



THE SMARTER WAY TO SELL YOUR HOME
IN CALIFORNIA

AN A-Z GUIDE | 2017 EDITION

HomeBay

About

Selling a home *can* be stressful, but it doesn't have to be. This eBook explains how HomeBay simplifies the process.

We make it easy to price, list and promote your home. My team and I provide full support during the offer and negotiation stage of the sale, help you navigate escrow with ease and expertly manage your transaction from listed to closed. Read on to find out how we do it!

Questions? Call us at 1-855-855-1278 or email us at info@homebay.com.



Tom Owen
Co-founder
[HomeBay](#)

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Part 1 - Preparing to Sell:

Selling your home is a big deal, and doing it yourself can be a lot of work. HomeBay makes it easier *and* saves you lots of money - that's why we call it the smarter way to sell.

List with HomeBay and our real estate experts will help you:

- Estimate how long it will take to sell
- Learn what to expect at every stage
- Competitively price your property
- Gather information for your listing
- Understand your seller to-do list



Home Sale Checklist

Print a copy of this page and hang it on your fridge for easy reference!

LISTING YOUR HOME:

- Work with HomeBay to determine a list price
- Gather property details & write a listing description (*we'll help!*)
- Set your professional listing photo appointment
- Use HomeBay's software to list your property on the MLS

SHOWING YOUR HOME:

- Clean & de-personalize your property (*store unneeded items*)
- Hire a stager or do your own DIY staging (*not required*)
- Put your HomeBay for sale sign in your yard
- Use our software to respond to buyer inquiries

OFFERS & COUNTEROFFERS:

- Use our software to manage & negotiate offers
- Provide seller disclosures to your buyer

ESCROW:

- Work with a Transaction Coordinator to complete inspections
- Do necessary repairs (*or negotiate price*)

CLOSING:

- Sign closing documents & see how much money you saved!

Timeline

Factors Impacting the Speed of a Home Sale:

- Neighborhood Desirability
- Availability of Financing
- Time of Year
- Property Condition
- Appraisal Value
- Market Inventory
- List Price



And that's just naming a few.

Your timeline can also vary dramatically based on the overall health of the real estate market, so what's true right now may not be true six months from now.

When you work with HomeBay, we'll evaluate your local market and will help you estimate how long it will take to sell. With expert guidance, it will be easier to plan your next move.

Curious about timing but not ready to list yet?

[Click here to request a free *Time on Market* estimate.](#)

Seller Resources

Seller Success Blog:

The HomeBay blog serves as an educational hub for home sellers. You'll find marketing ideas, showing tips, staging how-to's, pricing best practices and much, much more!

go.homebay.com/blog

Advice from Real Sellers:



There is no better teacher than experience. Find out what recent sellers learned throughout their own selling process and apply their knowledge to make your home sale more successful.

about.homebay.com/reviews.php

Free Listing Consultation:

Connect with our expert team to ask any questions you have about your sale, get advice on the best time to sell in your area and learn what all your listing options are.

go.homebay.com/get-a-quote

Part 2 -

Listing Your Home:

There are several things that go into making sure that your listing reaches and attracts the most qualified buyers.

Don't worry - HomeBay has you covered.

When you list with HomeBay, you get:

- Listing photos from a professional photographer
- Access to our intelligent listing management software
- A high-quality for sale sign for your front yard
- Your listing posted on your local MLS
- Your listing posted on popular real estate sites and 100s of local agent sites
- Help completing your seller disclosure packet

What You Need

Here's what you'll need to list your property:

1. **Square Footage:**
HomeBay's software pulls this information for you.
2. **Price:**
Before you can add your property to the MLS, you need to set your listing price. *We'll help you with this part, too!*
3. **Photos (included in our seller package):**
List with us and we'll set you up with a professional real estate photographer.
4. **Description:**
A comprehensive, compelling listing description helps you sell faster. *Our team will help you nail it!*



Pricing Your Property

Our team is available to help you pinpoint the right price.

But first, it's important to understand the steps involved in researching the market and figuring out your home's value.

1. Write Down What You Think Your Home is Worth:

It's useful to have a starting point so you can see how your price compares to other prices you research.

2. Get a Zillow Zestimate Price:

Zestimate will give you a useful starting point, but it's not accurate enough to rely on. It can be off by as much as 8%

3. Use the RedFin Home Value Estimator:

This is the most accurate online home value estimator because it uses tax records and recent sales (hard data).

4. Compare Your Home to Similar Homes:

Go to Zillow or Trulia, set filters to match your homes specs and see what similar properties in your area are selling for.

5. Remember - You're in Control:

HomeBay will provide guidance on how to best price your home, but at the end of the day, your price is your call.

Listing Description

Our team can help you write an excellent listing description.
Before you get started, it's important to understand some basic rules that will help guide you through the process.

RULE #1 - Don't Repeat Yourself:

You have limited characters to sell your home, so whatever you do, don't waste words repeating things already outlined in the main property information.

RULE #2 - Paint a Picture with Your Words:

Whether you're describing the amenities in your condo complex or your distance to a nearby shopping and dining district, use specifics, not generalizations, to help potential buyers visualize your words.

RULE #3 - If You've Got It, Flaunt It:

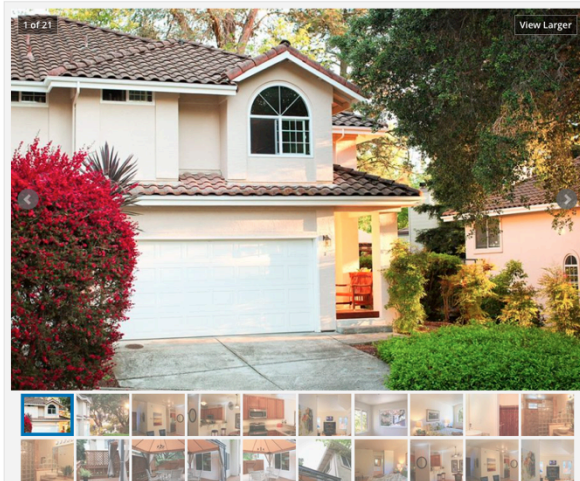
Buyers are looking for wow factor. If you have amazing views, a private backyard oasis, a highly energy efficient home or a unique plot of land, be sure to include those things in your listing description.

REPEAT AFTER ME:

DON'T REPEAT.

Sample HomeBay Listing

203 Bean Creek Rd. Valley, CA 95066-4162



\$712,000

Beds	3
Baths	2 full / 1 partial
Sq Ft	1504
Lot Size	1612 sq ft
Built	1991

Contact Owner

Go See It

Make an Offer

← List Price

← Square Feet

← Listing Photos

Property Description

Down a secluded driveway, just off of Bean Creek Road in Scotts Valley, you will find this town home nestled in sprawling oaks. There are only 11 homes in this very desirable, rarely offered, Bean Creek Villas development. This home features hardwood and tile floors, with granite countertops in the kitchen and two of the bathrooms. Spend the evening enjoying the included Bose entertainment system.

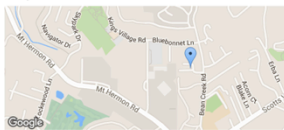
← Listing Description

Open House

Saturday, October 10 from 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM (PDT)

Property Location

203 Bean Creek Rd
Valley, CA 95066



← Property Location

Property Details

Neighborhood Bean Creek Villas	Property Type Townhouse	Beds 3	Baths 2 full / 1 partial
Stories 2	Square Footage 1504	Lot Size 1612	Year Built 1991
Fencing Full	Roof Type Clay Tile	Topography Slope Gentle	Materials Stucco
Pool None	Heat Equipment Forced Air Unit	Heat Source Natural Gas	Cooling None
Water Meter on Property	Sewer / Septic Sewer Connected	Laundry Location Closet Full Sized	Laundry Utilities Electric
Parking Garage Spaces 2	Non-Garage Spaces 1	Parking Garage Features Attached	HOA Fees \$286.00
Age Restrictions None	MLS # ML181517874		

← Property Details

Equipment Included

- Water Softener
- Microwave
- Garage Door Opener
- Water Filtration
- Fire Sprinklers
- Dishwasher
- Refrigerator
- Range/Oven
- Garbage Disposal
- Dryer
- Washer

← Equipment Included



Part 3 - Showing Your Home:

Showings are easy, but there are some little things you can do to wow potential buyers.

This section will explain what they are.

And here's how HomeBay makes showings even easier!

With our software, you can:

- Easily manage and respond to buyer inquiries
- Seamlessly schedule showings

Additionally, our team will help you:

- Make sure your home is show-ready
- Figure out the best way to stage your space
- Learn how to prepare for showings

Preparing to Show

1. De-clutter your space:

Visitors should be able to envision themselves living in your home. They can't do that if your stuff is everywhere, so de-cluttering is a good place to start.

If necessary, rent a storage unit to keep extra items during the selling process. And don't forget about cleaning out storage spaces like closets – you want them to look as large and functional as possible.

2. De-personalize Your Space:

Remove family photos (yes, even that super cute one of Fido) and any unique collectibles. Do your best to make everything as neutral as possible.



Staging Options

- **Option #1 - Hire a Professional:**
Many argue that hiring a professional stager will pay for itself at closing, but there's no definitive evidence that this is true. However, it may be worth looking into if you're listing a high value home.
- **Option #2 - Do It Yourself:**
If you want to save some cash, there are lots of easy ways you to stage your home yourself. [Check out this post for tips](#) on how to effectively stage your space.



Top Showing Tips

1. Give Buyers Their Space:

When a buyer comes to check out your home, be prepared to give them the freedom to roam around and take a look at all the various rooms. Lag behind a bit so you're within earshot if they have questions, but don't try to lead the showing. Let buyers set their own priorities.

2. Don't Rush:

When someone is considering putting in an offer on a home, they're going to want to spend a little time in the space to get a good feel for it. Don't rush them! If a buyer is lingering, take it as a compliment.

3. Talk About Money-Saving Features:

Did you just get a new roof? Install double-pane windows? Buy energy efficient appliances? Talk about 'em! Buyers love to hear that they'll be able to save money long after closing.

4. Take Pets and Kids off the Premises:

It can be hard for buyers to concentrate on your property if a dog (or child) is underfoot. Give your visitors a better experience by asking a friend or neighbor watch your babies, fur and human, during showings.



Part 4 - Negotiating Offers:

When it's time to start entertaining offers,
HomeBay helps you navigate the process.

HomeBay's software will:

- Review every offer submitted through our system
- Flag any unusual buyer requests

HomeBay's support team will:

- Offer suggestions on how to counter
- Help you finalize your offer and move into escrow

Negotiation Guidelines

Here's some advice on how to confidently head in to negotiations.

- **Be prepared with numbers and data:**

As you do research to determine how to price your home, you'll get a pretty solid idea of what similar homes in your area are selling for. Use that information to help determine whether a buyer's offer is good, bad or average.

- **Don't sweat the small stuff:**

It can be difficult, but throughout the negotiation process, you need to think big picture. If a buyer is totally convinced that your house isn't worth the asking price unless you throw in the washer and dryer, do it!

In the grand scheme of things, the price of a washer and dryer is pittance compared to the value of selling your property at a good price. Plus, Home Depot isn't going to run out of washers and dryers anytime soon (and it's always fun to buy new stuff!).

DON'T SWEAT

THE SMALL STUFF

Negotiation Techniques

Once you have an offer on the table, it's time to decide whether you want to accept that offer as-is, or if you want to negotiate with the buyer. We'll help you with the negotiations, but here are some common tactics you may want to use.

- **How to counter an offer:**

If you're *mostly* satisfied with an initial offer, counter by asking for a 1-2% increase. Buyers who are concerned about the possibility of losing the property will be likely to accept the counter (and you'll end up with extra cash in your pocket!).

- **Offer to split the difference:**

It's not uncommon to go back and forth a couple of times during the offer process. If you've already counteroffered once and the buyer came back with a second offer, it may be time to strike a compromise. Ask your buyer to meet you halfway and settle with a 50/50 split between your counter and their second offer.

50 / 50



Part 5 - Escrow:

Once you've accepted an offer, it's time to go into escrow. There are a lot of moving parts and people involved, *but our team helps you manage it all.*

HomeBay helps by:

- Guiding you through all the necessary paperwork
- Scheduling inspections and helping you evaluate results
- Having an attorney review all legally binding documents
- Acting as a liaison with other parties involved in the sale
- Making sure you meet all escrow deadlines so your sale stays on track

Standard Escrow Timeline

Timeline:

Escrow deposit is made:

3 business days after offer is accepted

Buyer submits pre-approval letter, down payment and closing costs confirmed:

7 calendar days

Inspections are conducted, reports and disclosures are reviewed, repairs are requested and contingencies are set:

7-17 calendar days

Contingencies removed or canceled, signed disclosures returned, VA or GHA financing form delivered:

17 calendar days (or 5 days after receipt, whichever occurs first)

Condition of property is verified:

5 calendar days before close of escrow

Pay purchase price, deed delivered:

close of escrow

SOURCE: California Association of Realtors (CAR) [More details](#)

Part 6 - Closing:

You've made it through escrow - the hard part is over! Now it's time for closing.

How HomeBay Helps:

- Communicates with all third parties to schedule closing
- Provides you with all the necessary paperwork

Sold!

The closing process:

The main purpose of closing is to formalize the sale and to give everyone one last chance to double check details before the transaction becomes fully binding. Because of the detailed nature of a real estate sale, there are literally thousands of pieces of paper that will be passed back and forth between you and your buyer (*that HomeBay will manage for you!*)

Who's involved:

- Buyer
- Seller
- Home Inspector
- Loan Officer
- Buyer's Agent (*most of the time*)
- HomeBay
- Appraiser
- Escrow Closer

Time frame:

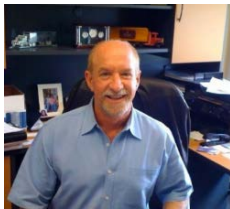
After you get notice that you're clear to close, it may take up to a week for closing to be scheduled - but you're done with the details and can coast to the finish line!



Seller Success Stories:



"We kept \$60,000.00 in commission and bought a plot of land in Arizona. We're building our dream home - and we're not planning on selling this one!" -- Jessica, Redondo Beach, CA



"Using HomeBay is like having a coach that holds your hand throughout the entire selling process. If I had to describe HomeBay in one word - I'd choose spectacular." -- Gary, San Rafael, CA



"HomeBay's team is fabulous. You listened to me and you have such experienced people who double check every aspect of the sale, which is super helpful." -- Maureen, Mill Valley, CA



"The support is phenomenal. Everyone I worked with was so great. They were available to answer all the questions I had throughout the process." -- Nadia, El Dorado Hills, CA



"Saving the commission was huge, and by showing my own home, I was able to show buyers all the upgrades in the house. A realtor couldn't have done any better." -- Shishir, Irvine, CA



"The biggest benefit was all the money we saved. You literally save thousands of dollars using HomeBay and they are very helpful and knowledgeable." -- Melisa, El Cajon, CA

[>> Read Our Seller Success Stories](#)



Sell your home the smarter way with HomeBay --

See how much you can save:

Visit go.homebay.com/sell-your-home