

MERRIMENT REALTY SELLER'S GUIDE



YOUR PATH TO A
SUCCESSFUL SALE IN THE
RALEIGH AREA-
GUIDED WITH CLARITY,
CONFIDENCE, AND CARE

Creating Joy.
Building Community.





MERRIMENT

R E A L T Y

CREATING JOY. BUILDING COMMUNITY.

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Your step-by-step guide to buying a home with confidence in the Raleigh area.

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Section 1. Getting Ready to Sell

Laying the foundation for a smooth and successful sale

Selling your home is both an exciting opportunity and a meaningful transition. At Merriment Realty, we believe the process should feel as rewarding as the memories you've created in your home. With the right preparation, we'll guide you toward a confident, successful sale that sets you up for your next chapter.

Why Sell Now?

- Lifestyle changes (career moves, downsizing, upsizing)
- Financial considerations (equity gains, timing the market)
- Market trends (Raleigh area demand + continued buyer activity)

DID YOU KNOW?

- Homes that are well-prepared and priced correctly often sell faster and for more money, even in shifting markets.



Why Work with Merriment Realty

Selling your home is more than a transaction. It's a life moment. At Merriment Realty, we believe you deserve a partner who will handle the details with care, advocate fiercely on your behalf, and make the journey as smooth as possible.

What Sets Us Apart

- **Local Expertise:** In-depth knowledge of Raleigh area neighborhoods and market conditions.
- **Strategic Marketing:** Professional photography, video, 3D tours, and digital reach that ensure your home stands out.
- **Strong Negotiation:** Experience in balancing price, terms, and timing to achieve your best outcome.
- **Personal Guidance:** A team that communicates clearly and supports you every step of the way.

MERRIMENT INSIGHT

- The right agent doesn't just list your home. They position it for success in today's market, easing stress and maximizing results.



Understanding the Market

Pricing your home correctly from the start is one of the most important factors in a successful sale. At Merriment Realty, we use a Comparative Market Analysis (CMA) and up-to-date local trends to guide you toward the right price strategy.

Key Factors We Consider

- **Comparable Sales:** Recently sold homes in your neighborhood with similar features.
- **Active Listings:** Current competition on the market.
- **Market Conditions:** Raleigh area trends such as days on market, inventory, and buyer demand.
- **Your Home's Unique Features:** Upgrades, lot size, location, and condition that set it apart.

MERRIMENT TIP

- Overpricing can cause your home to sit longer on the market, while the right pricing strategy often attracts multiple offers — creating stronger negotiating power for you.



Preparing Your Home

First impressions matter. Preparing your home before it goes on the market helps buyers picture themselves living there and can lead to stronger offers.

Steps to Get Ready

- **Declutter & Depersonalize:** Remove excess items and personal photos so buyers can envision the space as their own.
- **Deep Clean:** A spotless home signals care and value. Don't overlook windows, carpets, and baseboards.
- **Enhance Curb Appeal:** Tidy landscaping, fresh mulch, and a welcoming entryway set the tone.
- **Make Simple Repairs:** Fix leaky faucets, replace light bulbs, and touch up paint to eliminate distractions.
- **Consider Staging:** Professionally staged homes often sell faster and for more money.

MERRIMENT ADVANTAGE

- We'll walk through your home with a seller's eye and provide tailored recommendations so you know where to focus your time, energy, and budget.



Seller Checklist: Pre-Listing Essentials

Getting your home market-ready is simpler when you break it into steps. Here's a side-by-side look at what to do before listing:

Must-Do Before Listing

- **Declutter and depersonalize** living spaces
- **Deep clean** every room (including carpets & windows)
- **Handle small repairs** (leaks, paint touch-ups, fixtures)
- **Boost curb appeal** (yard tidy, fresh mulch, flowers)
- **Gather important documents** (warranties, HOA info, utility bills)

Strong Extras (to Stand Out)

- Fresh coat of **neutral paint**
- Professional **staging** or light styling
- Pre-listing **home inspection**
- **Energy-efficient updates** (LED bulbs, smart thermostat)
- Create a **welcoming entryway** (new doormat, potted plants)

MERRIMENT RECOMMENDATION

- Start with the basics first. Clean, repair, and declutter. Then choose extras that fit your budget and timeline. Even small touches can make a big impact.



The Merriment Advantage

Your home deserves to shine. At Merriment Realty, we invest in professional tools and marketing strategies that highlight your property's best features and reach the right buyers.

Our Advantage Includes:

- **Professional Photography:** Bright, high-quality images that make your home stand out online and in print.
- **3D Tours & Video Walkthroughs:** Immersive experiences that let buyers fall in love before they even step inside.
- **Compelling Online Presence:** Featured on MLS, Luxury Presence website, HomeStack app, and social media.
- **Targeted Marketing:** Customized campaigns designed to capture attention where buyers are searching.

MERRIMENT ADVANTAGE

- Our marketing doesn't just showcase your home. It creates an emotional connection that inspires buyers to take action.



Section 2. Marketing Your Home

Showcasing your home to attract the right buyers

The way your home is presented can make all the difference. At Merriment Realty, we combine professional visuals, strategic exposure, and personal touches to highlight your home's strengths. From stunning photography to widespread online reach, our goal is to attract serious buyers and create the best opportunities for a successful sale.

MERRIMENT TIP

Today's buyers often fall in love with a home online before they ever step inside, making marketing one of the most powerful tools in your sale.



Photography, Video & 3D Tours

The first showing of your home almost always happens online. High-quality visuals can capture attention instantly and motivate buyers to schedule an in-person visit.

Our Approach Includes:

- **Professional Photography:** Bright, clear images that highlight your home's best features.
- **Video Tours:** Engaging walkthroughs that give buyers a real sense of flow and space.
- **3D Tours:** Interactive experiences that allow buyers to “walk through” virtually, perfect for out-of-town buyers or busy professionals.
- **Detail Shots:** Highlighting unique features like custom finishes, outdoor living areas, or neighborhood amenities.

MERRIMENT ADVANTAGE

- Our professional media partners know how to capture not just the look of your home, but the feeling of living there, creating an emotional connection that inspires action.



Online Exposure

Once your home is market-ready, it deserves to be seen by as many qualified buyers as possible. At Merriment Realty, we ensure your property shines across every platform where buyers are searching.

Where Your Home Appears:

- **MLS (Multiple Listing Service):** The central hub that feeds listings to major real estate sites.
- **Merriment Realty Website:** A polished, luxury-focused online showcase through our Luxury Presence platform.
- **HomeStack App:** Personalized mobile search experience where buyers can favorite, share, and connect with us instantly.
- **Social Media Channels:** Engaging posts, reels, and ads that put your home in front of today's active buyers.
- **National & Global Reach:** Exposure through partner networks that extend visibility beyond the Raleigh area.

MERRIMENT INSIGHT

- Today's buyers often begin their search months before visiting in person. A strong online presence ensures your home is top of mind when they're ready to act.



Open Houses & Private Showings

Once buyers are drawn in online, in-person experiences give them the chance to connect emotionally with your home. Open houses and private showings are key opportunities to make a lasting impression.

Our Strategy Includes:

- **Open Houses:** Scheduled events that invite multiple buyers to view your home at once, creating energy and urgency.
- **Private Showings:** Personalized appointments that allow serious buyers to explore at their own pace.
- **Scheduling Convenience:** We coordinate showing times to minimize disruption to your routine.
- **Secure Access:** We use professional lockboxes and showing systems to ensure your home remains safe.
- **Feedback Collection:** Buyer impressions are gathered and shared to help you understand how your home is being received.

MERRIMENT RECOMMENDATION

- Treat every showing as the moment a buyer may fall in love with your home. Small touches like fresh flowers, open blinds, and a tidy space can make all the difference.



Seller's Role During Showings

Creating the right atmosphere during showings can make buyers feel instantly at home. A few simple steps help your property shine.

Before Each Showing

- Tidy rooms & clear counters
- Open blinds & turn on lights
- Set thermostat to a comfortable temperature
- Secure pets & personal items
- Add a welcoming touch (fresh flowers, soft music, light scent)

During the Showing

- Plan to leave the home to let buyers explore freely
- Keep vehicles out of the driveway
- Allow agents to highlight features without interruption
- Trust the process. We'll follow up with feedback

MERRIMENT TIP

- Buyers often decide within the first few minutes of entering a home. Creating a warm, inviting environment helps them picture their future there.



What Attracts Raleigh Area Buyers

Every market has its unique draws. In the Raleigh area, buyers are looking for more than just a house. They're looking for a lifestyle.

Top Buyer Priorities We See Today:

- **Move-In Ready:** Clean, updated spaces that feel fresh and low-maintenance.
- **Outdoor Living:** Patios, porches, and usable yard space are highly valued.
- **Flexible Spaces:** Home offices, guest rooms, or multipurpose areas for changing needs.
- **Location Matters:** Proximity to schools, workplaces, and amenities in sought-after neighborhoods.
- **Modern Features:** Smart home technology, energy efficiency, and open floor plans.

MERRIMENT INSIGHT

- Highlighting the lifestyle your home offers, not just the square footage, helps buyers see how it fits their future.



Section 3. Reviewing Offers

From offer terms to negotiations, here's how to choose the best path forward.

Receiving an offer is an exciting milestone, but not all offers are created equal. At Merriment Realty, we guide you through each detail, from price and terms to contingencies and closing timelines, so you can confidently decide which offer best meets your needs.

MERRIMENT TIP

The strongest offer isn't always the highest price. Flexibility in terms and conditions can sometimes provide more peace of mind.



Understanding the Offer Package

An offer is more than just the purchase price. It's a full package of terms that outline how the sale will move forward. Knowing what each piece means helps you make the best decision.

Key Parts of an Offer

- **Purchase Price:** The amount the buyer is willing to pay for your home.
- **Due Diligence Fee:** A non-refundable payment from the buyer for the right to investigate the property.
- **Earnest Money Deposit:** A refundable deposit showing the buyer's serious intent to purchase.
- **Contingencies:** Conditions the buyer requires (such as inspection, financing, or appraisal).
- **Closing Date:** The target day funds are transferred and keys are exchanged.
- **Personal Property Requests:** Items the buyer may ask to include (appliances, fixtures, etc.).

MERRIMENT INSIGHT

- It's not just what a buyer offers, but how they structure it. Terms, timing, and contingencies can all impact the strength of an offer.



Comparing Multiple Offers

When more than one buyer is interested, reviewing offers side-by-side helps you clearly see which one best meets your needs.

Offer A

- Purchase Price: \$___
- Due Diligence Fee: \$___
- Earnest Money: \$___
- Closing Date: ___
- Contingencies: ___
- Extras/Requests: ___

Offer B

- Purchase Price: \$___
- Due Diligence Fee: \$___
- Earnest Money: \$___
- Closing Date: ___
- Contingencies: ___
- Extras/Requests: ___

MERRIMENT ADVANTAGE

- We create easy-to-read summaries so you can quickly compare the full picture, not just the price, and feel confident in your decision.



Negotiating Beyond Price

While price is important, the best offer often comes down to the terms that bring you the most peace of mind. Negotiations give you the chance to shape an agreement that truly works for your needs.

Key Terms to Consider

- **Closing Timeline:** A flexible or faster closing may outweigh a higher offer.
- **Repair Requests:** How buyers handle inspection findings can affect your bottom line.
- **Financing Strength:** Cash or strong pre-approval letters carry more certainty than uncertain financing.
- **Contingencies:** Fewer contingencies often mean fewer opportunities for delays.
- **Buyer Motivation:** Relocation deadlines or strong personal connections to your home may create smoother negotiations.

MERRIMENT TIP

- A “win” in negotiations isn’t always about the highest dollar amount. It’s about balancing price, certainty, and convenience to support your next chapter.



Offer Summary Checklist

Before accepting an offer, use this checklist to make sure you've reviewed every detail:

Price & Payment

- Purchase price meets or exceeds your goals
- Due diligence fee is fair and non-refundable
- Earnest money deposit amount is strong

Terms & Timing

- Closing date works with your timeline
- Flexibility for your move-out needs
- Any rent-back or possession agreements are clear

Contingencies

- Financing contingency details reviewed
- Inspection contingency terms understood
- Appraisal contingency and process confirmed

Buyer Strength

- Proof of funds or strong pre-approval letter provided
- Minimal risks of delays due to financing or personal factors

Personal Property

- Items included/excluded are clear in the contract
- No unexpected or unreasonable requests

MERRIMENT RECOMMENDATION

- When reviewing offers, think beyond today's numbers. Choose the option that offers you the most security and confidence in reaching the closing table.



A close-up photograph of two people in business attire shaking hands. The person on the left is wearing a light grey suit jacket with three buttons visible on the sleeve. The person on the right is wearing a dark grey suit jacket. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with greenery and a building. The text "Next step: due diligence." is overlaid in white, with a thin orange horizontal line underneath it.

Next step: due diligence.

Section 4. Under Contract & Due Diligence

What happens once you've accepted an offer

Accepting an offer is a big milestone, but the process isn't finished yet. During the due diligence period, the buyer will complete inspections, finalize financing, and confirm their decision to move forward. With Merriment Realty by your side, you'll know what to expect, how to respond, and how to keep everything moving smoothly toward closing.

MERRIMENT RECOMMENDATION

- Staying flexible and proactive during this stage helps prevent delays and builds buyer confidence.



Buyer's Due Diligence Period

In North Carolina, buyers pay a due diligence fee for the right to investigate the property before fully committing to the purchase. During this period, the buyer can cancel for any reason, but you keep the due diligence fee if they walk away.

What Buyers Typically Do in This Period

- **Schedule** home inspections (general + specialized if needed)
- **Obtain** the appraisal from their lender
- **Finalize** mortgage approval
- **Review** HOA rules, covenants, or restrictions
- **Research** insurance coverage and costs

What Sellers Can Expect

- **Scheduling requests** for inspectors, appraisers, and contractors
- Potential **repair requests** based on inspection results
- Some back-and-forth **negotiation** on terms or credits
- The **possibility** (though rare) of a buyer terminating the contract

MERRIMENT INSIGHT

- The due diligence fee is non-refundable and yours to keep if the buyer backs out, which helps protect your time and commitment to the process.



Inspections & Repair Requests

Inspections give buyers peace of mind, but they can also raise questions or requests that impact your sale. Here's what to expect as the seller:

Buyer Inspections May Include

- **General home inspection**
- **Pest/termite inspection**
- **Radon testing**
- **HVAC, roof, or structural checks**
- **Well/septic inspections** (if applicable)

Seller Responsibilities

- **Provide** access for inspectors and appraisers
- **Review** repair requests once inspection reports are shared
- **Decide** whether to make repairs, offer credits, or negotiate
- Keep all agreements in writing through contract **amendments**
- **Ensure** repairs (if agreed) are completed before closing

MERRIMENT RECOMMENDATION

- Focus on addressing big-picture issues that could prevent the sale from closing, rather than small cosmetic items. This keeps negotiations on track and reduces stress.



The Appraisal Process

If the buyer is using financing, their lender will order an appraisal to confirm the home's value supports the loan amount. The appraisal protects both the lender and buyer, but it can also impact your sale.

What to Expect

- An appraiser will visit your home to assess condition, features, and upgrades.
- Comparable recent sales (similar homes nearby) are heavily weighed in determining value.
- The report is shared with the lender, not the seller directly.

Possible Outcomes

- **Appraised at or Above Price:** The sale moves forward smoothly.
- **Appraised Below Price:** The buyer may ask to renegotiate, bring more cash to closing, or in rare cases, cancel.
- **Rebuttal Option:** In some cases, additional comparable sales can be submitted to challenge a low appraisal.

MERRIMENT INSIGHT

- Appraisals reflect recent sales, not just your home's unique appeal. This is why setting the right price from the start is key to avoiding surprises.



Staying Flexible

The under-contract stage can bring unexpected twists, from repair negotiations to appraisal results. Flexibility and clear communication are the best tools for keeping the process on track.

Ways to Stay Flexible

- **Be open** to negotiating repairs or credits
- Allow **reasonable access** for inspectors, appraisers, and contractors
- **Stay patient** with lender timelines and paperwork
- **Trust** your Merriment Realty team to guide you through each step

MERRIMENT RECOMMENDATION

- The smoother and more cooperative the process feels for both sides, the more likely you are to reach the closing table without stress.



A photograph of a room with light-colored walls and a wooden floor. Several cardboard boxes are stacked in the corner. A window on the right side of the frame looks out onto a bright, sunny day. A semi-transparent green banner with white text is overlaid on the middle of the image.

Your next chapter awaits.

Section 5. Closing Day

The final step before handing over the keys

Closing day is the finish line of your selling journey when ownership officially transfers and you hand over the keys. At Merriment Realty, we coordinate closely with the closing attorney and all parties involved to ensure the process is smooth, celebratory, and free of surprises.

MERRIMENT INSIGHT

- Even if small delays arise, most closings are resolved within a short time. Staying calm and prepared makes the day much more enjoyable.



Closing Day: What to Expect

Closing is the final step in your homebuying journey. The day ownership officially transfers and you receive your keys. In North Carolina, all closings take place at an attorney's office.

At the Attorney's Office

- **Review and sign** all seller documents
- **Confirm** loan payoff amounts and closing costs
- **Verify** funds to be distributed after closing
- **Hand over** keys, garage openers, and any final items

Behind the Scenes

- The **buyer signs** their loan and closing documents
- **Funds** are transferred and disbursed
- The **deed is recorded** with the county, officially transferring ownership

MERRIMENT TIP

- Bring a valid photo ID, and make sure any required documents or wiring instructions are prepared in advance. A little preparation ensures a smooth, stress-free closing.



Closing Day Checklist

Use this list to stay organized and confident as you prepare for the big day.

What to Bring

- Government-issued photo ID
- All house keys, garage openers, and alarm codes
- Account information for wire transfer of proceeds
- Any required repair receipts (if agreed in contract)
- Forwarding address for final documents

What to Expect

- **Review and sign** seller documents
- **Confirm** loan payoff and settlement statement
- **Receive** net proceeds (by check or wire transfer)
- Deed is **recorded** with the county
- Officially **hand over** keys to the buyer

MERRIMENT RECOMMENDATION

- Double-check details like wiring instructions and payoff amounts before closing day to avoid delays or last-minute surprises.



Staying Calm if Delays Happen

Even with the best preparation, closings can sometimes experience small delays. Lender approvals, last-minute document checks, or county recording schedules may slow things down.

Common Causes of Delay

- **Lender** needing additional verification
- **Wire transfers** taking longer than expected
- **County office** timing for deed recording
- **Last-minute clarification** on documents

How We Help

- **Stay in close communication** with the attorney and lender
- **Keep you updated** every step of the way
- **Work quickly to resolve issues** so closing can move forward

MERRIMENT INSIGHT

- Most delays are temporary and easily resolved. With patience and guidance, you'll still be celebrating your successful sale in no time.



Key Handoff & Celebration

Closing day ends with one of the most rewarding moments, handing over the keys to the new owners. It's both a milestone and a fresh beginning.

What This Moment Means

- Your responsibility as the seller is complete
- The buyer begins their new chapter in the home
- You walk away with the proceeds and peace of mind

MERRIMENT ADVANTAGE

- We celebrate right alongside you. Whether you're moving into a new home, downsizing, or beginning a different adventure, Merriment Realty is proud to have guided you through this important step.



Looking Forward with Merriment Realty

Selling your home is a meaningful milestone, but it doesn't end our relationship. At Merriment Realty, we remain a trusted resource long after the closing table, ready to support your next chapter, whatever it may be

How We Continue to Help

- Share updates on Raleigh area market trends
- Provide referrals for trusted local services
- Be available when you're ready for your next move
- Stay connected through community events and client appreciation gatherings

MERRIMENT ADVANTAGE

- Our commitment is not just to the sale, but to the people we serve. Creating joy and building community is what Merriment Realty is all about.





MERRIMENT
REALTY

CREATING JOY. BUILDING COMMUNITY.

Let's sell with confidence together.

From pricing to closing day,
Merriment Realty is here to guide your sale with
clarity, care, and expertise.



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