

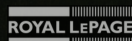


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VOLUME ONE

THE SELLER'S GUIDE

Your home, told properly.

A complete reference for working with the Pilarski Real Estate Group in Etobicoke, West Toronto and the GTA.



PILARSKI REAL ESTATE GROUP · WEST TORONTO

Royal LePage Real Estate Services Inc., Brokerage · 3031 Bloor Street West, Toronto

WELCOME

A note from Julian.

Selling a home — particularly a home you have loved, lived in, raised a family in, or carefully restored — is rarely just a financial transaction. The decisions you make in the weeks before listing will shape the offers you receive, the timeline you live inside, and the proceeds that ultimately fund whatever comes next.

We wrote this guide because the choices that matter most happen before a sign goes on the lawn. Inside, you will find the same framework we use every day with our sellers — the preparation, the pricing logic, the marketing approach that has defined our practice, and the questions that protect your bottom line at every stage.

Read it cover to cover, or keep it close and dip in when a particular question lands. When you are ready for a conversation — even a hypothetical one — we would welcome the opportunity to sit down, walk the home, and give you an honest read on what is possible.

With warm regards,

Julian Pilarski

Sales Representative · Team Leader
Pilarski Real Estate Group · Royal LePage
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Everything we would want you to know before listing — the strategy, the timeline, the marketing approach, and the language to navigate it all.

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CHAPTER ONE

Our philosophy.

We take on a deliberately small number of listings each year — and pour the same care into each one. The result is fewer days on market, stronger offers, and homes that sell for what they are actually worth.

Why microsites.

Most listings, even in the luxury market, exist as a few photographs on a broker's MLS feed and perhaps a feature page on the agent's website. Buyers see them in a stack with a hundred others. They get scrolled past.

We do not believe that the way to sell a distinctive home is to present it the same way every other home is presented. Every listing we take on earns its own dedicated microsite — its own URL, its own cinematic photography, its own film walkthrough, its own neighbourhood story, its own private showing-request page. The home is given the space to tell its own story.

Most listings fight for attention on a feed. Ours have their own address.

WHAT THIS APPROACH PRODUCES

- **Fewer days on market.** Well-positioned listings find their buyers faster, because the right buyer encounters the right story, told well.
- **Stronger offers.** Buyers who fall in love through immersive content arrive to showings primed — and tend to pay closer to the home's actual value.
- **Sharper differentiation.** In a market that increasingly looks the same, your home becomes immediately identifiable.
- **Better data.** We see exactly how buyers are engaging — which photos hold attention, which rooms drive showing requests, which neighbourhoods the inquiries are coming from. We adjust accordingly.

CHAPTER TWO

Meet the team.

Pilarski Real Estate Group is, by design, a small team. Three people, working closely together on a deliberately limited number of clients each year. The result is a level of attention that larger teams cannot replicate — and the depth of relationship that has earned us a place among the top 1% of Realtors® in Canada.

JULIAN PILARSKI — SALES REPRESENTATIVE · TEAM LEADER

A native of Toronto's west end, Julian has spent twenty years guiding buyers, sellers and investors through the city's most distinctive neighbourhoods — from Queensway Village to High Park, and across Etobicoke, Mimico, Humber Valley and the lakeshore. His leadership of the practice is grounded in three things: honest, straightforward advice; a deep understanding of local micro-markets; and a calm professional approach to complex decisions. Julian is the recipient of Royal LePage's National Chairman Award, recognizing the top 1% of Realtors® nationally, and consistently sits within the top 2% of agents in Canada by gross sales volume.

ANGELA BALAN — SALES REPRESENTATIVE

Real estate is Angela's third career — and arguably her most natural fit. With an undergraduate degree from Western, an MBA from the Ivey Business School, more than a dozen years at IBM Canada, and a successful management consulting practice behind her, Angela brings a depth of business acumen rare in the industry. She is also a lifelong investor — having renovated, built, and operated everything from urban townhouses to an off-grid waterfront cottage. Her guiding belief, repeated to every client: *real estate is not transactional, it is relational.*

KARRI SIEMMS — CLIENT CARE MANAGER · OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR

Karri is the operational backbone of the Pilarski Real Estate Group. As Client Care Manager and Office Administrator, she is the person every client speaks to first — and the one who keeps every transaction on track from the initial consultation through to the day the keys change hands. Her work spans the full arc of every file: pre-list preparation, trades and stylists, showings, buyer-agent inquiries, and the logistically intense weeks before closing when lawyers, lenders, inspectors and movers all need to move in lockstep. Beyond the logistics, Karri's instinct for client care is what most clients remember long after

closing — she notices the small things, anticipates problems before they arrive, and ensures that working with Pilarski Real Estate Group feels personal, attentive and human. The smoothest transactions are the ones where the client never has to wonder what is next — and that is Karri's craft.

CHAPTER THREE

Before you list.

The decisions that most influence your final sale price are made in the weeks before a sign goes on the lawn. The work we do together in this window often matters more than the marketing itself.

The honest first conversation.

Before we sign any listing paperwork, we want to walk your home with you, sit at your kitchen table, and have an honest conversation about three things: what your home is worth in today's market, what (if anything) is worth doing to prepare it, and what the timing looks like.

Some homes are ready to list as they sit. Others benefit meaningfully from two weeks of focused preparation — paint, staging, minor repairs. A few warrant more — a kitchen refresh, a bathroom update, landscaping. The right answer depends on your home, your market, and your timeline. We will tell you honestly what is worth doing and what is not.

Setting expectations.

West Toronto remains one of the most resilient and desirable real estate markets in Canada — but it is not a market that rewards illusion. Sellers who price aggressively without justification, or who decline to prepare their homes, regularly find themselves chasing the market downward. Sellers who approach the process with care and patience consistently outperform.

Your home is worth what a qualified, informed buyer is willing to pay for it on a specific day. Our job is to maximize that number — not to invent it.

CHAPTER FOUR

The six stages of selling.

Every listing we take on moves through the same considered stages. The framework is repeatable; the execution is tailored to each home.

01 Strategic positioning.

A frank conversation about price, timing, and the right buyer profile — grounded in current comparable sales, days-on-market trends, and the specific qualities of your home. We talk through whether to list immediately or wait for a stronger micro-cycle. We discuss whether to set a listing price at market value, slightly below to attract multiple offers, or at a strategic premium that supports negotiation. There is no single right answer; the right answer for your home depends on the market, the season, and the inventory we are competing against.

02 Pre-list preparation.

Trades, stylists, painters, landscapers — booked, briefed, and managed by us. You see one project plan, not a series of individual quotes; one set of decisions, not ten. We tell you only what is worth doing, and we project-manage the rest. Most preparations take two to four weeks. The most common interventions are paint, professional cleaning, decluttering, minor repairs, and staging.

03 Cinematic photography and film.

Once the home is ready, we book magazine-quality stills, a film walkthrough, drone work where it adds dimension, and twilight shots when the home calls for them. Every asset is shot for the way buyers actually encounter homes today — full-screen, on phones and tablets, in environments that compete for attention. We do not use stock real estate photography. The investment is ours; the return is yours.

04 The dedicated microsite.

Your home gets its own URL — a custom site that tells its full story. Hero photography, video, floor plans, neighbourhood notes, school catchments, transit, dining, and a private showing-request page. The

microsite is the centerpiece of the entire campaign — referenced in every social post, every email, every print piece, every conversation with the buyer pool.

Buyers do not just see a listing — they enter a story.

05 Considered marketing rollout.

A coordinated launch built around your specific home: targeted email to our buyer list, social media (organic and paid), print where it still earns its place, agent-to-agent networking inside Royal LePage and beyond, and the MLS listing itself. We choreograph the sequencing — soft launch to our internal network first, then a public launch to maximize first-week momentum. Open houses are scheduled strategically, not by default.

06 Negotiation and close.

When offers arrive, we evaluate them carefully — not just on price but on deposit size, conditions, irrevocability, closing date, and the strength of the buyer's financing. In multiple-offer situations, we manage the bidding process to extract the strongest result; in single-offer situations, we negotiate calmly and precisely. Once firm, we coordinate with your lawyer, the buyer's representatives, and any required inspectors to deliver a clean close.

CHAPTER FIVE

Pricing strategy — honest math.

Pricing is the single most consequential decision in any listing. It is also one of the most poorly understood — even by experienced sellers. Here is how we think about it.

The three pricing strategies.

In any market, there are essentially three ways to price a home for sale, each with distinct trade-offs:

MARKET VALUE PRICING

Listing at what the home is genuinely worth based on recent comparable sales, adjusted for the differences. This is the most predictable strategy: it produces realistic interest, fair-market offers, and a typical days-on-market for the area. The risk is that there is no upside surprise — buyers and their agents see the price as a ceiling, not a floor.

HOLD-BACK PRICING (LIST LOW, SELL HIGH)

Listing below market value with the intention of generating multiple offers. Done well, this strategy can produce sale prices materially above what a market-value listing would have achieved. Done badly — in markets that no longer support it, or with homes that do not warrant it — it can produce a single underpriced offer that the seller feels obligated to accept. We are selective about when to recommend this approach.

PREMIUM PRICING (LIST HIGH, NEGOTIATE DOWN)

Listing above market value with the intention of negotiating to a higher settlement than market-value pricing would have produced. Generally the weakest of the three strategies in a balanced market: it produces fewer showings, longer days on market, and stale-listing perception that compounds with each price reduction. Occasionally appropriate for genuinely unique properties with no recent comparables.

There is no universally right strategy. There is only the strategy that is right for your home, in your market, on the date you choose to list.

How we recommend.

Our recommendation begins with a careful comparable analysis — typically six to twelve recently sold homes that are genuinely similar to yours in size, condition, location and finishings. We layer in current active inventory (what buyers will be comparing you to), buyer demand signals, and seasonality. We then present you with a range, and a recommended strategy, with the reasoning behind it. The final pricing decision is yours; our role is to make sure it is informed.

CHAPTER SIX

Preparing your home.

The interventions that move sale prices the most are rarely the most expensive. Here is what works — and what to skip.

What typically earns its return.

- **Paint.** Fresh, neutral paint throughout interior. Often the single highest return-on-investment intervention. Budget \$3,000 to \$8,000 for a typical home.
- **Professional cleaning.** Deep clean of every surface, plus carpet and grout where applicable. \$400 to \$1,200.
- **Decluttering.** Removing roughly 30–50% of personal items. The home should feel lived-in but lightly so. Often involves a short-term storage rental.
- **Minor repairs.** Burned-out bulbs, sticking doors, leaky faucets, scuffed baseboards. Buyers notice cumulative small defects more than any single large one.
- **Landscaping & curb appeal.** Mulch, edging, seasonal flowers, fresh paint on front door. The first photograph buyers see is the exterior shot.
- **Professional staging.** Furniture and styling chosen specifically for the photographs and the market segment. We work with stagers we trust. Typical cost \$2,500 to \$8,000 depending on scope.

What is usually not worth doing.

- **Major kitchen renovations** on a tight timeline. Often overspend, and rarely recouped on resale unless the existing kitchen is genuinely dated and the market demands it.
- **Bathroom remodels** beyond fixture replacement and re-grouting. Same logic.
- **Adding bedrooms, finished basements, or square footage.** These are buyer decisions, not seller investments.
- **Custom finishes** that reflect personal taste. Stay neutral.

The goal is not to renovate. The goal is to present.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The microsite difference.

A recent case study: 196 Berry Road in Sunnylea South. Listed on a Tuesday. Multiple offers by Sunday. Sold over asking in under a week — in a market where most homes were sitting.

The setup.

196 Berry Road was a three-bedroom Sunnylea home with strong fundamentals: modern kitchen, updated bath, a multi-tier rear deck with a sunken spa, and a large fenced yard backing onto Park Lawn JMS. At the time of listing, inventory in the Sunnylea pocket was modest, but buyer activity had softened. Most listings in the area were sitting two to four weeks before finding their buyers — and some were not finding them at all.

The approach.

We built a dedicated microsite for the home — full photography, drone work, a film walkthrough of the home and the immediate neighbourhood, school catchment notes, transit information, and a private showing-request page. We did a soft launch to our buyer list and to West Toronto agent contacts three days before the public listing went live. We coordinated paid social to amplify the launch.

THE NUMBERS

- **Days on market:** 6.
- **Online views in the first week:** 30,000+.
- **Showings booked through the microsite:** 28.
- **Offers received:** multiple.
- **Final sale price:** over asking.

In a challenging market, you do not need luck. You need a proven approach.

What set this listing apart was not the quality of the home — every home in our portfolio meets a similar standard — but the quality of the presentation. The right buyers encountered the right story, told well, at exactly the right moment in the market cycle.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Tax & legal considerations.

A brief, non-exhaustive overview of the tax and legal considerations most relevant to home sellers in Toronto. None of this constitutes legal or tax advice — please consult your lawyer and accountant for guidance specific to your situation.

The principal residence exemption.

For most Canadian homeowners selling their primary residence, the capital gain on the sale is fully exempt from federal income tax under the Principal Residence Exemption (PRE). To qualify, the home must have been your principal residence for every year you owned it (or be designated as such for each qualifying year), and you must have ordinarily inhabited it during those years.

As of 2023, the sale of any residence must be reported on your tax return — even if it qualifies fully for the PRE. Failing to report can disqualify the exemption. Your accountant will handle this on the return for the year of sale.

If the home was not always your principal residence.

If you have rented out part or all of the property, used a portion for business, or owned it without occupying it for a stretch, the PRE may apply only partially. The math is non-trivial — strongly recommend consulting your accountant well before listing.

Investment properties.

For investment properties (homes you have not occupied as your principal residence), capital gains are taxable. Half of the realized gain is added to your taxable income for the year of sale and taxed at your marginal rate. If the property has been depreciated for tax purposes, recaptured capital cost allowance is also taxable.

HST.

Resale residential homes are not subject to HST. New construction homes are. If you are selling a substantially renovated home or a home you have built, consult your accountant about possible HST implications.

Legal representation.

As a seller, your real estate lawyer prepares the conveyancing documents, responds to title requisitions from the buyer's lawyer, discharges your mortgage, handles tax adjustments, and disburses the net proceeds to you on closing day. Legal fees for a typical residential sale are in the range of \$1,500 to \$3,000. We can introduce you to lawyers we trust.

Always involve your accountant before listing — not after closing. Tax planning is meaningfully easier in advance.

CHAPTER NINE

A realistic timeline.

Most West Toronto sellers move from first conversation to closing within 90 to 150 days. The most important time is the four to six weeks before listing — when the majority of the value-creating work happens.

- **Weeks 1–2** — Initial consultation, comparable market analysis, pricing discussion, listing strategy agreed.
- **Weeks 2–6** — Pre-list preparation. Paint, staging, repairs, decluttering. Trades coordinated and managed by our team.
- **Weeks 5–6** — Photography, film, drone, microsite build.
- **Week 6** — Soft launch to internal network and West Toronto agent contacts.
- **Week 7** — Public launch. MLS active, microsite live, marketing in market.
- **Weeks 7–10** — Active marketing, showings, open houses (where appropriate). Offer activity typically peaks in this window.
- **Variable** — Offer received, negotiated, accepted. Conditional period (if any) follows.
- **30–90 days from firm-up** — Closing. Lawyer prepares documents, buyer arranges financing, mortgage discharged, funds flow to you.

CHAPTER TEN

A glossary.

Reference for the terms that come up most often in a Toronto residential sale.

AGREEMENT OF PURCHASE AND SALE (APS)

The contract by which the buyer agrees to purchase and you agree to sell, under specified terms. Once signed and unconditional, it is legally binding on both parties.

BULLY OFFER (PRE-EMPTIVE OFFER)

An offer submitted before the seller's stated offer-review date, intended to compel the seller to consider it ahead of competing bids. May or may not be entertained, depending on strategy.

COMPARABLE MARKET ANALYSIS (CMA)

An analysis of recently sold homes similar to yours, used to estimate market value and inform pricing strategy.

COMMISSION

The fee paid to the listing brokerage on closing, typically split between the listing brokerage and the cooperating (buyer's) brokerage. Negotiated in the listing agreement.

COOPERATING COMMISSION

The portion of the total commission offered to the buyer's brokerage. Listed on MLS to attract co-operating agents.

CONDITIONS (IN AN OFFER)

Terms in the buyer's offer that must be satisfied for the deal to become firm. Common conditions include financing, inspection, and (for condos) status certificate review.

CONDITIONAL SALE

A sale where the buyer's offer includes conditions yet to be satisfied. The property remains listable in 'conditionally sold' status until conditions are waived or fulfilled.

DAYS ON MARKET (DOM)

The number of days a listing has been active. A common buyer signal — extended DOM can suggest pricing issues or other concerns.

DISCLOSURE

Information you are legally or contractually required to share with prospective buyers — typically known material latent defects (defects not visible on inspection that materially affect the property).

EASEMENT

The right of another party to use a portion of your property for a specific purpose. Disclosed in your title and visible to the buyer's lawyer.

FIRM SALE

An Agreement of Purchase and Sale with no conditions outstanding. Once firm, both parties are legally bound.

HOLDOVER PERIOD

The period after a listing agreement expires during which the listing brokerage is still entitled to commission if the property sells to a buyer introduced during the listing term. Typically 60 to 90 days.

HOLDBACK

An amount of money withheld at closing to ensure completion of a specific item (e.g., outstanding repair, work order, condo reserve verification).

LATENT DEFECT

A defect not visible during a typical inspection or showing that materially affects the use or value of the property. Sellers have a duty to disclose known latent defects.

LISTING AGREEMENT

The contract between you and your real estate brokerage authorizing us to market and sell your property. Sets out commission, listing term, and other terms.

LISTING PRICE

The price at which the home is offered to the market. Not necessarily the price at which it sells.

MLS® (MULTIPLE LISTING SERVICE)

The shared database used by real estate professionals to list and search properties for sale. Powers the public listing portals.

MULTIPLE OFFER SITUATION

Two or more registered offers on a property at the same time. Sellers may consider all offers, reject all, or negotiate with one (depending on jurisdiction and the instructions given to the brokerage).

NET PROCEEDS

What you receive at closing after deducting outstanding mortgage, commissions, legal fees, adjustments, and any other deductions.

OFFER DATE / OFFER REVIEW

A specified date and time after listing on which the seller will review any received offers. Common in competitive markets to encourage multiple offers.

PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE EXEMPTION (PRE)

A federal tax exemption that shields capital gains on the sale of your principal residence from income tax. Must be reported on your tax return for the year of sale.

RESERVE FUND (CONDO)

Funds set aside by the condo corporation for major repairs and replacements. The status certificate discloses the current state and the buyer's lawyer reviews it.

SELLER'S PROPERTY INFORMATION STATEMENT (SPIS)

An optional written disclosure form completed by the seller. Often declined; consult your lawyer about the implications of completing one or not.

SHOWING INSTRUCTIONS

Instructions provided to the listing brokerage about how showings should be booked and conducted — e.g., notice required, lockbox access, pet considerations.

STAGING

Professional preparation of the home's furnishings, layout, and styling for photography and showings. A key part of our pre-list approach.

STATUS CERTIFICATE

For condos: a document setting out the legal, financial, and operational condition of the condominium corporation. The buyer's lawyer reviews it during the conditional period.

TITLE

Legal ownership of the property. Transferred from you to the buyer on closing day.

TITLE INSURANCE

Insurance protecting against defects in title. Typically purchased by the buyer; occasionally relevant to sellers.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Next steps & contacts.

When you are ready to talk through your situation — whether you are six months out or just curious — we welcome the conversation. No obligation, no pressure.

How to reach us.

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Request a private valuation.

A no-obligation, private valuation grounded in current comparable sales, days-on-market trends, and twenty years of West Toronto experience. We come to your home, walk it together, and follow up with a written valuation report typically within five business days. Visit pilarskigroup.com or email Julian directly to arrange.

Thank you for reading. The decision to sell a home is rarely simple. We hope this guide proves useful in your thinking, whether or not we end up working together. When the time comes, we would be honoured to be considered.

— Julian Pilarski