A SELLER'S GUIDE TO THE FUNDAMENTALS

How Homes Actually Sell

The whole process, start to close, explained plainly.

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The decision is yours.
My job is to make sure it is informed.

Seven Stages.
One Sequence.

Every page in this book belongs to one of seven stages, in the order a real sale actually moves through them. Skip to the one you need, or read it start to finish. Either way, nothing here is out of order.

01	**TRUTH**	The three facts every sale starts with
02	**PRICE**	Why the first number matters more than any number after it
03	**POSITION**	What a buyer experiences before they decide what it's worth
04	**EXPOSURE**	Where buyers actually come from
05	**OFFER**	Reading what an offer really says, and what you'll net
06	**ESCROW**	The three checkpoints that reopen negotiation, and the clock underneath all of it
07	**CLOSE**	What actually has to happen for a sale to be done

"Fundamentals first. Everything else is a tactic serving them."

Start Here

This book explains how a home actually gets sold in California. Not the polished version. The real sequence, from the first honest conversation to the day the deed records.

I believe in traditional real estate principles, carried out with current tools so nothing falls behind. Fundamentals first. Everything else is a tactic serving them, and this book stays on the fundamentals.

You don't need to hire anyone to use what's in here. Read it, keep it, hand it to a neighbor. If you want help when the time comes, my information is on the last page.

WHAT YOU WON'T FIND IN THIS BOOK

Gimmicks, scripts, or a sales pitch. The one page about me is near the end, clearly labeled and easy to skip.

THE FIRST FUNDAMENTAL

The Blunt Truth

Every successful sale I’ve seen started the same way: with a seller willing to hear three facts. None of them are personal. All of them are useful.

The market sets the value.
A home is worth what a qualified buyer will actually pay for it. Not what you paid, not what you owe, not what the next chapter needs. Those numbers are real and they matter to you. The market just never sees them. Buyers compare your home against every other option they can afford, and they set the value by choosing.

Location is fixed.
You can’t move the house, and no amount of marketing changes the street it sits on. Price and positioning are how you answer for the things that can’t change. They’re powerful answers, which is why they each get a page of their own.

Early honesty is cheap. Late honesty is expensive.
The condition issue named before listing costs a repair. The same issue found by a buyer’s inspector during escrow costs a repair, a credit, and leverage. Every hard conversation in a sale gets more expensive the longer it waits.

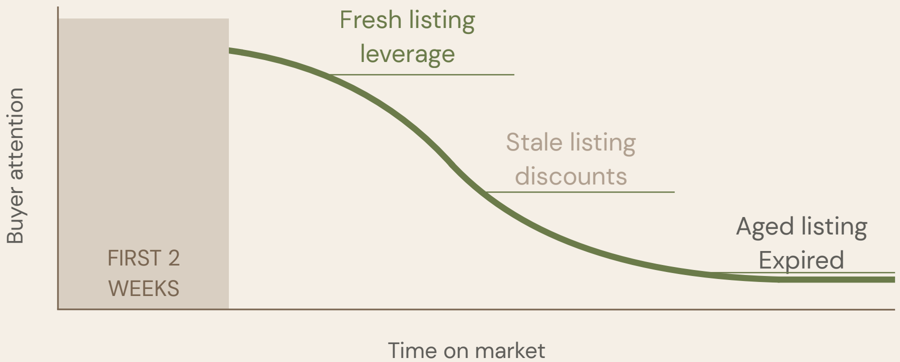
> None of this is meant to sting. It’s meant to put you in the strongest seat in the building. A seller who starts with the truth negotiates from strength for the entire process, because nothing surprises them later.

THE SECOND FUNDAMENTAL

Price Is Position

Buyers search in price bands. Their filters decide what they see before taste gets a vote. A home priced outside the band where its actual buyers are looking doesn't get rejected. It gets unseen. And a buyer who never sees your home can't make you an offer.

The first two weeks carry the most weight. A new listing gets its heaviest attention early, from buyers and from the agents who represent them. Strong early demand creates competition, and competition is where good terms come from. Weak early demand invites low offers. That window doesn't reopen.



Price reductions are honest, but they're loud. Every cut tells the market the first number was wrong, and buyers read the days on market sitting next to it. Priced right on day one beats priced high and corrected. It isn't close.

THE THIRD FUNDAMENTAL

How It Shows

Positioning is everything a buyer experiences before deciding what your home is worth to them, and most of it happens on a screen. Buyers choose online whether to visit in person, so the photos and the first impression set your showing count before anyone touches the door.

Condition work before listing is triage, not a remodel. The money goes to removing reasons to say no, not to chasing upgrades the market won't repay.

USUALLY WORTH IT

- Deep clean and real decluttering
- Paint where it's tired
- Small repairs a buyer would notice
- Light: bulbs in, curtains open, lamps on

USUALLY NOT

- Major remodels right before listing
- Upgrades priced above the neighborhood
- Personalized touches the next owner will redo

Access is quiet leverage. A home that's easy to show gets shown, and every declined showing is a buyer you'll never hear about. You can't negotiate with someone who never walked in. Showings are inconvenient. So is leaving money on the table.

The goal of positioning isn't to disguise the home. It's to remove every reason to say no that was cheap to remove.

THE FOURTH FUNDAMENTAL

Where Buyers Come From

The MLS is the engine. One correct entry syndicates your home to the portals where nearly every buyer already searches, and into the databases every working agent runs client searches through. Most buyers are represented, so reaching their agents is reaching them. Everything else in marketing builds on top of this.

Marketing widens the funnel. Professional photos, video, open houses, targeted campaigns. All real tools, and I use them. But none of them fix a wrong price or a poor first impression.

Tools change. Principles don't. I use current technology because falling behind costs sellers money, but I don't confuse the technology with principles. No tool has ever sold an overpriced home.

> A fair test for any marketing idea: can it explain, in one sentence, how it puts a qualified buyer in front of your home? If it can't, it's decoration.

"Exposure multiplies the fundamentals. It cannot replace them."

Reading An Offer

An offer is more than its number. Six parts carry weight, and they trade against each other.

Part	What It Means
Price	The headline. Real only if the rest of the offer can deliver it.
Buyer's agent compensation	Requested in each offer, not set in advance, and always negotiable.
Financing	How the buyer pays: cash, conventional, FHA, VA. Each closes differently. None is automatically better.
Contingencies	The buyer's exit doors: inspection, appraisal, loan. Fewer and shorter means more certainty for you.
Timeline	Escrow length, key dates, possession. Speed has value. So does breathing room, if you need it.
Terms	Everything else: deposit, credits, what stays with the home, rent back if you need more time to move.

The highest price is not always the best offer. A big number with shaky financing can cost more in a failed escrow than a smaller number that closes, because the days lost to a collapsed deal come back as questions from the next buyer.

Vet the financing before you commit. Pre-approval letters are not all equal. A direct conversation with the buyer's lender, verified funds, and a realistic timeline tell you whether the offer is real. That call takes twenty minutes and saves more escrows than any marketing plan ever will.

THE HONEST MATH

What You Actually Keep

The sale price is the headline. The net is the story. Several costs come out of the sale price before proceeds reach you, and every one of them is easier to manage when it's projected early. The fix is simple: a written net sheet before you list, updated with every serious offer.

Commissions
Paid out of proceeds and set in your listing agreement, in writing, before anything is signed. Whoever you work with, ask for the number in writing and ask exactly what it covers. A professional answers that question without flinching.

Closing costs
Escrow fees, title insurance, transfer taxes, recording. On the seller's side in California these commonly run around 1 to 3 percent of the sale price, varying by county and by what's negotiated.

Liens and payoffs
Your mortgage balance, any solar loan, tax or HOA balances. All of it settles at closing, and all of it affects the wire you receive. Solar deserves special attention. Payoff and transfer terms surprise more sellers than any other line.

Credits and concessions
Repair credits, closing cost help, rate buydowns. Negotiated during escrow, and every one comes out of your side. Strategy here is the difference between a net protected and a net eroded.

"You should never learn your bottom line at the signing table."

AFTER ACCEPTANCE

Escrow, Round Two

An accepted offer opens escrow. It does not end negotiation. Three checkpoints can reopen the deal, and all three are normal. What matters is whether your side is ready for them.

Inspections
The buyer inspects, then usually asks for repairs or credits. Some requests are safety and function items. Some are renegotiation wearing a tool belt. Knowing the difference, and answering each accordingly, protects your net.

The appraisal
If it comes in low, the deal isn't dead. It's back at the table. The answers are a price adjustment, buyer cash to bridge the gap, or a mix of both. The right one depends on the market that week and the strength of the buyer you have against the buyers you'd get.

The loan
Financing can wobble late. Underwriting conditions, document delays, rate movement. Most wobbles are survivable when they're caught early and worked immediately. The dangerous ones are the quiet ones.

Round two is where preparation pays. A seller who knows the numbers, and expected the checkpoints, negotiates calmly. Calm wins these.

"Calm is a negotiating position."

Contracts Run On Clocks

A purchase contract is a schedule with signatures. Deposit deadlines, disclosure deliveries, contingency removals, loan milestones, the closing date. Miss one and leverage moves, sometimes money with it. Every date needs an owner who is watching it, not remembering it.

And you're not the only party on that schedule. A normal sale involves:

- The buyer and their agent
- The buyer's lender and underwriter
- Escrow and title

- Inspectors and the appraiser
- Sometimes an HOA, a solar company, contractors
- Your side: you, and whoever represents you

Each of them has a job, a timeline, and their own interests. **Coordination** means all of them moving on schedule. **Compliance** means every disclosure and signature done correctly the first time, because paperwork done right is invisible, and paperwork done wrong resurfaces at the worst possible moment.

Communication is the early-warning system for all of it. Most escrow emergencies were quiet problems for a week before they were loud ones. Regular updates aren't a courtesy. They're how problems get caught while they're still cheap to fix.

Closed Means Recorded

The finish line has steps, and the order matters.

Final walkthrough
The buyer confirms the home is in the agreed condition: repairs done, included items present, nothing removed that shouldn't be. A clean walkthrough is the product of a clean escrow, not luck.

Signing
You sign with a notary a few days before close. Signing is not closing. Nothing has transferred yet.

Funding, then recording
The buyer's lender funds, and then the county records the deed. Recording is the legal moment the home changes hands. You're not closed until it records.

Proceeds and keys
After recording, escrow wires your proceeds. Keys and possession transfer on the timeline you negotiated back at the offer.

Your file
A sale generates a stack of disclosures, reports, signatures. Walk away with a complete copy of yours. Years from now, when taxes or the next move asks a question, the answer is in that file.

Before You List

Everything in the last several pages, turned into a list. Walk through it before you talk to anyone.

Truth & Pricing

- I've heard a price range based on what buyers are paying, not what I owe or need
- I know what similar homes nearby have actually sold for, recently
- I'm ready to price for strong demand in the first two weeks, not a slow correction later

Condition & Access

- Deep clean and decluttering scheduled
- Obvious small repairs identified and handled
- I've decided how flexible I can be on showing access

Before Any Offer

- I understand the six parts of an offer, not just the price
- I have a written net sheet estimate in hand
- I know who verifies a buyer's financing before I commit

> Use the net sheet on the next page to price with your real numbers, not guesses.

Your
Net Sheet

Here's what this looks like for a typical Canyon Hills sale. These figures are reference points, not your numbers; walk through the three columns below to see how proceeds shift with price, then subtract your own payoffs at the bottom to land on your estimate.

Estimated sale price	**$600,000**	**$650,000**	**$700,000**
Listing Commission (3%)	$18,000	$19,500	$21,000
Buyer's Agent Compensation (2.5%) *Negotiated, See Page 8*	$15,000	$16,250	$17,500
Closing costs (~2% est. of sale price)	$12,000	$13,000	$14,000
Proceeds Before Your Payoffs	$555,000	$601,250	$647,500
Now subtract what's yours to pay off			
Mortgage payoff			
Solar loan payoff, if any			
Anticipated concessions / credits			
Your Estimated net proceeds			

HOA, taxes, and Mello-Roos/CFD bonds settle at closing; ask your HOA if unsure.

How I Work

Eleven pages about how selling works. One about how I work. Here's the whole system.

I tell the truth early.
Pricing, condition, offers. You'll hear what the market is saying, not what feels good, because honesty in week one is cheaper than honesty in week six.

You'll never wonder what's happening.
Updates on showings, feedback, and next steps, on a steady rhythm. When something changes, you hear it from me first, with the numbers and options.

You reach me directly.
My phone, my email, me. No layers between you and the person responsible.

If I'm not delivering, you can leave.
I don't trap people in agreements. You stay because the work is good, and for no other reason.

That's it. Fundamentals, done properly, with someone on your side of the table.

READY WHEN YOU ARE

If This Helped,
It Did Its Job.

If you want help, you know where to find me.

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“The decision is yours. My job is to make sure it is informed.”

Facts. Options. Leverage. Your decision.

If you are already working with a real estate professional, please disregard this.

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