

THE COMPLETE HOME SELLER HANDBOOK

SELLERS.

A step-by-step breakdown of the system we use to price, market, and sell homes in Windsor-Essex. Keep this close.

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WELCOME

BUILT TO GET HOUSES SOLD.

Most agents follow the same playbook: list on MLS, put a sign on the lawn, and wait. We stopped doing that a long time ago. What you're holding is a breakdown of the system we've developed and refined over years of selling homes in Windsor-Essex. The one that consistently gets faster sales and stronger prices for our clients.

Every section of this guide walks you through one part of that system. Pricing strategy, marketing infrastructure, negotiation approach, closing process. You'll know exactly what we do, why we do it, and what to expect at every stage.

This isn't a document you read once and forget. Keep it close. It's a reference for the whole journey.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Read it front to back or jump to whatever stage you're thinking about. The table of contents on the next page maps everything out. If you have questions at any point, call or text Luis directly. That's what he's there for.

THE SYSTEM, BY THE NUMBERS

98%

OF OUR LISTINGS SOLD

16

DAYS FASTER THAN AREA AVERAGE

\$1B+

IN REAL ESTATE SOLD

AW4U The Real Estate Group, 2024 performance vs. Windsor-Essex area average.

WHAT'S INSIDE.

01	WHAT IS YOUR HOME WORTH? How we price your home and what the data tells us	4
02	THE SELLING TIMELINE Step by step, from listing to keys	7
03	PREP & STAGING Checklist, quick wins, and what not to do	9
04	MARKETING YOUR HOME What goes into every listing campaign	13
05	SHOWINGS What buyers notice, what you need to do	15
06	OFFERS & NEGOTIATION How offers work and how we protect your position	17
07	CLOSING DAY Costs, checklist, and what to expect	19
08	COMMON QUESTIONS The stuff people Google at 11pm	23
09	MEET LUIS MENDEZ Background, track record, and client reviews	25
10	LET'S TALK STRATEGY Book your complimentary home evaluation	27

01 • PRICING

PRICE IS EVERY THING.

Before a single photo is taken, we do the work that matters most. Pricing is where deals are won or lost.

PRICING STRATEGY & DAYS ON MARKET.

WINDSOR-ESSEX • MAY 2026 • 137 SOLD HOMES

How you price relative to market value is the single biggest factor in how long your home sits. The data below is pulled from last month's closed sales across Windsor-Essex.



AVERAGE DAYS ON MARKET, SIDE BY SIDE



WHAT OVERLISTING ACTUALLY COSTS YOU

Overpriced homes waited 46 days and still sold for 11% less than asking.

WHAT THE NUMBERS SHOW

- 76% of underlisted homes below \$600K sold within 2 weeks.
- Overlisted homes still sold at an average of 11% below their asking price — sellers who held firm waited longer and gave up more.
- Above \$600K, the gap sharpens further: 17 days for underlisted homes vs. 46 days for overlisted ones.

Bracket-by-bracket distribution (0–7 / 8–14 / 15–30 / 30+ days) is available on request — ask Luis for the full data cut behind this month's numbers.

HOW WE FIGURE OUT WHAT YOUR HOME IS WORTH.

We run a Comparative Market Analysis, or CMA, before recommending any number. Here is exactly what goes into it and what the process looks like for you.

- 1 WE PULL RECENT COMPARABLE SALES**
 We look at homes that actually sold in your neighbourhood over the past 60 to 90 days. Similar square footage, similar lot size, similar age and condition. These are the comps. They tell us what buyers in your area were willing to pay in real market conditions, not what sellers were asking.
- 2 WE MAKE ADJUSTMENTS FOR YOUR HOME SPECIFICALLY**
 No two homes are identical. We adjust the comps to account for differences in size, lot, garage, basement finish, renovations, updates to kitchen and bathrooms, and overall condition. A renovated kitchen can add real value. A dated bathroom can pull it down. We factor all of it in.
- 3 WE LOOK AT ACTIVE LISTINGS AND EXPIRED LISTINGS**
 Active listings show you your competition. Expired listings, the ones that sat and never sold, show us what buyers rejected. Both matter. If similar homes are sitting with no offers, we need to know why before we set your number.
- 4 WE FACTOR IN CURRENT MARKET CONDITIONS**
 Is it a buyer's market or a seller's market right now? How long are homes sitting before they sell? Are list-to-sale ratios trending above or below asking? These conditions affect strategy. We apply them to your situation specifically, not just in general.
- 5 WE WALK YOU THROUGH THE NUMBER**
 You get a clear recommended price range with the reasoning behind every dollar. We show you the comps, the adjustments, and the rationale. There's no pressure and no guessing. You understand exactly why we're recommending what we're recommending before you sign anything.

WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOUR HOME IS WORTH RIGHT NOW?

We offer a complimentary home evaluation with no obligation. You get a full CMA, a pricing recommendation, and a clear picture of what selling looks like for your specific property.

02 • THE SELLING PROCESS

THE SELLING TIMELINE.

From our first conversation to closing day. Exactly
what happens and when.

STEP BY STEP, **START TO FINISH.**

STEP 01 1-7 DAYS	PRE-LISTING PREP We meet, walk through the home, and align on pricing, timing, and what prep makes sense. You sign the listing agreement. Staging, professional cleaning, and the photo and video shoot are all scheduled. Lockbox and lawn sign ordered.
STEP 02 DAYS 5-10	MARKETING LAUNCH Our in-house creative team shoots and edits professional photos and cinematic video. Feature sheets are printed. Your listing launches on MLS and Realtor.ca with a full campaign behind it from day one.
STEP 03 WEEK 1-4	SHOWINGS & OPEN HOUSE Buyer agents book showings through our scheduling system with advance notice to you. A public open house runs in week one for qualifying listings. A private broker open brings agent traffic from across the city. You get showing feedback within 24 hours of every visit.
STEP 04 OFFER NIGHT	OFFERS & NEGOTIATION I present every offer in full: price, deposit, conditions, closing date. We review together and I advise on how to respond. Counteroffers drafted and delivered. I manage all communication with buyer agents until we have a deal you're happy with.
STEP 05 POST- ACCEPTED	CONDITIONS PERIOD The buyer satisfies conditions, usually financing and a home inspection. I coordinate access, track every deadline, and keep you updated at each stage. Your lawyer receives the paperwork and begins preparing for closing.
STEP 06 CLOSING DAY	CLOSING DAY Your lawyer handles the final transfer. Funds arrive the same day. Keys go to the buyer. I'm available throughout and walk you through what to expect so there are no surprises. See Section 07 for the full closing checklist.

03 · PREP & STAGING

PREP.



A little work before listing day pays off more than almost
anything else.

THE PRE-LISTING CHECKLIST.

Tick these off before photos are taken. First impressions happen online before a buyer ever steps through the door.

GENERAL MAINTENANCE

- ☐ Oil squeaky doors and hinges
- ☐ Tighten all loose doorknobs
- ☐ Replace burnt-out bulbs (match colour temperature throughout)
- ☐ Clean and repair windows
- ☐ Touch up chipped paint
- ☐ Repair cracked plaster or drywall

CURB APPEAL

- ☐ Trim shrubs and mow the lawn
- ☐ Pick up any litter or debris
- ☐ Clear the walkway of leaves
- ☐ Repair gutters and eavestroughs
- ☐ Touch up exterior paint
- ☐ Polish door hardware and knocker

CLEANING & DEEP PREP

- ☐ Shampoo carpets (~\$150–300, high ROI)
- ☐ Clean washer, dryer, and tubs
- ☐ Clean furnace and replace filter
- ☐ Clean fridge and stove inside and out
- ☐ Clean and freshen all bathrooms
- ☐ Clean and tidy the entrance

SHOWING READY

- ☐ Turn on all lights before showings
- ☐ Open curtains during daytime
- ☐ Clear all counter surfaces
- ☐ Play quiet background music
- ☐ Remove or secure pets
- ☐ Clear toys and personal items

5 HIGH-IMPACT WINS

FRESH TOWELS

MATCHED BULBS

DECLUTTER COUNTERS

FRESH FLOWERS

CLEAN FRONT DOOR



STAGING

SHOULD YOU STAGE YOUR HOME?

Not every home needs full staging. We assess this during our walkthrough. The main factors are how current the furniture is, how well the layout reads in photos, and how much competition you're up against in the market right now.

Staged homes typically sell faster, and the return on a staging investment tends to be well above 100% when it's done right.

THREE OPTIONS

Full Staging: furniture and decor brought in. Used for vacant homes or where existing furniture isn't working for the space.

Partial Staging: your furniture stays, supplemented with key pieces for photos and showings.

Virtual Staging: digitally styled listing photos for vacant homes where physical staging isn't practical.

03 • STAGING PARTNER

MOUNA.

THE CITY ORGANIZER

When a home calls for full or partial staging, we bring in Mouna, founder of The City Organizer. She specializes in home organizing, home staging, and home moving across Windsor-Essex, with an eye for detail and a deep understanding of the emotional connection people have with their homes.



Her approach is personal: she assesses the space, collaborates on every decision, and designs a system built around how the home actually shows. Realtors who've worked with her point to the same result — listings that present beautifully and sell faster, sometimes above asking.

WHAT SHE HANDLES

- Home & Business Organization
- Home Staging
- Home Moving



THE CITY
ORGANIZER

WEBSITE

thecityorganizer.com

EMAIL

**thecityorganizer
@gmail.com**

PHONE

226-345-7980

04 · MARKETING

MARKET.

Most agents post on MLS and call it marketing. We built an in-house team and a full campaign infrastructure so your listing reaches buyers before they're even looking.

THE CAMPAIGN BEHIND EVERY LISTING.

We have a dedicated in-house Creative Director who handles all photography, video, and paid ad creative. Nothing is contracted out. It means faster execution, a consistent visual standard, and content that's built around your specific property.

ON EVERY LISTING

These are standard for every home we list.

- **Professional Photo & Video.** Full high-res photo set, aerial drone shots where applicable, and a cinematic walkthrough video. Buyers form opinions within seconds of seeing a listing. Visuals are where it starts.
- **MLS & Realtor.ca.** Maximum exposure on the platforms buyers and agents use most, with a complete, well-written listing description built to convert browsers into showings.
- **Signage & Directionals.** Professional yard sign and directional signs placed strategically to capture foot and drive-by traffic in your neighbourhood.
- **A 7, 14, 30, 60-Day Review Cycle.** Week one is the launch. Week two we review performance and adjust. Day 30 we check in on where we're at. By day 60, most homes under this system are already sold.

DEPENDING ON THE LISTING

Applied based on property type, price point, and market conditions.

- **Organic Social Media.** Your listing gets posted to our accounts, which average thousands of views per post across a highly engaged local following. We know how to present a home on social in a way that actually performs.
- **Paid Social Ads.** Facebook and Instagram campaigns targeted to buyers in your price range and neighbourhood, including GTA relocators. Our audience reach is 630,000+ impressions across 33,500+ followers.
- **Open House with Feature Sheets.** A promoted public open house to drive qualified foot traffic at peak buyer interest, supported by custom printed take-aways buyers can share after visiting.
- **Team Listing Presentation.** Your home gets presented at our internal team meeting, turning every agent on the team into an advocate within their own networks and sphere of influence.

05 · SHOWINGS

SHOWINGS.

What buyers notice, what you need to do, and how the process runs while your home is on the market.

WHAT TO EXPECT DURING SHOWINGS.

HOW SHOWINGS ARE BOOKED

Buyer agents request showing times and you get a notification with the date, time, and how much notice was given. Standard notice is 2 to 4 hours. You're never obligated to accept any showing, but the more flexible you can be, the more buyers you'll reach.

DURING THE SHOWING

Leave the home while buyers are there. Buyers explore more freely and stay longer when the owner isn't present. Plan for 30 to 60 minutes. Take the dog for a walk, grab a coffee, or wait at a neighbour's.

FEEDBACK

You'll get showing feedback within 24 hours. I follow up with buyer agents after every showing and share what I hear, what they liked, what gave them pause, and whether they're still considering. That feedback shapes our ongoing strategy.

WHAT BUYERS ARE LOOKING AT

Buyers walk through mentally checking off a list. The things that register fastest:

- ☐ Natural light: open curtains, clean windows, matching bright bulbs
- ☐ Smell: neutral is best. Avoid heavy candles or air fresheners
- ☐ Storage: closets, pantry, and garage are always opened
- ☐ Kitchen condition: counters, appliances, under the sink
- ☐ Bathroom cleanliness: the most scrutinized rooms in the house
- ☐ Flow: can they picture moving through the space easily?

DAILY SHOWING ROUTINE

- ☐ Make all beds every morning
- ☐ Sinks clear and dry
- ☐ All surfaces decluttered
- ☐ Curtains open, lights on before you leave
- ☐ Lawn maintained and driveway clear
- ☐ Pets removed or secured

06 · OFFERS & NEGOTIATION

NEGOTIATE.

Everything before this moment was in service of getting to this table with leverage. Here's how it works and how we protect your position.

HOW OFFERS WORK FROM YOUR SIDE.

WHEN AN OFFER COMES IN

I call you as soon as an offer arrives. We review it together: price, deposit, closing date, conditions, and Schedule A. I give you my read on the offer relative to your goals, then we decide how to respond.

RESPONDING TO AN OFFER

You have three options: accept as-is, reject outright, or send a counteroffer. Most deals go through at least one round of back-and-forth. The irrevocable period, the window an offer is held open, is typically 24 to 48 hours.

WHAT MAKES AN OFFER STRONG

Price matters, but it's not the only thing. A strong offer also has:

- ☐ A large deposit: shows the buyer is serious
- ☐ A closing date that works for you
- ☐ Fewer or no conditions: fewer conditions, cleaner deal
- ☐ Clean Schedule A with no unusual requests

MULTIPLE OFFERS

If we receive more than one offer at the same time, we can set an offer date where all parties submit their best offers simultaneously. I'll guide you through what to look for beyond the highest price.

BULLY OFFERS

A bully offer comes in before the offer date with a short irrevocable period, trying to force a decision before other buyers can prepare. It can be real or it can be pressure. I'll help you read the situation and decide how to respond.

"The difference between a real estate professional and someone merely holding a license is their willingness and know-how to negotiate."

Paul Germanese, Team Lead, AW4U The Real Estate Group

KEY TERMS

IRREVOCABLE PERIOD

The window an offer is held open. Once it expires, the offer dies unless you've accepted or countered.

CONDITIONS

Requirements that must be met before the deal goes firm. Usually financing approval and a home inspection.

SCHEDULE A

An attachment listing additional terms or conditions the buyer is requesting.

CHATELS VS. FIXTURES

Fixtures are attached to the home and stay. Chattels are movable and leave with you unless agreed otherwise.

DEPOSIT

Money paid by the buyer when the offer goes firm. Held in trust and applied to the purchase at closing.

HOLDBACK

Funds held back from the seller until a specific condition is met, usually a repair agreed upon in the deal.

07 · CLOSING

SOLD.

Here's exactly what happens between a firm deal and the moment the keys change hands. No surprises.

WHAT HAPPENS ON CLOSING DAY.

THE TIMELINE

The closing date is set in the offer. Your lawyer handles the transfer of title and release of funds. You typically receive the proceeds by late afternoon once the buyer's lawyer confirms receipt. Keys go to the buyer at or before the time stated in the offer.

WHAT YOU'LL PAY AT CLOSING

Most sellers are surprised by the full list. Here's a rough breakdown:

Real estate commission	As agreed
Legal fees	\$1,500-\$2,500+
Mortgage discharge fee	Varies by lender
Property tax adjustments	Prorated
Moving costs	\$1,000-\$5,000+
Capital gains (if applicable)	Consult accountant

Ask for a net sheet. A rough estimate of what you walk away with after all costs.

YOUR CLOSING CHECKLIST

- ☐ Hire a real estate lawyer (do this early)
- ☐ Confirm mortgage discharge with your lender
- ☐ Book movers 4 to 6 weeks before closing
- ☐ Cancel or transfer utilities (hydro, gas, water, internet)
- ☐ Update address with CRA, bank, employer, subscriptions
- ☐ Forward your mail through Canada Post
- ☐ Remove all agreed-upon chattels
- ☐ Leave all agreed fixtures, appliances, remotes, manuals
- ☐ Disconnect or transfer security system
- ☐ Leave all keys, garage openers, mailbox keys
- ☐ Final walkthrough and lawyer documents signed

MOVING GUIDE

We put together a full moving guide to help you plan the transition out of your home. It covers everything from booking movers to utility transfers to setting up your new address. Scan the QR code or ask Luis for the link.



YOUR NET PROCEEDS BREAKDOWN.

Fill in what you know and use the ranges as a starting point. Your lawyer and agent will sharpen any estimate before closing day.

ESTIMATED SALE PRICE

COST ITEM	TYPICAL RANGE	YOUR ESTIMATE	TYPE
Real Estate Commission Paid from proceeds. Split between listing and buyer's agent.	As agreed		-
Legal Fees Real estate lawyer to handle title transfer and closing documents.	\$1,500 – \$2,500+		-
Mortgage Discharge Fee Releasing your mortgage. Higher if you're breaking early before the term ends.	\$200 – \$5,000+		-
Property Tax Adjustment Prorated to your closing date. You pay up to the day you hand over keys.	Prorated		-
Moving Costs Professional movers, packing supplies, storage if needed between properties.	\$1,000 – \$5,000+		-
Repairs and Prep Any agreed-upon repairs after inspection, touch-ups, or pre-listing work.	Varies		-
Capital Gains Tax (if applicable) Typically does not apply to a principal residence. Consult your accountant.	Consult accountant		-

TOTAL ESTIMATED COSTS

Add your estimates from above

YOUR ESTIMATED NET PROCEEDS

Sale price minus total costs

WANT US TO RUN THIS FOR YOU?
Book a complimentary selling strategy and we'll build a full net proceeds estimate based on your specific home, your mortgage, and what the Windsor market looks like right now. No obligation.

519.990.0711
luis@aw4u.ca

WHAT YOU ACTUALLY WALK AWAY WITH.

When sellers ask what they'll actually net from a sale, three deductions move the number more than anything else: the mortgage payout, the real estate commission, and legal fees plus any mortgage discharge penalty.

- Mortgage payout — what's left owing to your lender
- Real estate commission — plus HST on that commission
- Legal fees and mortgage discharge penalties

EXAMPLE: A \$700,000 SALE, \$300,000 MORTGAGE BALANCE

Sale Price	\$700,000
Less: Mortgage Payout	(\$300,000)
Less: Real Estate Commission (5%)	(\$35,000)
HST on Commission (13%)	(\$4,550)
Less: Legal Fees & Disbursements	(\$1,500)
Less: Mortgage Discharge Fee	(\$400)
Less: Mortgage Penalty (Example)	(\$6,500)
ESTIMATED NET PROCEEDS	\$352,050

A realistic estimate before a mortgage payout statement tightens the numbers.

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT THE MORTGAGE PENALTY

The mortgage penalty is the wildcard. With one year remaining on the mortgage, it's often calculated as three months' interest or the Interest Rate Differential (IRD) — most lenders charge whichever is greater.

For a mortgage balance around \$300,000, expect a range of:

- \$2,000 – \$3,000 (best case)
- \$5,000 – \$10,000+ (depending on lender and mortgage type)

"Let's assume you'll walk away with approximately \$350,000 after paying off the mortgage, commissions, legal fees, and discharge costs. Once we get a mortgage payout statement from your lender, we can tighten those numbers considerably."

Luis Mendez, REALTOR • AW4U The Real Estate Group

That's a realistic estimate for a \$700,000 sale with a \$300,000 mortgage balance. Every deal is different — we'll run your numbers specifically once we know your payout and your home's value.

08 · COMMON QUESTIONS

THE STUFF PEOPLE GOOGLE AT 11PM.



Real questions, plain answers.

THE QUESTIONS PEOPLE ALWAYS ASK.

DO I NEED A REAL ESTATE LAWYER?

Yes. In Ontario, a lawyer is required to complete a real estate transaction. They handle title transfer, mortgage discharge, adjustments, and disbursement of funds. Hire one independently.

DO I HAVE TO LEAVE DURING SHOWINGS?

Not legally, but you really should. Buyers explore more honestly when the owner isn't in the room. It also avoids questions that could create liability issues.

CAN I SELL BEFORE BUYING MY NEXT HOME?

Yes, and depending on the market, it can actually be the smarter move. Selling first gives you a firm budget, removes financing conditions, and puts you in a stronger negotiating position as a buyer. We can also negotiate a longer closing date to give you more time to find your next place. We'll map this out together before listing.

WHAT IF MY HOME DOESN'T SELL?

We review everything: pricing, marketing, showing feedback. The answer is almost always one of three things: price, condition, or reach. We adjust and keep going. You're not stuck.

WHAT IF THE BUYER'S FINANCING FALLS THROUGH?

If the deal was conditional and the buyer can't get approved, the deal dies and your home goes back on market. If the deal was firm and they can't close, you may have legal remedies. Your lawyer will advise.

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DISCLOSE?

In Ontario, you're required to disclose any known material defects that could affect the value or safety of the property. You'll complete a Seller Property Information Statement. When in doubt, disclose.

HOW IS COMMISSION PAID?

Commission is paid at closing from the sale proceeds. You don't write a cheque. It's split between the listing agent and the buyer's agent and comes out before your net proceeds are calculated.

DO I HAVE TO ACCEPT THE FIRST OFFER?

No. You can counter, reject, or let it expire. We'll look at it together and I'll give you my honest read on whether it's worth negotiating or holding out for something stronger.

HOW SOON CAN I LIST?

Once we agree on price and strategy, typical timeline to listing day is 7 to 14 days. Enough time for prep, photos, and staging. If you're in a rush, we can move faster.

BEST TIME OF YEAR TO SELL IN WINDSOR?

Spring (March to May) and fall (September to October) see the most buyer activity. That said, a well-priced, well-marketed home can sell in any season.



09 • MEET LUIS MENDEZ

LUIS MENDEZ.

REALTOR • AW4U THE REAL ESTATE GROUP

Luis brings over 20 years in service, sales, and marketing. Before real estate, he ran a successful fitness business where he learned that the work doesn't stop when someone signs up. You earn their trust every day after that. He brought that same mentality into real estate.

He got into this industry because the job fit the way he already operates: constant communication, data-backed decisions, and a genuinely personal approach to every client. He doesn't push people toward outcomes. He helps them make informed ones on their own terms.

What his clients say about him consistently: he stays in the game. He's worked with buyers for over a year before they were ready to move, and he made them feel looked after the entire time. That kind of relationship is what drives his referral business.

519.990.0711

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WHAT CLIENTS SAY

DON'T JUST TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT.

"Luis was amazing. He listened to what we wanted and helped advocate for us at every step."

BRAYDENNE BAIN

"He stuck with us for over a year and never pressured us once. He genuinely looked out for us regardless of how much of a nuisance we thought we were being."

VUK BUAC

"Even in a tough market he helped us get a house within our budget that ticked off all of our boxes and more. Highly skilled, honest, and fully transparent."

CALEB COULTER

"We were returning to Windsor with a fresh new baby and looking from a different city. Luis truly made it an easy experience. Nothing but great things to say."

SARAH NOSEWORTHY

"My husband and I struck absolute gold working with Luis."

PAULLENE WRIGHT

"He helped me find my home in a short period of time and did an amazing job. I would recommend him to anybody. He truly cares about his clients."

NICOLE GALLOWAY

\$1B+

IN REAL ESTATE SOLD

TOP 1%

TEAMS IN CANADA, CHAIRMAN'S CLUB

200+

HOMES SOLD IN 2024

LET'S TALK STRATEGY.

We'll start with a complimentary home evaluation: a full CMA, a clear pricing recommendation, and a tailored plan for how we'd sell your specific property.

No pressure, no commitment. Just a conversation about your home, your timeline, and what the system looks like for you.

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