



# Your Real Estate and Lifestyle PLANNING GUIDE

**BERKSHIRE  
HATHAWAY**  
HOMESERVICES

CALIFORNIA  
PROPERTIES

Real Estate's **FOREVER** Brand™



**GERARD**  
LIFESTYLE REAL ESTATE



“A home is one of the most important assets that most people will ever buy. Homes are also where memories are made and you want to work with someone you can trust.”

- Warren Buffett

Chairman and CEO, Berkshire Hathaway, Inc.

# Introduction

Dear Valued Client:

On behalf of the Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices franchise network, I'd like to thank you for your time and trust you've placed in me.

Just as you have a financial planner to help you invest your money, you have a knowledgeable caring network agent to help you craft a real estate asset plan that works for you and your family. That's why we call our network professionals Forever Agents<sup>SM</sup>. They understand the delicate balance between your dreams and your realities and want to make your real estate goals of buying, selling, and investing come true. In other words, I want to be your agent For Life.

We believe that real estate can be a cornerstone of building wealth and happiness and deserves the careful attention and planning of any other life decision, from graduation, to marriage, to child-rearing, and to and through retirement. The choices you make are essentially investments in your family's and your future.

Plans provide clarity and direction. Your real estate plan should create a comfortable, affordable balance between the real estate you own today plus what you desire to own in the future. My desire is that this real estate and lifetime planning guide will help you navigate changes you want to make for your real estate holdings, be better prepared for the strategic life decisions you make in the future, and to maximize the value you receive through buying and selling real estate.

As a network member of the Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices network, I am guided by the enduring values of Trust, Integrity, Stability and Longevity. We hope you see this planning guide as a valuable tool that delivers on our brand's promise to help you realize the lasting value of home and homeownership.



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A home isn't just where  
you are. It reflects who  
you are.

# The Need for Real Estate Planning

No two people have the same lifestyle needs or financial situation. That's why the Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices network of Forever Agents<sup>SM</sup> help you to determine which lifestyle factors are most important to you when making your future real estate decisions. Think of this guide as the first step on your journey to enhance your lifestyle.

# Making Real Estate Lifestyle Decisions\*

Your Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Real Estate and Lifestyle Planning Guide can help you establish priorities, plan for increasing the worth of your present property, formulate a real estate action plan, and serve as your tool for financial planning.



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1981-1996

## MILLENNIALS

Lifestyle choices for singles and partners are often driven by work and career considerations.



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1965-1980

## GEN XERS

Oftentimes, lifestyle choices are driven by the time spent commuting to work along with the quality of school districts, shopping, cultural attractions and community amenities.

\*The Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Planning Guide neither suggests that all real estate consumers make decisions based upon their age nor does Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices advise they should.

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1956-1964 YEARS

## EARLY-AGE BABY BOOMERS

Lifestyle choices often center on children at home and may also include caretaking for aging parents—making quality schools, access to healthcare and recreational opportunities a priority.



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1946-1955

## LATER-AGE BABY BOOMERS

Oftentimes, lifestyle choices include the need or desire for a smaller home, access to quality healthcare, and leisure activities for a rewarding retirement.



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1928-1945 YEARS

## THE SILENT GENERATION

Lifestyle choices often include a desire to live independently and close to the support of friends and family, and medical services.



# Getting Started on Lifestyle Planning



Your home is a  
repository for the  
important things  
in your life.

## STEP 1

Determine Your Lifestyle  
Needs and Goals

## STEP 2

Review Your Lifestyle Options

## STEP 3

Formulate Your Goals

## STEP 4

Develop a Lifestyle Plan



A photograph of a man and a young girl with curly hair laughing together on a porch. The man is wearing a grey and blue long-sleeved shirt and blue jeans. The girl is wearing a blue and white striped shirt and tan pants. They are sitting on a white ledge. In the background, there is a large window with white frames. The overall mood is joyful and intimate.

STEP 1

# Determine Your Lifestyle Needs and Goals

This exercise is intended to help you examine the attitudes held by both you and your spouse/partner regarding real estate so you can arrive at more mutually-compatible decisions.

## REAL ESTATE PREFERENCES

Using the scale below, write down the number that best describes yourself in the first column. The second column is for your spouse or partner.

### SCALE

- ☐ 3 Agree
- ☐ 2 Undecided
- ☐ 1 Disagree

### SCORE

**42-66**

You are strongly real estate oriented.

**20-41**

You are moderately real estate oriented.

**< 19**

You are doubtful about the role real estate plays in your life.

## EXERCISE

I want to live where it's easy to walk to amenities.

I want to live closer to water (i.e. oceans, lakes, rivers).

I want to live close to neighbors.

I want to live further away from neighbors.

I want to live in a more diverse community.

I believe the neighborhood or community we select is as or more important than the home we select.

I believe the lifestyle benefits of where we move is more important than how much our property may or may not appreciate or depreciate.

YOU

PARTNER

## EXERCISE

YOU

PARTNER

I believe the abundance of amenities surrounding our property is more important than the square footage.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Dog parks or pet friendly areas are an important part of my decision making process.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Being near families with children is important to me so my children have playmates.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Job opportunities are more important to me than climate considerations.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Being near restaurants and shopping destinations is important to me.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Total**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

List the five most important factors when considering your next move.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

To help you begin to assess the real estate that best matches your lifestyle, we encourage you to consider the following lifestyle factors.

## LIFESTYLE PREFERENCES

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WHAT I LIKE BEST ABOUT MY PRESENT HOME

YOU

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SPOUSE/PARTNER

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WHAT I LIKE LEAST ABOUT MY PRESENT HOME

YOU

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SPOUSE/PARTNER

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WHAT I'D LIKE IN MY NEXT HOME

YOU

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SPOUSE/PARTNER

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## LIFESTYLE CONSIDERATIONS

Check the boxes  
or fill in the blanks  
to complete this  
section.

## DESIRED QUALITIES

### Type of home

(Single family, townhome, condominium, high rise, ranch, farm, resort home, oceanfront, etc.)

### Architectural style of home

(Modern, retro, colonial, Cape Cod, etc.)

#### Living Space

- ☐ Under 1,500 sq. ft.
- ☐ 1,500 to 3,500 sq. ft.
- ☐ 3,500 to 6,000 sq. ft.
- ☐ Over 6,000 sq. ft.

#### Lot Size

☐ Open Floor Plan

☐ Traditional

☐ Master Suite

☐ Walk-in Closets

\_\_\_\_\_ # Bedrooms

\_\_\_\_\_ # Bathrooms

☐ Spa Bathroom

#### Kitchen

- ☐ Eat-in
- ☐ Standard
- ☐ With Island
- ☐ Commercial-grade
- ☐ Wine Cooler
- ☐ Beverage Center
- ☐ Coffee Station

☐ Separate Family Room

☐ Combined Family/  
Kitchen Area

☐ Living Room

☐ Great Room

☐ Den or Home Office

☐ Children's Playroom

☐ Mother-in-Law Suite

☐ Game/Media Room

☐ Exercise Space

#### Connected Home Features

- ☐ Security System
- ☐ Smart Locks
- ☐ Smart Garage Doors
- ☐ Smart Thermostat
- ☐ Smart Lights
- ☐ Security Cameras
- ☐ Smart Appliances  
(refrigerator, dishwasher, etc.)

☐ Solar/Green Features

☐ Fireplace

☐ Wood Stove

☐ Indoor Water Feature

\_\_\_\_\_ Garage Stalls

☐ Boat Storage

☐ Outbuilding Storage  
(for ATVs, kayaks, etc.)

#### Landscaping

- ☐ Minimal Upkeep
- ☐ Standard
- ☐ High-end Landscaping
- ☐ Hardscaping

☐ Outdoor Kitchen

☐ Pool

☐ Hot Tub

☐ Changing Cabana

☐ Patio

☐ Decks

## LIFESTYLE CONSIDERATIONS (CONTINUED)

### NEIGHBORHOOD

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Great Schools               | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic Restaurants     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quality Healthcare          | <input type="checkbox"/> University Town        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jogging/Cycling Paths       | <input type="checkbox"/> Performing Arts Center |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parks, Plazas, Green Space  | <input type="checkbox"/> House of Worship       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Sports Fields        | <input type="checkbox"/> Tranquil and Serene    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walk to Shops               | <input type="checkbox"/> Always Buzzing         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sailing                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Family Friendly        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Transportation  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Golf                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Proximity to Airports  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic District           | <input type="checkbox"/> Proximity to Work      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nightlife and Entertainment | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Events       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Music Venues                | <input type="checkbox"/> Block Parties          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fine Dining                 |   |

Other Important Community Amenities:

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A photograph of a woman with long, wavy white hair, smiling warmly at the camera. She is sitting on a light blue couch, wearing a grey and white patterned zip-up cardigan over a light-colored top. She is holding a white mug in her left hand and resting her right hand on her head. The background is a bright, out-of-focus window. The text "STEP 2" is overlaid in a dark grey box in the top right corner.

STEP 2

# Review Your Lifestyle Options

# To help ensure you are fully aware of your lifestyle options and their potential benefits, below are some things to consider when renting versus buying.

The Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices approach to real estate represents a departure from many in the industry who solely emphasize homeownership. We take the time to explain the benefits of both homeownership and renting as we believe that the choice to rent or buy is your decision to make as an empowered consumer. With that in mind, below are factors we believe will aid in determining which choice is right for you.

## RENTING VERSUS BUYING

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### WHEN RENTING MIGHT BE BEST

We understand that life can be composed of complex circumstances for consumers, which is why we encourage you to review the following factors regarding renting versus homeownership. If you answer yes to one or more of these questions, it may be advisable that you rent.

#### DOWN PAYMENT

Would a down payment for a home represent a financial strain or is simply not possible at this time?

#### OWNERSHIP LENGTH

Do you plan on living in a home for less than three years?

#### PROPERTY VALUE

Based upon price trending, overall demand for the area and price range you are considering, is your property more likely to go down in value for the foreseeable future than to increase in value?

Although some might say owning a home represents the American Dream, ill-advised timing and circumstances can also lead to the "American Nightmare." Specifically, when prices drop significantly over a short period of time and it is for the same length of time that the home is owned. When this happens, it triggers a negative economic event, as the owners of a property do not have enough time to benefit from historically-impressive appreciation.

Moreover, if you own a home for only a short period of time you will be denied the opportunity to spread the upfront inspection and closing costs over time.

## RENTING VERSUS BUYING

(CONTINUED)

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### BENEFITS OF RENTING

- + By renting, you will be free of home repair costs and homeowners insurance which is more costly than renters insurance
- + If the stock market continues to outpace real estate as it has over the last decade\*, then renting while investing in the stock market might also be beneficial

\*Based on 2018

Accordingly, there are times when you should leave the so-called American Dream and instead, over a short period of time, revel in all the benefits of renting. It would be a pleasure to help you rent, whether you are a homeowner and want to rent or rent before you own.

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### BENEFITS OF HOME OWNERSHIP

- + The opportunity to build equity (wealth)  
According to research from the Survey of Consumer Finances, homeowners developed 36 times the average net worth than renters
- + Social stability  
According to the research from the National Association of REALTORS® and the American Social Workers Journal, homeowners are more likely to participate within the community
- + Homeownership, according to studies, provides a greater sense of stability and higher self-image
- + Homeowners are more enthusiastic about making their home child safe and ecologically friendly
- + Homeowners are more likely to maintain the physical integrity of their home than renters
- + Homeowners may benefit from lower crime rates\*  
\*Source: 2012 Social Benefits of Homeownership and Stable Housing, National Association of REALTORS® Research Division
- + Homeowners enjoy preferential tax treatment

# Lifestyle Planning Regarding “Move Up Markets”

As Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices’ network of Forever Agents<sup>SM</sup>, we take issue with the words “moving up.” We all have heard the expression that beauty is in the eyes of the beholder and moving up to a more expensive or expansive home to many does not necessarily constitute a move up. For the same reason, many real estate professionals prefer to refer to downsizing as rightsizing—for some, a smaller home can make for a better lifestyle. Therefore, our advice on moving up has more to do with timing than it has to do with the size of a home or offered lifestyle.

A so-called move up market in real estate terms can mean a period when there are special negotiating opportunities due to changing marketplace circumstances. Specifically, we suggest that if you are looking to buy a more expensive home while selling a less expensive home, that there are times when one can sell a home for a loss and buy a much more expensive home at an even greater reduction from its former value. A move up market can be where timing, timing and timing may trump location, location and location.

Ask your Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Forever Agent<sup>SM</sup> to keep you informed for when more expensive homes, in general, are dropping at a higher percentage than lower priced homes. However, you and you alone are responsible for deciding if and when to “move up.” As you put together your lifestyle plan and before you consider moving up, consider the following.

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## CONSIDERATIONS

- + What your present home should sell for and how much equity you have.
- + How much of your decision is based upon economic considerations versus lifestyle?
- + How long are homes taking to sell in your price range, as well as in the higher priced range you are considering?
- + What are the tax considerations of buying and selling during the same timeframe? Ask your tax specialist or financial advisor.
- + Should you sell your home before you move up, or is there an opportunity to buy a more expensive home that has dropped dramatically in price that requires you to act quickly? Only you can decide.
- + If you should move up to a larger, more expensive home or try to time the market for when you believe there is a greater opportunity to move up during a more favorable negotiating period for so-called move up buyers.
- + Determine what you would like in a new home and what you dislike, if anything, about your present home/lifestyle.
- + Involve your real estate agent and financial advisor in your planning.

# Each year millions of American homeowners are faced with the decision to either continue living in their present home or downsize—or as some would say, “rightsize.”

As Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices’ network of Forever Agents<sup>SM</sup>, we are quick to point out that each person, couple or family, represents a different set of circumstances and lifestyle objectives. That said, there are common, prevalent decisions facing all who want to make the best choices regarding moving from a larger home to a smaller home.

## DOWNSIZING BY DESIGN

### DETERMINE YOUR NEEDS

To help you determine the right time, place and type of real estate to purchase, we encourage you to consider which of the following lifestyle factors play an important role in your decision to downsize:

- + Lower maintenance costs
- + Cash in home equity
- + Increase walkability
- + Improve ecological footprint
- + Increase transportation efficiency
- + Reduce cleaning time and effort
- + Retire or prepare for retirement
- + Live closer to children or grandchildren
- + Reduce taxes
- + Declutter
- + Health care and/or mobility
- + Join an active community
- + Experience change
- + Move closer to services
- + Move closer to recreational activities
- + Improve resources for pets
- + Drive less
- + For estate reasons
- + Move closer to work
- + Experience greater diversity

## Downsizing By Design (CONTINUED)

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### BENEFITS

As you know, there are many factors to consider when downsizing and the rankings of each may differ from each person or party.

Throughout the Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices network, many individuals, couples and even some families feel a sense of lifestyle emancipation after downsizing. For the first time in years, they are free from long commutes, burdensome levels of maintenance, high taxes and excessive dependence on their automobiles. Moreover, many who downsize also find that their lifestyle actually grows substantially as they become more involved in the community due to convenience and their aforementioned freedom from housing maintenance.

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### LIFESTYLE ADVICE WHEN CONTEMPLATING DOWNSIZING

- + Do not rent or buy your next home until your present home is under contract.
- + Downsizing by design should provide you with more time to prepare your home through staging for sale compared to when you feel pressure to sell.
- + If there are possessions in your home that are important to grown children, consider asking them to remove and store elsewhere.
- + Consider reducing the space you currently live in as a way of preparing for a smaller home.
- + If you're thinking about moving to a condo with a homeowners association, be sure to carefully read the association documents regarding fees and potential increases.

# Moving with Children

While moving can be stressful for adults, the corresponding anxiety it can cause children is often even more pervasive and lingering. In many cases, the stress children experience from leaving behind friends and favorite places far eclipses the anxiety over leaving their physical home for another. Here are some tips to help ease the transition for your children. For more information and tips on moving with children, ask your Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices network Forever Agent<sup>SM</sup>.

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## HELP EASE THE TRANSITION FOR YOUR CHILDREN

### PREPARING YOURSELF AND YOUR CHILDREN

By properly preparing for your move, you can reduce the stress for your children (and thus yourself) by developing a plan of:

- + When to tell your children
- + How to tell them
- + How to select the right town, city or neighborhood based upon your needs and interests
- + When to pack
- + When to declutter
- + When to move out
- + When to move in

### DECIDING WHETHER RENTING OR OWNING IS BEST FOR YOUR CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT

While numerous studies assert owning a home provides a developmental advantage for children, other studies claim the overall stability of the family and neighborhood weigh more heavily.

### INVOLVE YOUR CHILDREN IN THE RELOCATING PROCESS

During the town/home selection process consider:

- + Giving assignments to your children such as, researching towns, schools, recreational activities and homes (establish price range), but only if you are confident your children will be able to accept your final decision on where you will move.
- + Assigning each child the responsibility of preparing their individual room for the move.
- + Asking your children to research the services and recreational activities that are important to them.
- + Planning with your children how to best manage saying goodbye to friends and establishing an ongoing communication plan with them.
- + Organizing some of their favorite activities before you leave and researching how these favorite activities can be continued in the next town or city.

# Moving with Pets

Selling a home is cited as one of life's most stressful events. Often overlooked is the stress a move can cause pets. Not only can pets endure significant stress, but many homesellers become stressed regarding how to maximize the sale of their home while minimizing the stress on their beloved pets.

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## HELP EASE THE TRANSITION FOR YOUR PET

- + Make sure you're aware of pet guidelines for places like condominiums or townhouse communities before deciding where to move (i.e. certain dog breeds not allowed).
  - + Learn the local leash and cleanup laws before deciding on a new neighborhood.
  - + If possible, bring your dog to the new area before you move to help them prepare for the relocation.
  - + Identify a new veterinarian before moving.
  - + Ensure all pet identification tags are current with your cell phone number.
  - + Consider a microchip to locate your dog or cat if they get lost.
  - + On moving day provide all necessities for your pet inside their crate and place a "do not let out" sign on it. Both cats and dogs can be overwhelmed and depressed transitioning to a new environment, as well as encountering movers and other strangers coming and going all day.
  - + Pet proof your new home.
  - + Consider only opening one section of your new home at a time to your pets so they do not feel overwhelmed in their new environment.
  - + Try to keep the same routines, such as what time you walk your dog or feed your cat.
- 

## PET/AGENT RELATIONSHIP

Regardless of your pet or breed, you should not hire a real estate agent unless you determine that the prospective agent is comfortable around your pets. Although it is widely known within real estate circles that many buyers have discomfort—even an aversion to being around pets—it is also true that an agent who dislikes pets can limit their desire to show your home. A real estate professional who is uncomfortable around your pets, as evidenced by either their words or body language, should not be the person you rely upon to maximize showings and results.

# Multigenerational & Special Needs

Do you have lifestyle planning needs that include extended family or those with special needs? According to the National Association of REALTORS®, there is an ever-increasing rise in home purchasing that relates to the needs of multigenerational families and those with special needs.

Lifestyles that find either children staying at home well into their twenties or thirties, or middle-aged adults taking care of their elderly parents, are causing many home buyers to take a greater range of lifestyle-related factors into consideration when buying their next home. Here are some tips for those with multigenerational housing and special needs.

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## TIPS

- + Where possible and practical, make sure all parties moving into the new home are involved in the planning process in order to assess their expressed individual needs and preferences.
- + Make sure to carefully review privacy, space and physical limitations as part of the final decision. Also consider whether a private and separate entrance is called for.
- + For elderly and/or disabled parents, make sure you rigorously evaluate the quality and convenience of medical services.
- + Consult with an attorney to determine all of the possible ownership and estate considerations when you are considering a multigenerational purchase.
- + As a trial run, consider renting a similar size home with a comparable floor plan for a short period of time to determine if the space and layout of homes you're considering buying is feasible.
- + Make sure there is an agreement on the division of labor and maintenance regarding the property.
- + Seek advice from your Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices network of Forever Agents<sup>SM</sup> for examples of how other special needs and multigenerational families have managed this category of lifestyle planning.
- + When negotiating your home or rental, ask your Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Forever Agent<sup>SM</sup> if it is to your advantage not to disclose how many people will be living in your new home.
- + Make sure the entire family will be comfortable in the neighborhood or community, and that everyone's transportation needs are considered.
- + Ask your agent how homes built or remodeled to accommodate extended families and those with disabilities are price trending, in general, so you can consider potential resale consequences with your decision.
- + Before you purchase, check with your municipality to make sure any projected renovations or remodeling will be approvable.
- + Finally, before the home search process begins, if looking to purchase a home for multigenerational or caregiving needs, you should meet with your Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Forever Agent<sup>SM</sup> to determine your overarching as well as custom requirements

# Staging/Merchandising Your Home

Before you market your home, make sure it is staged and/or merchandised. This phase is involved within a three-step process you should be familiar with when you look to sell your home—merchandising, marketing and selling.

## 1. MERCHANDISING

First, consider merchandising or staging your home before marketing your property. Staging represents all that you can do cosmetically to enhance the appeal of your home.

We decorate our homes based upon how we like our property to look when we live there. When selling one's home we recommend staging your home based upon what might best appeal to the preponderance of buyers.

Merchandising is different than staging in that merchandising relates to the minor or major physical changes to the property that might yield a more appealing price when the home sells. For example, a new kitchen represents a merchandising decision regarding resale, while rearranging furniture or giving a room a fresh coat of paint would constitute as staging.

## 2. MARKETING YOUR HOME

It is recommended that home sellers seek out a highly specific marketing program that can be customized in such a way that maximizes demand and achieves the highest price possible for your home.

## 3. SELLING YOUR HOME

By marketing your property offline and online—both within the real estate community and to those searching online for properties in your price range and community— we increase the likelihood of a faster sale.

When looking to sell your home, discuss with your Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices network Forever Agent<sup>SM</sup>:

What can be done to effectively stage your home for sale that costs little or no money.

What small improvements would make sense to increase your return on investment through a home sale.

Are there significant changes that would require more expense but might lead to a much better selling result. What is the best method of increasing the range, reach and influence of the marketing of your home in order to best leverage the laws of supply and demand regarding your home for sale?

A woman with dark, curly hair is shown from the chest up, leaning over a desk. She is wearing a coral-colored top and is focused on writing in a notebook with a white marker. The background is softly blurred, showing a wooden desk and some office supplies. A dark purple banner is at the top right, and a larger dark purple banner is at the bottom containing the title.

STEP 3

# Review Your Lifestyle Options

# Lifestyle Planning Goals

The Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices approach represents a departure from many in the industry who emphasize only homeownership because we also take the time to explain the benefits of renting. Whether you rent or buy should be your decision—and made as an empowered consumer.

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## CONSIDERATIONS

- + Your timeframe of when you would like to move by.
- + How much estimated equity you have in your present home. Ask your Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices network Forever Agent<sup>SM</sup> to help you determine this.
- + What areas and price range is most desirable and realistic for you.
- + Search based upon your lifestyle planning and involve your agent proactively in this process.
- + Ask how long homes are taking to sell and whether homes “in general” are going up or down in price in your market and price range.
- + We recommend that you should not buy a new property until your current property is under contract and all contingencies met. If you find a property that is so compelling, be certain that you are willing to absorb the risk of having multiple house payments simultaneously. Additionally, make sure you can afford to carry the cost of two homes for multiple months and possibly even years.
- + Make sure your agent is qualified to represent you, not only in the marketing of your home but in the negotiating process, when they are directly negotiating on your behalf.
- + Ask to see how pricing is trending in the new area and price range where you are considering buying.
- + Review the sections on moving up, downsizing and renting versus buying and make a list of questions to ask your Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Forever Agent<sup>SM</sup>.
- + Ask your Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Forever Agent<sup>SM</sup> for all the benefits of home ownership as well as when it might be advantageous to rent.
- + Remember, lifestyle planning is not just about location, location, location but also timing, timing, timing.
- + How do I/we wish to live in the next year, five years or ten years?

A young man and woman are sitting on a brown couch. The man is sitting on the floor, leaning against the couch, and holding a laptop. The woman is sitting behind him, leaning over his shoulder and looking at the laptop screen. They are both smiling. The man is wearing a light blue button-down shirt over a white t-shirt and light blue jeans. The woman is wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt and light blue jeans. They are sitting on a patterned rug. In the background, there is a potted plant and a window with blinds.

STEP 4

Develop a  
Lifestyle Plan

# Develop a lifestyle plan below, encompassing your short, mid and long-range goals.

## LIFESTYLE PLAN

### EXAMPLES

Scheduling a competitive market analysis (CMA)

Completing a move-up or home merchandising analysis

Looking at available properties

Purchasing investment property and other forward actions

### TO MEET SHORT-RANGE GOALS

DATE TO BE COMPLETED

1		
2		
3		
4		

### TO MEET MID-RANGE GOALS

DATE TO BE COMPLETED

1		
2		
3		
4		

**LIFESTYLE  
PLAN  
(CONTINUED)**

**TO MEET LONG-RANGE GOALS**

**DATE TO BE  
COMPLETED**

1	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/>
2	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/>
3	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/>
4	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/>

## REAL ESTATE AND LIFESTYLE RELATED SERVICES

### CONTACT INFORMATION

#### REAL ESTATE AGENT/REAL ESTATE TRUSTED ADVISOR

Agent/Firm Mike Gerard/Gerard Lifestyle Real Estate

Phone 714-883-2943

Email michaelgerard@bhhscal.com

#### REAL ESTATE ATTORNEY

Firm \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

#### FINANCIAL ADVISOR

Firm \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

#### MORTGAGE BROKER

Firm \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

#### PROPERTY & CASUALTY INSURANCE AGENT

Firm \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

#### ARCHITECT

Firm \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

#### GENERAL CONTRACTOR

Firm \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

#### ELECTRICIAN

Firm \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**REAL ESTATE  
AND LIFESTYLE  
RELATED  
SERVICES**  
*(CONTINUED)*

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**CONTACT INFORMATION**

**PLUMBER**

Firm \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

**ROOFER**

Firm \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

**PAINTER**

Firm \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

**CARPENTER / HANDY PERSON**

Firm \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

**LANDSCAPER**

Firm \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

**PEST CONTROL**

Firm \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

**TERMITE TREATMENT**

Firm \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

**POOL MAINTENANCE**

Firm \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

# What is the difference between a Forever Agent<sup>SM</sup> and a Real Estate agent?

While there is no one official definition for either title, we believe what distinguishes one from the other is the following:

- Traditionally, A Real Estate agent is mostly focused on ethically and successfully facilitating a Real Estate transaction(s).
- A Forever Agent<sup>SM</sup> seeks to serve consumers and clients by also providing ongoing advice and assistance throughout their lifetime Real Estate journey.
- While all Forever Agents<sup>SM</sup> must be licensed Real Estate agents, not all Real Estate agents view their role as one of being committed to serving consumers or clients as a Forever Agent<sup>SM</sup> for life.

As we believe you will see in your interaction with the Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Real Estate Forever Agent<sup>SM</sup> who shared this guide with you, this approach to serving consumers and clients is one that regrettably is not universally shared within the real estate industry.

That's why you want an advocate who is knowledgeable in the real estate process and has the backing of a world-class brand in your corner

As Real Estates "forever brand" we clearly favor and encourage our forever network agents to go beyond just serving transactional needs.

And I trust that you approve.

**Here's to your real estate and lifestyle success.**

# BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY

HOMESERVICES

## CALIFORNIA PROPERTIES

### About the Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Network

Real estate agents often claim they would like to be your real estate agent for life. Unfortunately, there is rarely a defined service other than being involved when you buy and sell real estate.

As a Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices network Forever Agent<sup>SM</sup>, I am committed to providing my clients with a lifetime of value which includes relevant resources and tools like the real estate lifestyle planning guide that can assist you in developing real estate and lifestyle-related strategies.

I look forward to earning your respect as your real estate trusted advisor or as we say at Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices—your network Forever Agent<sup>SM</sup>.



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HATHAWAY**  
HOMESERVICES

**CALIFORNIA  
PROPERTIES**

Real Estate's **FOREVER** Brand<sup>SM</sup>



**GERARD**

LIFESTYLE REAL ESTATE

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