

INTRODUCTION

There have been many 'how to sell your house' books published. They cover most of the different aspects of selling: the financial, the legal, how to negotiate, how to decorate and even how to sell without an auctioneer (normally in America). Many of these books have little if any relevance to Ireland.

Selling your home, while seldom a 'fun-filled' experience, can be a painless and profitable one if you go about the job with purpose and direction. It can be a daunting prospect. It can also be very tempting to just turn over the reins to the first estate agent you meet.

But wait. What is your goal? If you are like most people, it is to sell your home for the best price, in the shortest time and with the least hassle. Why hand over hard-earned cash to an estate agent without knowing what they will be doing to achieve these goals for you? This book sets out to help you decide whether you need an estate agent's assistance, and, if so, how you can insure that the estate agent you appoint will help you achieve your goal. Again, this is 'the best price, in the shortest time and with the least hassle'.

SELLING YOUR HOME

In my years as an estate agent, I haven't yet come across a book that explained how to choose an estate agent, and then get the most out of that agent, when you are selling your home. This amazes me, as most sellers sell through an estate agent. Yet, there are no books on how the process works. This book will explain much about what an estate agent should do for you, if you appoint one. The role of an estate agent is not simply to act as an intermediary between you and the buyer. They are acting on your behalf. It is you who are paying them.

We look also at the option of selling your home privately and at the tasks you will have to undertake should you take on the job of selling your home yourself.

I will advise you on what you or your estate agent or both of you can do to ensure that your property stands out among all the other properties currently on the market with the aim of selling your home quickly and for the most money. In the following chapters, we will look at the sales process, privately and with an estate agent, how to ensure that your property is marketed effectively, how to deal with offers and how to complete the sale. We will also consider the job of selling an apartment and liaising with property-management companies on the sale.

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If you want to reap the rewards of a fast sale, you must be willing to invest your time, your imagination, your patience and even a little elbow grease. Even with an excellent estate agent, it will involve a substantial time commitment as well as a good deal of planning and research. By choosing the best option for you, be it selling privately or with an estate agent, and working to a well-thought-out plan, you are well on the way to achieving your goal.

Note: in Ireland, estate agents can be called by a number of names. 'Auctioneers', 'valuers' or 'estate agents' are the most common polite descriptions of those working in the profession. The most commonly used term is 'auctioneer', even though most property is not sold by auction. The reason for this is that estate agents must hold either an auctioneer's (or a house agent's) licence in order to trade. To obtain a licence, one currently does not need to have any past experience, nor is there any academic requirement for entry into the profession. The majority of estate agents in Ireland are academically qualified. That said, there are still many unqualified practitioners in the business.