



The Ultimate Home Seller's Guide

What you can expect, from start to finish!

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Your Local Real Estate Expert

Table of Contents

1. First Things First	1
2. Mission POSSIBLE	2
3. The “CMA”	3
4. Three More Important Letters – “MLS”	5
5. Marketing Plan	6
6. Our Agreement	7
7. Preparing Your Home For Photographs	9
8. “Hitting” The Market	10
9. When To Expect To Hear From Us	11
10. Handling Showing Requests	12
11. Preparing Your Home For Showings	13
12. Leave For Showings	14
13. How Long Should It Take To Sell Your Home?	15
14. How To Handle “Low-Ball” Offers	17
15. What If We Have Multiple Offers?	18
16. Negotiating	19
17. Keeping The Deal Together	20
18. Don’t Forget To Do These Things	22
19. The Walk-through	23
20. Closing Day!	24

1. First Things First

First and foremost, the team at VillaMía is really looking forward to helping you sell your home on the Costa Blanca!

We're sure you're excited to get it on the market, see buyers coming through and, of course, get an offer!

Selling a house is a fun and exciting process, but it can also be stressful at times.

This is why we're giving you this...

We do everything possible to make sure everything goes as smoothly as possible.

Many of the things that are stressful can be avoided (or handled better) as long as you know what to expect and do ahead of time.

So please, give this a quick read, and refer back to it throughout the process of selling your home.

While this guide won't get into every little detail about the process (we'll be taking care of a lot of things behind the scenes which you'll never need to worry about)...

...it does get into some things you should know about, which will save you time, effort, money, and heartache.

Again, we're looking forward to working with you, and thanks for choosing to work with VillaMía.

2. Mission POSSIBLE

As real estate agents in Jávea, Costa Blanca, sometimes we're representing a buyer, and at other times a seller.

Obviously, our "mission" is different for both of those types of clients.

Since we're representing you as a *seller*, our mission is pretty simple:

To help you sell your house for the highest amount the market will bear in as short a time as possible!

How long your home takes to sell depends on a lot of factors (many of which we'll address in this guide). We can assure you we will help you sell it as quickly as possible for as much as the market will bear.

Getting the best results only happens when clients make the best choices and decisions along the way, which this guide should help you do.

3. The “CMA”

Before we do anything else, we need to determine an accurate market value for your home.

We'll do a thorough comparative market analysis (CMA) which will help us determine a likely range that your home should sell for.

In the analysis, we will look at similar homes to yours which:

- ▶ Recently sold
- ▶ Are currently under contract
- ▶ Are currently active on the market

This will also help us determine an appropriate price to list your house for against the current competition and considering the current market activity.

We'll give you our objective perspective and advice as to how much you should list your house for.

However, the buyers in the market ultimately determine the market value of your home. It is only worth what a willing, ready, and able buyer is willing to pay. That should be in line with the value we see in the CMA, as long as there are no major changes within the market.

Many homeowners tend to overprice their house when they first hit the market because:

- ▶ They believe they should have “wiggle room” to be able to negotiate to the price they want to get.
- ▶ They simply hope that someone will pay more than the market value.
- ▶ They price it based upon what they “need to get” in order to sell their house.
- ▶ They add every dollar of improvements they have made to the house over the

years on to the value.

When an owner over-prices, for any reason, they usually lose interest by potential buyers by being out of line with the market. This causes their home to sit there and causes buyers to wonder, "What's wrong with the house?".

Our best advice is to listen to the data and price your home accordingly. That'll end up saving you a lot of time, money, and stress.

4. Three More Important Letters – “MLS”

One of the most basic, but also *most important*, marketing tools we'll use to expose your home to the entire market is the Multiple Listing System (MLS). (This is also what we use to help determine your market value.)

5. Marketing Plan

We're sure one of your biggest questions is "What are you going to do to market my house?"

Here's how we will be marketing your home:

- ▶ A 'For Sale' board where we put up when possible, professional photographs and 3D videos. We will list the property and send a link for approval
- ▶ We advertise on portals such as Kyero, Think Spain and Right Move
- ▶ Ads in Professional Services Guides and Female Focus
- ▶ High social profile on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Pinterest](#)
- ▶ Weekly mailings to hundreds of interested applicants registered for our property details
- ▶ The company website [VillaMía](#)
- ▶ The office window - a prime location on the Arenal in Jávea
- ▶ VillaMía is a member of the [Costa Blanca Business Association](#), and fellow CBBA professionals will also recommend us to any of their clients who are looking for properties on the Costa Blanca

If you have any specific requests, just let us know and we can certainly discuss working them into the marketing mix.

6. Our Agreement

Want to hear some good news?

The good news is you don't have to pay us until (and unless) your property sells.

You get our time, thoughts, advice, skills, and marketing with no risk to you, but all risk on us.

We get paid 5% of the selling price (+ 21% IVA). No sale, no commission. If the property is listed exclusively with us, then our commission is 3%. All the information will be in the sales mandate you sign to agree the sales price and commission.

Of course we want (and need) to get paid. That's why we take a lot of pride (and money!) in the time, thought, marketing, and advice we give to our clients. It's in our best interests to sell your Costa Blanca property after all.

This is why we like to look at the relationship with clients as "partners" - we're in this together.

We'll take on the responsibility of not getting paid until your property is sold...

All you have to do is be serious and committed to selling your property.

Before we can begin preparing the marketing for your home, or put it on the market, you'll need to sign the "sales mandate" to give us your approval to list your property.

We'll meet up to talk through the procedure and prepare the paperwork. If you have any questions or concerns at all, just ask. We'll be glad to clarify anything you want.

As we mentioned in the previous section, a lot of time and expertise will be spent on selling your house...

...So, please, before you sign this, make sure you're ready to commit to the process and our relationship.

7. Preparing Your Home For Photographs

Nowadays, buyers have pretty much seen your home before they even step through the front door!

The days are long gone when buyers needed to physically come to your house in order to see what was inside. They were lucky if there was a black and white photo of the exterior to view on a paper flyer.

But now, buyers will see almost every nook and cranny of your home from their phone or computer...

...which is why it's so important to have the best photographs possible! They'll literally decide whether or not prospective buyers will step foot in your home based upon the photos.

We take considerable care when it comes to photography. You can help us get the best photographs by:

- ▶ Decluttering every room.
- ▶ Making sure the house is clean.
- ▶ Making sure all beds are made and there is no laundry on the floor.
- ▶ Hiding unsightly things like laundry baskets, rubbish bins, vacuums, etc.
- ▶ Taking down as many "personal effects" as possible (pictures, things hanging on the fridge, etc.).
- ▶ Making sure all lightbulbs are working (for brightness).

Pro tip: If there's a particularly good time of day at your house to capture the best light, and you know when that is, let me know so I can schedule accordingly!

8. "Hitting" The Market

The big day is here! Time to "hit the market." This is the day your home goes "live" on the VillaMía website.

We're sure you're as excited as we are to start seeing buyers come through the house.

Typically, we'll see the most activity within the first two weeks of hitting the market. The most serious buyers in your price range will most likely show up within the first few days of your house going on the market. Hopefully we'll get an offer within the first few weeks.

If we don't get an offer or see much activity in the first few days or weeks, don't worry. We'll reassess the situation.

The things we look for during this time are:

- ▶ How many showings were there?
- ▶ Did any of the buyers make offers? If not, why? What was the feedback from the buyers?
- ▶ Were there few showings or no showings at all? Is it that the market is slow, or is it something to do with the house or price?

For now, let's hope we see a good number of showings and strong interest.

9. When To Expect To Hear From Us

One of the biggest complaints sellers have is that their real estate agent was never in touch with them once the house was listed. They “stuck a sign up and never heard from them again...”

That is not how we do business at VillaMía. We will keep you informed along the way.

You're certainly welcome to reach out whenever you have a question or concern. But we will also give you regular updates and let you know whenever:

- ▶ Someone wants to view your home
- ▶ We have feedback on a showing
- ▶ Someone makes an offer

If you want to get in touch with us at any time, please call or email. We'll always respond as quickly as possible, but please know that sometimes we are with clients, our families, or perhaps even sleeping once in a while (LOL!). If that's the case, just leave a message and we'll make sure to get back to you first thing!

10. Handling Showing Requests

As anxious as most sellers are to have buyers come to see their home, it can also feel too much at times.

Sometimes it's because the house is such a "hot listing" that it feels like you have a revolving door the way buyers and agents are streaming in and out.

Other times it's because it's a steady stream of buyers coming through for a lot of weeks straight, but no offers are coming in.

No matter what the scenario, showings can get tiresome because you typically have to:

1. Keep the house ready to be shown
2. Get out of the house at short notice
3. Stay out of the house for longer than you want to

No matter how you're feeling it pays to stay calm. Here's our best advice....

Be as pleasant and accommodating as possible. Since other homeowners get a bit grumpy and rude, when an agent or buyer comes across a seller who is pleasant to deal with, it can affect how they feel about your house over another.

Also if they do make an offer, your kindness will likely influence how they act during negotiations and throughout the deal.

Don't underestimate the power of simply being nice and accommodating.

11. Preparing Your Home For Showings

If you did a good job of preparing your home for the photography, then you should be in pretty good shape!

Of course, make sure you give your house a good cleaning once a week. But on a daily basis, you should make your home is ready to show by:

- ▶ Making sure all beds are made.
- ▶ Making sure all dishes are either in the dishwasher or washed and put away.
- ▶ Making sure there's no food, crumbs, or stains left anywhere.
- ▶ Tidying up the bathroom - don't leave toothpaste, toothbrushes, razors etc. on the sink.
- ▶ Sweeping or vacuuming the floors if they need it.
- ▶ Putting lights on so the buyers walk into a bright home.
- ▶ If you have pets, making sure they are out of the house or are secured if necessary.
- ▶ Making sure there are no odours from cooking, pets, etc.

Pro tip: Don't leave valuables around. They should be safe since agents accompany their buyers and are responsible...but why take a chance?

12. Leave For Showings

Some homeowners feel it would be a good thing for them to be around when agents and buyers come through the house in order to point out all of the features.

Others simply just don't want to have to leave.

But they should.

The biggest reason is that buyers need some "space" in order to make *your space* their own. Let them roam and chat without feeling like you're watching and listening to them.

Also, we, as agents know our buyers (as well as what we should and shouldn't say to them). We will know what to point out about your house and, as importantly, what not to point out. (Homeowners often focus on things that turn a buyer off.)

Another reason to give agents some space, which is more for your benefit, is that if you're not around, you can't say something that may hurt you. An agent or buyer could get you into a conversation that gives them a glimpse into your motivation for selling, for instance. Or you might answer something incorrectly that comes back to haunt you legally.

So, go run an errand. Take a walk. Visit a neighbour... Just get out of the house.

But if you absolutely can't...at least step outside, or be on the opposite side of the house from them at all times, and interact as little as possible (without being rude).

13. How Long Should It Take To Sell Your Home?

Earlier we talked about how you'll probably see the most activity in the first two weeks. Your house *may* sell in the first two weeks...but it could as easily take longer than that.

One of the things that many homeowners get aggravated about is the length of time it takes their house to sell. This is also one of the main things that cause those rash decisions we touched on earlier.

Interestingly, when an owner's house sells quickly — like in the first two weeks — they often get aggravated because they feel it happened too fast. They usually think that means they asked too low of a price or “gave their house away.” That's probably not the case at all. It's almost always just an indication that the house was priced appropriately. But this can lead sellers to do some silly things, like refuse great offers and wait for a better one, or even increase their price...only to find out weeks and months later they made a mistake.

On the other hand, other owners get frustrated when their house has been on the market for a few months with no offers at all. A few months may not be long at all, depending on the current market.

It's almost like the perfect amount of time owners expect a house to sell in is somewhere around a month to two months.

We can look at statistics to get a feel for how long houses in your area and price range have been taking to sell recently, but that doesn't mean it will play out that way on your property. Markets change. The number of buyers in the market goes up and down. The supply of properties for them to choose from goes up and down.

The most honest answer to the question of how long it should take to sell your Costa Blanca property is...it depends upon the current market conditions and how appropriately you are priced.

Our best advice is this...

If it happens quickly for you...rejoice!

If it takes a while longer than you hope or expect...have faith and patience!

14. How To Handle “Low-Ball” Offers

Ahhh, “low-ball” offers...

...the biggest fear (and expectation) of almost every homeowner.

Not every homeowner receives a “low-ball” offer when they sell (and hopefully you won’t either). Buyers don’t *necessarily* come in really low in order to negotiate and eventually “meet in the middle” on price.

But some buyers do.

And when that happens, a lot of sellers don’t respond well, if at all. They get so offended they may not even give the buyer a counter-offer.

It’s human nature to be offended — especially if the buyer has no justification for such a low offer and has no desire or intention of ever coming up to a realistic price.

But here’s the thing...

A buyer who came in with a low offer has some interest in the home. Rather than respond in anger or frustration, recognise that they have made an offer and work with it. Keep your emotions in check.

Remember, they want your house enough to have made an offer. We can always tell them to take a hike at some point if they show they aren’t serious enough to be realistic...

But if it happens, let’s give it enough time to see if we can get them up to a realistic number before we show them the door!

15. What If We Have Multiple Offers?

Multiple offers — every seller's dream scenario! (And every *real estate agent's* dream!)

But it can also be a bit of a nightmare...

If we *do* get multiple offers, *how* we deal with them will be important.

It's great to get multiple offers, but we need to make sure we choose the right one to move forward. The "best" offer is not always the "highest" offer.

There are many different ways to handle multiple offers, and we'll have to gauge and discuss which way is best, if and when we get multiple offers.

16. Negotiating

We're sure you've heard that negotiating is an art. And it's true!

The approach we take to negotiate the best deal for your house will depend upon:

- ▶ The buyer we're dealing with.
- ▶ The overall situation. (how many showings you're getting, how many buyers have shown interest, the current pace of sales, etc.)
- ▶ Your personal situation and desired approach.

There are certainly other factors we'll consider as well.

Many sellers think that to get the best price for their house they need to play "hardball." That might be appropriate...sometimes. Again, it depends on a lot of factors.

However, that approach can backfire fast and hard. Getting the best deal possible just might not look or sound like some people imagine from what they see in movies and on TV. In real life, you need to write the right script, at the right time, for the right audience.

Sometimes it takes a softer approach to get a buyer to where you really want them to be. That isn't to say we're going to actually be soft and not negotiate the best deal possible.

17. Keeping The Deal Together

You'd think that once you find a buyer and successfully put your house under contract, it should be a done deal...smooth sailing all the way to closing.

Ideally, that *will be* the way it goes for you! But it doesn't always happen like that.

The two things that most often cause issues are:

- ▶ The home inspection
- ▶ The appraisal

Home Inspection

The buyers may organise a home inspection. Their inspector will most likely write a report that makes it sound like there are lots of problems and that the problems are bigger than they really are.

The buyer might then ask for a whole lot of things to be fixed, replaced, or credited.

Just take a deep breath when we get there. Don't get worried or angry. We'll review and respond to their requests objectively. If there's something in the report that truly needs to be addressed (structural or operational defects), you'll probably have to address those. If they're minor repairs, you can probably say no to the request.

We say "probably" because it depends on a lot of factors. We'll have to make a judgment call once we get to that point.

The important thing is to keep the big picture in perspective — is it worth declining a request, or saying yes to a request, in order to keep the overall deal you have...or not? More often than not, it's better to negotiate a compromise than dig your heels in and say an absolute no. And more often than not, you don't have to agree to every request either.

The Appraisal

By definition, you and the buyer have determined the fair market value of your house, which is: the amount a ready, willing, and able buyer is willing to pay and that a seller is willing to accept.

However, the buyer's mortgage lender wants and needs to make sure that the amount they are lending is justified and protected by having an appraisal done.

While appraisals aren't always an issue, they can be. If an appraisal comes back low, we'll need to address it.

"Addressing it" may amount to:

- ▶ The buyer agreeing to make up the difference between the appraised amount.
- ▶ You agreeing to lower the sale price to the appraised amount.
- ▶ You lowering the sales price a bit, and the buyer coming up with more downpayment, to make the difference between the appraised amount and the sales price.
- ▶ Or, the appraisal may be contested.

The approach that works best (*if* this even occurs) will depend on many factors. We'll have to review and discuss if and when this happens.

Do not stress yourself out or worry in advance about these things! Can they happen? Yes. That's why we're even mentioning them. Will they happen? Maybe (and hopefully) not.

Just know that these are things we are familiar with, and we will help you deal with them appropriately if they do come up!

18. Don't Forget To Do These Things

Between the time your house goes under contract and closing day, it might seem like you have all the time in the world to get things done.

But time flies!

So, as soon as your house is under contract, you should do these things:

- ▶ Start lining up a mover. (They often book up far in advance. Plus, it takes time to find one you trust and to get the best rates possible.)
- ▶ If you'll be moving yourself and are hoping for friends and family to help, make sure to line them up! (Just a heads up...many a seller has found that their friends and family say they'll help, only to be unavailable when the time actually comes!)
- ▶ Call all of your utility companies and let them know you're selling the house and want a final bill. ((Let them know if buyers will be transferring the contract into their name too, which is often the case.)
- ▶ Begin packing as early on as possible. Waiting until the last days will add a lot of stress, and you might not get done in time. This is also a good opportunity to declutter!
- ▶ Contact your lenders for a final pay-off statement.

Doing a little bit of these every day will make your move less stressful!

19. The Walk-through

One of the last things to worry about before closing is the “walk-through.”

This is when the buyer and their agent may come to the house to make sure everything is in the condition it was when they agreed to purchase the house.

This is usually done the day of closing, but sometimes it is the day or evening before.

They will be looking to make sure that:

- ▶ No damage has occurred since the date they agreed to purchase it.
- ▶ All of the fixtures, appliances, mechanical items, and utilities are in working order.
- ▶ Everything you agreed to leave behind contractually is being left behind.
- ▶ The house is clean. (Make sure to leave it as clean as possible!!!)
- ▶ You are entirely moved out. (You’d be surprised at how many times buyers show up and a seller isn’t even *close* to being moved out!)

Pro Tip: When you start packing up and moving things out, you will notice some minor damage and dirtiness you probably never even noticed before, which is why it’s good to be moved out a little ahead of time and budget some time and elbow grease toward patching small holes, cleaning, touching up paint, etc.

20. Closing Day!

Congratulations! You're closing on the sale of your home!

There will be lots of documents to review and sign, including a trip to the notary. All property purchases in Spain are completed in the presence of a notary, where the title deeds (escritura) are signed over from the seller to the purchaser.

Don't stress about this because we will be with you and your lawyer should be there too.

Here are a few things you should do before your appointment with the notary:

- ▶ Bring all extra keys, garage door openers, alarm codes, etc. with you to the notary to give to the buyer.
- ▶ Most likely, all of your closing costs will be paid out of the equity in your home. But if not, make sure you have sufficient cash or your bank card with you to pay for these.
- ▶ Bring the proper identification. Usually a photo I.D. (like your passport), NIE or TIE, and/or birth certificate.
- ▶ A rested wrist! (You'll be signing a lot of documents!)

After this, many documents will still need to be processed and recorded. Once it's all complete, the final documents can be mailed to you at your new address.

Of course, we will always be available if you have any questions or concerns, even after the closing. Never hesitate to reach out to us!

And we hope we stay in touch on a personal level too! Thanks so much for choosing VillaMía as your Costa Blanca real estate agent. We look forward to helping you with all of your real estate needs in the future...as well as any friends or family you refer to us!

Compliments of:



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