity. That kind of net worth can go a long way if you're trying to make a move.

That’s part of the reason why the share of all-cash buyers recently reached a new high. According to an annual report from the *National Association of Realtors* (NAR), 26% of buyers were able to buy without a mortgage (see graph below):



Imagine buying your next house in cash. No mortgage. No monthly payment. No interest rate to mess with. If you want to find out how much equity you have to see if that’s an option for you, connect with a real estate agent and ask for a professional equity assessment report (PEAR).

Who knows, you may find out you have enough equity to buy your next place outright — and with today’s mortgage rates, not having to take out a home loan is pretty incredible. Even if you don’t have enough equity to buy in all cash, you may still have enough to make a larger down payment, which has its own benefits, too.

Bottom Line

Homeowners have an extraordinary amount of equity today — and that’s why the share of all-cash buyers is on the rise. To see how much equity you have and talk through how it can help fuel your next move, let’s connect.



... all cash purchases have increased in the last two years. These housing consumers owned a home, sold it, and then they could purchase their next property without a mortgage. The freedom to make this purchase was likely due to the large amount of housing equity they have earned as home prices have increased in recent years.

Jessica Lautz
Deputy Chief Economist and Vice President of Research, NAR

Expert Forecasts for the 2025 Housing Market

Thinking about moving and wondering what's in store for the housing market this year? And more specifically, what it all means for you if you plan to sell your house? Here's what the experts say lies ahead.

Will Mortgage Rates Come Down?

Everyone's keeping an eye on mortgage rates and waiting for them to come down. So, the question is really: how far and how fast? The good news is they're projected to ease a bit in 2025. But not by much. That means you shouldn't expect to see a return of 3-4% mortgage rates. And the other experts agree. They're forecasting rates could settle in the mid-6% range by the end of the year (see chart below):

Mortgage Rate Projections

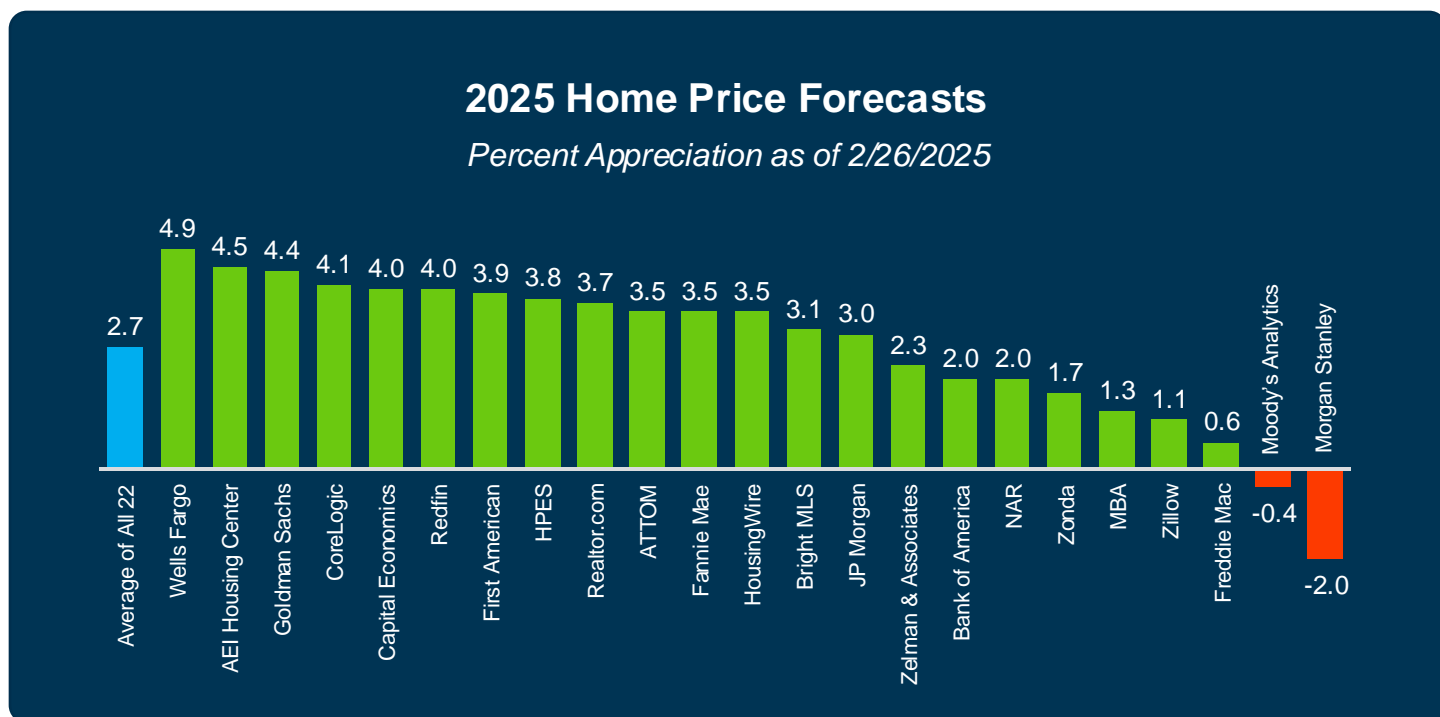
30-Year Fixed Rate, As of 2/20/2025

Quarter	Fannie Mae	MBA	Wells Fargo	Average of All Three
2025 Q1	6.90%	6.90%	7.10%	6.96%
2025 Q2	6.80%	6.90%	6.90%	6.86%
2025 Q3	6.70%	6.70%	6.65%	6.68%
2025 Q4	6.60%	6.50%	6.50%	6.53%

But you should remember, this will continue to change as new information becomes available. Expert forecasts are based on what they know right now. And since everything from inflation to economic drivers have an impact on where rates go from here, brace for some rate volatility. Don't get caught up in the exact numbers here and try to time the market. Instead, focus on the overall trend and that even a small decline can help bring down your future mortgage payment.

Will Home Prices Fall?

The short answer? Not likely. While mortgage rates are expected to ease a bit, home prices are projected to keep climbing in most areas — just at a more normal, sustainable pace. If you average the expert forecasts together, you'll see prices are expected to go up about 3% in 2025, with most of them hitting somewhere in the 3 to 4% range (see *graph below*):



So don't expect a sudden drop that'll score you a big deal if you're thinking of moving this year. While that may sound disappointing if you're hoping prices will come down, refocus on this. It means you won't have to deal with the steep increases we saw in recent years, and you'll also likely see any home you do buy go up in value after you get the keys in hand. And that's actually a good thing.

Keep in mind, though, the housing market is hyper-local. So, this will vary by area. Some markets will see even higher prices. And some may see prices level off or even dip a little if inventory is up in that location. In most places though, prices will continue to rise (as they usually do).

Bottom Line

Let's talk so you can get the scoop on what's happening in our area and advice on how to make your next move a smart one.



Deciding whether to sell your house depends on your personal circumstances and the specific dynamics of the market in your area. If you need to sell now . . . an experienced local agent can guide you through the process.

NerdWallet



The 3 Biggest Mistakes Sellers Are Making Right Now

If you want to sell your house, having the right strategies and expectations is key. But some sellers haven't adjusted to where the market is today. As a result, those sellers are making some costly mistakes.

Here's a quick rundown of the 3 most common missteps, and how partnering with an expert agent can help you avoid every single one of them.



1. Pricing the Home Too High

According to a survey by *John Burns Real Estate Consulting* (JBREC) and *Keeping Current Matters* (KCM), real estate agents agree the #1 thing sellers struggle with right now is setting the right price for their house (see graph below):

58% of Agents Say Sellers Have the Most Trouble Setting the Right Price in Today's Market

Top Issues Sellers Find Most Challenging in Today's Market



Source: JBREC and Keeping Current Matters Real Estate Agent Survey

More often than not, homeowners tend to overprice their listings. If you aren't up to speed on what's happening in your local market, you may give in to the temptation to price high so you can have as much wiggle room as possible to negotiate. You don't want to do this.

Today's buyers are more cautious due to higher rates and tight budgets, and a price that feels out of reach will scare them off. And if no one's looking at your house, how's it going to sell? This is exactly why more sellers are having to do price cuts.

To avoid this headache, trust your agent's expertise from day 1. A great agent will be able to tell you what your neighbor's house just sold for and how that impacts the value of your home.

2. Skipping Repairs

Another common mistake is trying to avoid doing work on your house. That leaky faucet or squeaky door might not bother you, but to buyers, small maintenance issues can be red flags. They may assume those little flaws are signs of bigger problems — and it could cost you when offers come in lower or buyers ask for concessions. As *Investopedia* says:

“Sellers who do not clean and stage their homes throw money down the drain. . . Failing to do these things can reduce your sales price and may also prevent you from getting a sale at all. If you haven’t attended to minor issues, such as a broken doorknob or dripping faucet, a potential buyer may wonder whether the house has larger, costlier issues that haven’t been addressed either.”

The solution? Work with your agent to prioritize anything you’ll need to tackle before the photographer comes in. These minor upgrades can pay off big when it’s time to sell.

2. Refusing to Negotiate

Buyers today are feeling the pinch of high home prices and mortgage rates. With affordability so tight, they may come in with an offer that’s lower than you want to see. Don’t take it personally. Instead, focus on the end goal: selling your house. Your agent can help you negotiate confidently without letting emotions cloud your judgment.

At the same time, with more homes on the market, buyers have options — and with that comes more negotiating power. They may ask for repairs, closing cost assistance, or other concessions. Be prepared to have these conversations. Again, lean on your agent to guide you. Sometimes a small compromise can seal the deal without derailing your bottom line. As *U.S. News Real Estate* explains:

“If you’ve received an offer for your house that isn’t quite what you’d hoped it would be, expect to negotiate . . . the only way to come to a successful deal is to make sure the buyer also feels like he or she benefits . . . consider offering to cover some of the buyer’s closing costs or agree to a credit for a minor repair the inspector found.”

The Biggest Mistake of All? Not Using a Real Estate Agent

Notice anything? For each of these mistakes, partnering with an agent helps prevent them from happening in the first place. That makes trying to sell your house without an agent’s help the biggest mistake of all.

Bottom Line

Avoid these common mistakes by starting with the right plan — and the right agent. Let’s connect so you don’t fall into any of these traps.

Home Staging FAQ: What You Need To Know

You may have heard that staging your home properly can make a big difference when you sell your house, but is it really worth your time and effort? Here are a few quick FAQs that can help you decide.

What Is Home Staging?

Staging is the process of arranging and decorating your house to highlight its best features and make it as appealing as possible to potential buyers. It can range from simple touch-ups to more extensive setups, depending on your needs and budget.

How Does It Help Me Sell My House?

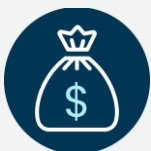
Studies show good staging ultimately helps your house sell faster and maybe for a higher price than an unstaged home (*see visual*):



How Staging Your House Affects Your Sale



Staged homes sell **73% faster**



Offer prices can go up **between 1-5%**

Source: NAR

What Are My Staging Options?

The most common is leaning on your agent for their expert advice. They know what buyers like because they're in showings all the time and hear that feedback firsthand. That expertise is crucial to getting your house market-ready.

Full-service staging is another option if your house needs more hands-on attention. This is when you hire a staging professional or staging company to come in, make recommendations, and do the work for you. Going this route is more involved and that makes it more costly, too.

How Do I Know Which Option To Go With?

Your real estate agent will help determine what level of staging you need based on:

- **Market Conditions:** If the market is slower, going all in on staging can make your home more attractive to buyers. If the market is very active and homes are selling fast, you may be able to get by with doing less.
- **Your Home's Condition:** If your house is vacant or has a unique layout, using a professional stager who can bring in the right furniture and accessories may help.
- **Your Budget:** If your budget is tight or your home only needs minor updates, your real estate agent can suggest simple DIY staging tips to help your home look its best.

Bottom Line

Staging your house properly can make it much more attractive to buyers, but it's not a one-size-fits-all solution. Let's talk through what your home really needs to stand out and sell for top dollar.



A Checklist for Selling Your House

As you get ready to sell your house, add these items to your to-do list. A real estate professional will also provide other helpful tips based on your specific situation.

Make It Inviting



- ☐ Open blinds or curtains to let the light in



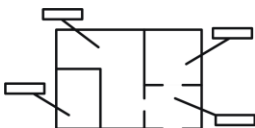
- ☐ Check lightbulbs and replace as needed



- ☐ Take down personal photos or items



- ☐ Declutter throughout



- ☐ Give every room a clear purpose

Show It's Cared For



- ☐ Clean your vents and baseboards



- ☐ Vacuum, mop, or sweep floors



- ☐ Fix anything that's broken



- ☐ Organize countertops, cabinets, and closets



- ☐ Touch up any scuffs on the walls

Boost Curb Appeal



- ☐ Power wash outdoor surfaces



- ☐ Wash the windows (inside and out)



- ☐ Tidy up the landscaping



- ☐ Freshen up your entry



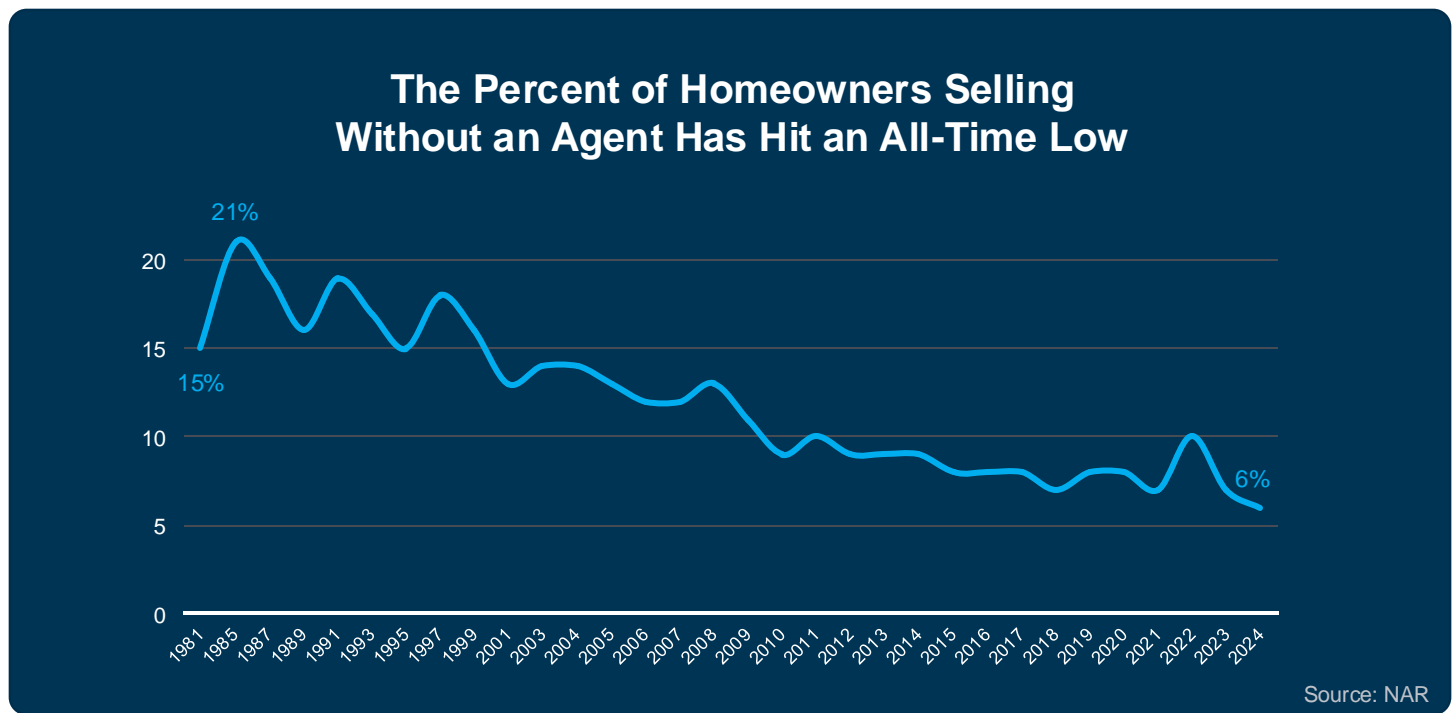
- ☐ Sweep patios, decks, and walkways

Why More Sellers Are Hiring Real Estate Agents

Putting your house for sale on your own – often called “For Sale by Owner” or FSBO – might be on your mind. But you should know that it gets complicated very quickly, especially in today’s complex market.



That’s why data from the *National Association of Realtors* (NAR) shows a record low number are going the route of selling on their own (see graph below):



Instead, more and more homeowners are choosing to work with a real estate agent. And here’s why partnering with an expert is the go-to choice.

1. Getting the Price Right

One of the biggest hurdles when selling a house on your own is figuring out the right price. **It's not as simple as picking a number that sounds good — you need to hit the bullseye.** Price your home too high, and buyers may overlook your listing. Price it too low, and you could leave money on the table or even raise red flags about the condition of your home.

Real estate agents are experts at finding the right price for today's market trends. As *Zillow* explains:

“Agents are pros when it comes to pricing properties and have their finger on the pulse of your local market. They understand current buying trends and can provide insight into how your home compares to others for sale nearby.”

With their knowledge of the local market, buyer behavior, and what homes like yours are selling for, an agent will help you make sure you set a price that's competitive and will draw in buyers. And it's that perfectly strategic price that'll set the stage for selling at top dollar.

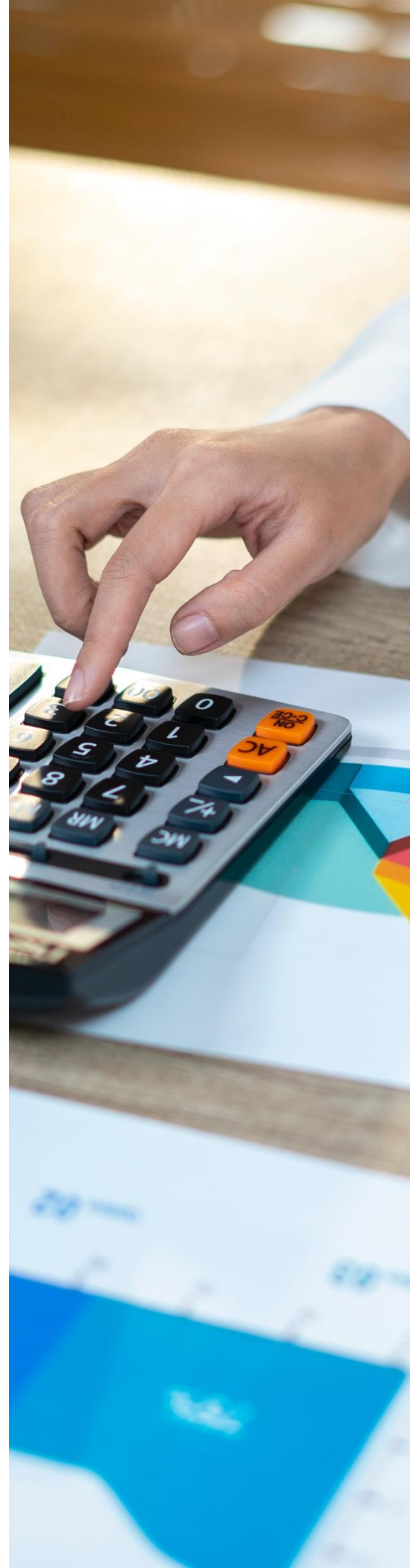
2. Understanding and Managing the Legal Documentation

Another part of the process is dealing with a growing stack of paperwork, from disclosure forms to contracts. Each document needs to be completed accurately, and there are legal requirements to follow that can feel overwhelming if you're not familiar with them.

This is another area where an agent's expertise really shines. They've handled these documents countless times and know exactly what's needed to keep everything on track. Your agent will guide you through the paperwork step by step, making sure it's done right the first time. With their help, you can avoid unnecessary mistakes that can lead to delays, legal complications, and more.

Bottom Line

You don't want to take all of this on by yourself. Let's connect so you have a pro to help with everything from pricing your home to managing the details.



Key Reasons To Hire a Real Estate Agent When You Sell



Industry Experience

We're well-versed in the housing market and know the ins and outs of the entire process.



Expert Insights

We simply and effectively explain today's market conditions and what they mean for you.



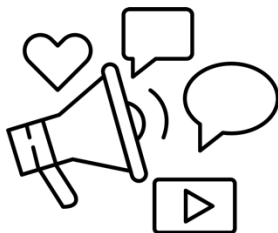
Pricing and Market Value

We help you understand today's real estate values when setting the price of a listing or making an offer to purchase your next home.



Contracts and Fine Print

We help with all the disclosures and documents necessary in today's heavily regulated environment.



Marketing and Exposure

We have effective marketing tools and networks to attract more buyers.



Negotiation Experience

We act as a buffer in negotiations with all parties throughout the entire transaction.



The complexities of the current conditions mean that, now more than ever, it's smart to lean on the guidance of an experienced local real estate agent. If you want to enter the housing market in 2025, whether as a buyer or a seller, let a pro lead the way for you.

Bankrate



Let's Chat.

I'm sure you have questions and thoughts about the real estate process.

I'd love to talk with you about what you've read here and help you on the path to selling your house. My contact information is below, and I look forward to working with you.



Michael Morales

Realtor

Keller Williams Sierra Foothills

Golden K Homes

(925) 337-3600

mikemorales@goldenk.net

www.goldenk.net

Sonora, CA



SPRING 2025 EDITION

