



THE STEEL CITY AGENT
AMANDA TIHEY | REALTOR®



A COMPLETELY UNOFFICIAL FIELD GUIDE

Real Estate: A Comedy in Several Acts

From the moment you decide to sell to the moment you hand over the keys, real estate is a full emotional journey — complete with plot twists, unexpected villains, and at least one inspection item that will make you question your entire life. This guide covers all of it.

Disclaimer: This guide is intended to be funny. Real estate transactions, however, are very real. Please also read the serious ones.



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*Because if you can't laugh about it,
you're probably in the inspection period.*

Before the Sign Goes in the Yard

The decisions, the delusions, and the deep clean that reveals more about your home than you were ready to confront.



Act I: The Decision to Sell

Also known as: 'How hard could it be?'

The Epiphany

You watch three episodes of a home renovation show and decide your house is worth \$80,000 more than it was last Tuesday. You are not wrong in spirit. You are wrong in dollars.

The Zestimate Phase

You check Zillow seventeen times in one day hoping the number will go up. It goes down by \$3,000 on a Wednesday for no discernible reason. You take it personally. This is normal.

The Declutter Promise

You tell yourself you'll go through every closet before listing. You move everything from the closets into the garage. The garage is now a museum of every decision you've made since 2011.

The Home Improvement Spiral

You start with touching up the paint in the hallway. Six weeks later you've retiled two bathrooms, replaced the gutters, and are seriously researching whether a kitchen island would 'add value.' It won't. Stop.



Act II: Interviewing Agents

A dating show, but for your house.

The Overpricing Agent

One agent tells you your home is worth \$425,000. Another says \$385,000. The third says \$500,000 because they really want the listing. You hire the third one. This is also called 'being human.'

The Resume Dump

An agent shows up with a 47-slide presentation, a branded folder, a personalized calendar, and a coffee mug with your address on it. You feel vaguely overwhelmed and mildly impressed. They still haven't answered how they plan to market the home.

The Friend Situation

Your cousin's neighbor's brother just got his license six months ago and 'would really appreciate the business.' This is a lovely impulse. It will also cost you approximately \$15,000. Refer him to someone else's house.

The Gut Check

You end up hiring the agent who was direct, knew the neighborhood, and didn't try to convince you your split-level was a 'hidden gem waiting to be discovered.' Honesty wins. Eventually.



Act III: Preparing the Home

Or: cleaning things you've never noticed in 12 years.

The Deep Clean Revelation

Professional cleaners arrive and find things behind the refrigerator that predate your marriage. Everyone is professional about it. No one is comfortable.

The Staging Conversation

Your agent gently suggests removing 'some' of your décor. They mean all of it. Your gallery wall of 34 family photos does not say 'move-in ready.' It says 'this family does not leave.'

The Furniture Edit

You remove half the furniture like they said. The rooms look bigger. You are furious that no one told you this eleven years ago.

The Pet Situation

You are asked to remove evidence of pets for showings. You have two dogs, a cat, and a rabbit. You spend \$400 on candles. Buyers still know. They always know.

Under Contract & Holding On

Offers, inspections, and the quiet emotional damage of reading a 68-page report about your home.



Act IV: The Listing Goes Live

Day 1 energy. Day 14 energy is different.

The First Hour

You refresh Zillow every four minutes. Views are climbing. You text your agent: 'How are we looking?' It has been 47 minutes. She is used to this.

The Showing Notification

You get your first showing request and immediately clean the house to a level it has never achieved in your ownership. You leave. You drive around the block twice. You get a smoothie you don't want.

The Feedback Loop

Feedback from Showing #1: 'Loved the kitchen.'
Feedback from Showing #2: 'Didn't like the kitchen.'
You are no longer sure you have a kitchen.

The Open House

Forty-two people walk through your home on Sunday. One is a serious buyer. Twelve are neighbors who were curious. The rest wanted to see how you decorated. Several have opinions about your paint colors. Zero asked to remain anonymous.



Act V: The Offer Arrives

The document is 14 pages. You will read none of it correctly the first time.

The First Offer

It is \$22,000 under list price, includes a 90-day closing, asks you to leave the refrigerator AND the garage shelving, and is contingent on the sale of their home, their dog's approval, and Mercury leaving retrograde. Your agent calls it 'a starting point.'

The Counter-Offer Dance

You counter. They counter. You counter. They counter. You and a family you've never met are now in a deeply committed relationship conducted entirely through PDFs and passive aggression expressed in dollar increments.

The Multiple Offer Situation

Three offers arrive the same day. You feel powerful. Your agent reminds you that this is about the best net proceeds, not revenge against the one who asked for closing cost help. She is right. You don't care.

Going Under Contract

You accept an offer. You feel a mix of triumph, relief, and the sudden terrifying realization that you now have to actually leave this house. You go look at your closets again. This was a mistake.



Act VI: The Inspection

A professional stranger judges your home. Try not to be there.

The Inspector

He has a flashlight, a ladder, and the energy of a man who has never once in his life been surprised by anything. He is in your crawl space. He seems fine. You are not fine.

The Report

It is 68 pages long. It has 214 items. Items 1 through 209 are standard observations. Items 210 through 214 will be negotiated as if your house is held together with popsicle sticks and a prayer.

The Buyer's Repair Request

They want \$14,000 in credits for a 15-year-old water heater, a garage door spring that 'could' break, and a bathroom vent that 'might' not fully exhaust. You offer \$1,200 and a strongly worded silence.

The Resolution

You split the difference somewhere no one is happy with. This is the only possible outcome of an inspection negotiation. There are no winners. There is only closing.



The Final Stretch

Appraisals, walkthroughs, closing tables, and the particular silence of a car in a parking lot after the biggest day of your financial life.



Act VII: The Appraisal

A stranger decides what your home is worth. You will disagree.

The Wait

The appraiser visited for 35 minutes. You spent four hours in the driveway cleaning the exterior and rearranging the porch furniture. He looked at the furnace and left. You will not know his conclusions for 10 business days.

The Number

It came in \$8,000 below contract price. The appraiser used a comp from the next town over from 2022. Your agent prepares a Reconsideration of Value. The word 'reconsideration' has never felt so personally meaningful.

The Buyer's Reaction

The buyer acts as if a low appraisal is something that happened specifically to them as a person. Negotiations resume. Everyone is tired. The closing date is discussed as a 'goal' now.

The Resolution (Again)

The parties agree to split the gap. Documents are amended. The loan officer emails everyone at 6pm Friday. The closing date shifts by four days. The moving truck company charges a rescheduling fee. This is fine.



Act VIII: The Final Walkthrough

One last look to confirm nothing has spontaneously combusted.

The Purpose

The final walkthrough exists to confirm the home is in the same condition as when the offer was made. In practice, it exists to give the buyer one final opportunity to find something to worry about.

The Curtain Rods

You agreed to leave the curtain rods. You forgot about the curtain rods. The curtain rods are in your new house. There is now an emergency. This is a real thing that happens.

The Light Bulb

The buyer notices that the light in the guest bedroom closet is out. It was out when they made the offer. It was out during the inspection. It was out in the listing photos. It is now an issue.

The Emotional Buyer

The buyer stands in the empty living room and says 'it feels different.' It is empty. You had furniture in it. This is why it feels different. You do not say this out loud. You are very close to the finish line.



Act IX: Closing Day

Sign here. And here. And here. Initial here. And here. And here.

The Table

There are approximately 400 pages to sign. You will not read most of them. Your hand will cramp. The title agent will say 'almost done' four times before you are actually almost done. This is their version of humor.

The Wire Transfer

Somewhere in the 30 days leading up to this moment, someone tried to email you fake wiring instructions. Your agent warned you about this fourteen times. You used the verified instructions. The money arrived. You are proud of yourself.

The Keys

They hand you the keys. Or a key fob. Or a garage door opener in a ziploc bag. The moment is sacred regardless of the delivery mechanism. You have done it. You own a home. Or you've just sold one. Either way: it's done.

The Aftermath

You sit in your car in the parking lot of the title company and feel absolutely nothing for about four minutes. Then you feel everything. This is normal. Call your agent. She's probably already texted you a congratulations gif.

OKAY, SERIOUSLY THOUGH.

Real Estate Is Funny. Your Agent Shouldn't Be.

Every joke in this guide is rooted in something real — something that happens in transactions every single week. The curtain rod thing? Happened. The buyer who said the rooms felt 'different' when empty? Also happened. The 68-page inspection report? Every time.

The best thing you can do is work with an agent who has seen all of it, laughed at most of it, and knows exactly how to handle every single act of this comedy — so your closing day is the triumphant finale, not an outtake reel.

"I've seen buyers cry over curtain rods, sellers renegotiate over a \$40 light bulb, and appraisers cite a comp from a different zip code with a straight face. I will handle all of it. Calmly. Competently. And occasionally with a laugh, because sometimes that's the only appropriate response."

— Amanda Tihey, The Steel City Agent

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What Amanda Actually Does (Non-Sarcastically):

- ✓ Keeps her phone on — including when Mercury is in retrograde
- ✓ Tells you the truth about price, even if it's not what you hoped
- ✓ Reads the 68-page inspection report before you panic about it
- ✓ Prepares a Reconsideration of Value before you even ask
- ✓ Handles the curtain rod situation so you don't have to
- ✓ Gets you to closing — on time, with your earnest money intact



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AMANDA TIHEY | KELLER WILLIAMS EXCLUSIVE | SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Moving you from where you are now... to where you want to be!™

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