QC HOME ADVISORS
CHARLOTTE REAL ESTATE

The *Move-Up* Guide

Selling one home and buying the next, in the right order.

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THE SITUATION

You are a seller and a buyer at the *same time*

You already own a home in Charlotte, and you are ready for the next one. More space, a different layout, a location that fits how you live now. The move itself is the easy part to picture. What makes a move-up different from a first purchase is that you are standing on both sides of the table at once. You are selling a home and buying a home, and the two transactions have to be coordinated so that neither one leaves you exposed.

That coordination is the whole game. Most of the stress people feel during a move-up does not come from finding the next house. It comes from timing: the worry about owning two homes at once, or selling and having nowhere to land. This guide walks through how to sequence the two sides so the move happens on your terms rather than the market's.

There is no single right order. The right order depends on your finances, the home you are selling, and how much certainty you want along the way. The pages that follow lay out the tradeoffs plainly so that when we sit down together, you already understand the choices in front of you.

> A TIP FROM TIM
>
> *The first conversation is not about listing or shopping. It is about sequence. Once we know whether you are buying first or selling first, every other decision gets simpler.*

WHERE EVERY MOVE-UP STARTS

Buy first, or *sell* first

This is the decision that shapes everything else, and it comes down to one question: do you need the proceeds from your current home in order to buy the next one?

If you can carry both homes for a period, even briefly, you have the option to buy first. If you need your equity out before you can purchase, you will most likely sell first. Neither path is better in the abstract. Each one protects something and exposes something.

Buying first protects your search. You can take the time to find the right home and move once, on a schedule you control. What it exposes is cost and risk: you may carry two homes for a stretch, and your current home still has to sell on terms you are comfortable with.

Selling first protects your finances. You know exactly what your home sold for and exactly what you have to spend, and you negotiate your next purchase from a position of strength rather than contingency. What it exposes is housing: there can be a gap between closing on your sale and closing on your purchase, and that gap has to be planned for.

The next pages take each path in turn. Read both, even the one you think does not apply. The market you are buying in, and the home you are selling, can push the answer in a direction you did not expect.

WHAT YOU ARE WORKING WITH

Paper equity and *usable* proceeds

Equity is the part of your home's value that is actually yours: what it would sell for, minus what you still owe and minus the cost of selling. The distinction that matters in a move-up is between the equity on paper and the cash you can actually put toward the next home.

Paper equity is the simple subtraction of your mortgage balance from an estimated value. Usable proceeds are what is left after the real costs of a sale: the agent commission, which is negotiable; attorney fees, since North Carolina closings are handled by an attorney; any seller-paid closing costs; payoff of your existing loan; and any repairs or credits negotiated along the way.

Knowing the usable number, not the paper one, is what lets you set a real budget for the next home. It is also what tells us, early, whether buying first is even on the table. Before you fall for a home you cannot yet fund, we run these numbers together so the figure you are shopping with is the figure you will actually have.

> **A TIP FROM TIM**
>
> *An online estimate of your home's value is a starting point, not a proceeds figure. The number that matters is what lands in your account after the sale closes, and that is a calculation, not a guess.*

BRIDGING THE GAP

Options for the *in-between*

If your timing means there is a window where you have committed to the next home before the current one has sold, there are financing tools built for exactly that gap. Each has tradeoffs, and the right fit depends entirely on your situation and your lender's current programs. Think of this as a map of what exists, not a recommendation of any one product.

Bridge loan. Short-term financing that lets you access part of your existing equity before your home sells, then gets paid off when the sale closes. Lenders typically lend against only a portion of your home's value and for a limited time, and terms change often. This is a conversation to have with your lender early.

Home equity line of credit. A HELOC opened against your current home before you list can give you flexible access to funds for a down payment. It has to be in place before the home goes on the market, so the timing of this one matters.

Sale-contingent purchase. An offer that is contingent on your current home selling. It carries less financial risk to you, but it is also less attractive to a seller, especially in a competitive market, and may require concessions on price or terms.

Recast after sale. Some buyers purchase the next home with a larger loan, then apply the proceeds from the sale to reduce the principal and recast the payment afterward. Whether this is available depends on the loan.

I am not a lender and cannot tell you which of these you qualify for or what it will cost. What I can do is connect you with lenders who handle move-up financing well, and make sure the financing plan and the transaction plan are built to fit each other.

PATH ONE

Selling *first*

When you sell before you buy, you trade a little housing uncertainty for a lot of financial clarity. You will know your exact proceeds and your exact budget, and you will make your next offer as a clean, non-contingent buyer. In a market where sellers weigh certainty heavily, that is a real advantage.

The piece to plan for is the gap between closing your sale and closing your purchase. A few ways to handle it:

- **Rent-back.** Negotiate to stay in your home for a set period after it closes, paying the new owner an agreed amount. This can buy you weeks to close on your next home without a second move.
- **Temporary housing.** A short-term rental or a stay with family between homes. Less convenient, but it removes all timing pressure from your purchase and can strengthen your negotiating position.
- **Aligned closings.** Where possible, we work to dovetail the two closing dates so the gap is short or closes the same week.

Selling first asks for flexibility in exchange for leverage. If you can stay flexible on where you land for a short window, this path puts you in the strongest possible position on the home you actually want.

A TIP FROM TIM

A rent-back is one of the most useful tools in a move-up, and it is negotiated at the time of your sale, not after. We build it into the offer you accept, so the bridge is in place before you need it.

PATH TWO

Buying *first*

When you buy before you sell, you protect your search. You can wait for the right home, write a clean offer that is not contingent on your sale, and move once. For many move-up buyers, that is worth a great deal.

What it asks of you is the capacity to carry both homes for a period, and a clear-eyed view of what is at risk while you do.

In North Carolina, a buyer typically commits a **due diligence fee** to the seller. It is generally non-refundable, and it is paid up front in exchange for a window in which you can investigate the home and walk away for any reason. You also place **earnest money**, which is usually refundable if you terminate within the due diligence period. When you buy first, that due diligence fee is real money committed before your current home has sold, so the plan has to account for it.

The other exposure is straightforward: until your current home sells, you are responsible for two mortgages, two sets of taxes and insurance, and the upkeep on both. That may be entirely manageable for a short overlap, or it may argue for selling first. The honest answer comes out of the numbers, which is why we run them before you commit to this path.

Buying first is the right call when you have the financial room for an overlap and you do not want your search rushed. It is the wrong call when a short carrying period would strain you. Knowing which is which is the point of planning it in advance.

WORKSHEET

What is working, what *isn't*

Before you can define the next home, it helps to be precise about the current one. Fill this in honestly. It separates the problems a different house would solve from the ones a different neighborhood would solve, and it keeps your search anchored to what actually matters.

My current home: what works

My current home: what does not

My neighborhood and location: what works

My neighborhood and location: what does not

The single most important thing the next home must do

A TIP FROM TIM

If everything you dislike is about the house but you love where you live, your move may be shorter than you think. If the location no longer fits, we start the search by area, not by house.

TWO TRACKS AT ONCE

Getting ready to sell *while* you look

The most common stall in a move-up is finding the right home and not being able to act on it because the current home is not ready to list. The fix is to run both tracks in parallel from the start, so that the moment your next home comes into focus, your current one can go to market without a scramble.

That does not mean a full renovation. It means knowing, in advance, exactly what your home needs to show well and pass inspection without a long list of surprises. A pre-listing walkthrough together tells us what is worth doing and what is not, at your price point and in your part of Charlotte.

A short head start usually covers it:

- [ ] Address the obvious repairs that a buyer's inspection would flag
- [ ] Declutter and begin removing what you will not bring to the next home
- [ ] Handle deferred maintenance that is easy to fix and easy to notice
- [ ] Gather records: improvements, warranties, system ages
- [ ] Decide on paint and cosmetic refreshes that return more than they cost

The goal is simple. When you find the next home, the answer to “can we list mine quickly” is already yes.

THE SELL SIDE

Pricing the home you are *leaving*

Pricing your current home well is what funds the next one, and it is where emotion does the most damage. The years you have spent in a home are real, but they are not a line item a buyer pays for. The market sets the value, and our job is to read it accurately and position the home to meet it.

This guide keeps the sell side brief on purpose, because the full pricing and preparation playbook lives in the Home Seller's Guide. For a move-up specifically, two things matter most:

Price to the current market, not to your purchase. What you need for the next home does not change what this one is worth. We price to comparable sales and live conditions, because an overpriced home that sits weakens your whole move-up timeline.

Protect the certainty buyers are paying for. In a move-up, your sale needs to close cleanly and on schedule so your purchase can proceed. Clean terms, a fair price, and a home that inspects well are what keep your buyer at the table all the way to closing.

> A TIP FROM TIM
>
> *Most people see a house. I see a financial decision. Pricing the home you are leaving is the first of several numbers in your move-up, and getting it right protects every number after it.*

WORKSHEET

Defining the *next* home

Move-up searches go wrong when the wish list and the budget never meet. This worksheet sorts what the next home must have from what it would be nice to have, so the search stays focused and the compromises are deliberate rather than accidental.

Must-haves (the move does not make sense without these)

Strong wants (would weigh heavily, but negotiable)

Nice to have (welcome, not deciding)

Areas of Charlotte I want to be in

Areas I want to rule out, and why

My target purchase range (set with usable proceeds and pre-approval, not paper equity)

A TIP FROM TIM

Bring this to our consultation. The clearer your must-have line, the faster we recognize the right home when it comes up, and the calmer the decision is when it does.

WINNING THE NEXT HOME

A strong offer when you *have a home to sell*

The worry every move-up buyer carries is that a seller will pass them over for a buyer with nothing to sell. That worry is fair, and it is also manageable. There are concrete ways to make your offer competitive even with a home of your own in the picture.

The single strongest move is to get your current home under contract before you write. An offer backed by a home already sold is, for the seller's purposes, nearly the same as a buyer with no home at all. That is the core argument for selling first, or at least listing first.

Beyond sequence, sellers in North Carolina weigh a handful of things:

- ☐ **A meaningful due diligence fee**, which signals you are committed and reduces the seller's risk that the deal falls through
- ☐ **A clean, realistic closing timeline** that fits the seller's needs
- ☐ **Flexibility on the seller's possession**, such as a short rent-back if they need it
- ☐ **Strong pre-approval** and a lender who can move quickly
- ☐ **Terms that are simple to say yes to**, with as few conditions as the situation allows

Price matters, but certainty often matters as much. When a seller is choosing between offers, the one that feels most likely to actually close is frequently the one that wins. We build your offer to read that way.

THE HANDOFF

Bringing two closings *together*

The mechanical heart of a move-up is getting two transactions to land in the right relationship to each other. In North Carolina, closings are handled by a real estate attorney, and a good one is central to making this work smoothly.

A few common structures:

Back-to-back closings. Your sale closes, then your purchase closes shortly after, sometimes the same day, using the proceeds from the sale to fund the purchase. The attorney coordinates the order so the funds move correctly.

Rent-back after your sale. You close on your sale but stay in the home for an agreed period, giving you time to close on and move into your next home once, rather than moving twice.

A planned gap. Where the two cannot be aligned, we plan the gap in advance with temporary housing, so the timeline is a decision rather than a surprise.

What ties these together is sequencing the dates before anything is signed. We work with your attorney and your lender so the closing calendar is set deliberately, and so a delay on one side has a plan attached rather than a panic.

> A TIP FROM TIM
>
> *Choose the closing attorney early and bring them into the timing conversation. The move-ups that go smoothly are the ones where the attorney, the lender, and I are coordinating the same calendar from the start.*

WORKSHEET

What the move *actually costs* each month

A bigger or newer home is not only a higher price. It is a different monthly reality: taxes, insurance, utilities, and upkeep usually rise with it. This worksheet puts the current home and the next one side by side so the decision is made with the full monthly picture, not just the purchase price. Review the tax lines with your CPA. I am not a tax advisor.

	CURRENT HOME	NEXT HOME (EST.)
Monthly mortgage (principal + interest)		
Property taxes (monthly)		
Homeowners insurance (monthly)		
HOA dues, if any		
Utilities (estimate)		
Routine upkeep (estimate)		
Total monthly		

One-time costs to plan for: two sets of closing costs and attorney fees, due diligence and earnest money on the purchase, any carrying period if the homes overlap, and moving expenses.

> A TIP FROM TIM
>
> *The purchase price tells you whether you can buy. The monthly total tells you whether the move fits your life. We fill both columns in before you fall for a specific house.*

PLAN AROUND THESE

The traps people *hit*

Most move-up problems are predictable, which means they are avoidable. The ones I see most often:

Two of everything. Two closings means two sets of closing costs and two attorney fees. Budget for both from the start so neither is a surprise at the table.

Underestimating the carry. If the homes overlap even briefly, you are covering both. A short overlap can be very manageable, but only if you planned for it rather than assumed it away.

Over-improving the home you are leaving. It is tempting to renovate before selling. Often the better return is targeted preparation, not a remodel. We decide that together, against your actual market.

Pricing the current home on emotion. The most common reason a move-up stalls is a departing home priced to the owner's history rather than the market. An overpriced listing that sits puts the whole sequence at risk.

Letting the search outrun the plan. Falling for a home before the financing and sequence are settled is how buyers end up committed to a path that does not fit. The plan comes first, then the search.

None of these are reasons to hesitate. They are simply the things a good plan accounts for, so the move happens the way you intended.

THE PATH, IN ORDER

A working *move-up* timeline

Every move-up is a little different, but the sequence below is the backbone. We adapt it to your path once we know whether you are buying first or selling first.

- ☐ **Start with sequence.** Decide buy-first or sell-first, based on your finances and the market.
- ☐ **Run your real numbers.** Usable proceeds, budget, and a lender pre-approval.
- ☐ **Define the next home.** Must-haves, areas, and target range.
- ☐ **Get the current home list-ready.** In parallel, not after.
- ☐ **Line up financing for any overlap.** With your lender, before you need it.
- ☐ **Choose your closing attorney.** Bring them into the timing early.
- ☐ **Execute the plan.** List, shop, offer, and coordinate the two closings.
- ☐ **Move once, on your schedule.**

When you are ready, the first step is a conversation. We map your sequence, run your numbers, and build the plan before anything goes to market or under contract.

PLAIN LANGUAGE

Move-up *terms*, defined

Bridge loan.
Short-term financing that lets you access part of your current home's equity before it sells, repaid when the sale closes.

Contingent offer.
An offer with a condition attached, such as the sale of your current home, that must be met for the contract to proceed.

Due diligence fee.
In North Carolina, a fee paid by the buyer to the seller, generally non-refundable, in exchange for a defined period to investigate the home and the right to terminate for any reason during it.

Earnest money.
A good-faith deposit from the buyer, typically refundable if the buyer terminates within the due diligence period.

HELOC.
A home equity line of credit, opened against your current home, that provides flexible access to funds. It must be in place before you list.

Rent-back.
An agreement that lets the seller remain in the home for a set period after closing, paying the new owner an agreed amount.

Usable proceeds.
What you actually net from a sale after loan payoff and the costs of selling, as opposed to paper equity.

ABOUT

Working *With Me*

Most people see a house. *Tim sees a financial decision.*

TIM PETRINEC, REALTOR®

That distinction shapes every conversation. When Tim works with a seller, he is thinking about what buyers in the current market will actually pay, which improvements move the needle, and how to create the kind of early momentum that drives stronger offers. When he works with a buyer, he is evaluating the neighborhood trajectory, the exit potential, and the real cost of ownership over time, not just whether the layout works.

Before real estate, Tim spent years at Edward Jones as a Financial Advisor, learning how to evaluate investments in terms of long-term value, risk, and return. He later built and led the Sales and Service division of a digital agency inside a medical device company. Those two experiences gave him a way of thinking about pricing that goes beyond what a typical market report shows. He understands it as strategy.

Since 2020, Tim has closed more than 200 transactions across the greater Charlotte region and nearby South Carolina communities. He also invests actively in real estate, with firsthand experience in property acquisitions, flips, long-term rentals, and short-term rentals. That experience changes how he evaluates every property he walks through.

His practice is built on a one-on-one model. Every client works directly with Tim, from the first conversation through closing. No handoffs, no team assistants handling the parts of the process that matter most. That is a deliberate choice, and it shapes everything about how he works.

Tim has called Charlotte home since 2007. Eighteen years of watching this city grow has given him a depth of knowledge about how its neighborhoods work, how they have changed, and what those changes mean for buyers and sellers making decisions today.

Outside of real estate, his favorite way to spend time is anything with his wife, stepson, their dog, and their friends. They love checking out different restaurants around Charlotte and exploring hiking trails around the region. On Sunday mornings, you can usually find them at Mecklenburg Community Church. In the fall, they enjoy getting their hopes up for a Buffalo Bills Super Bowl run. With family spread across Mexico, Indiana, New Jersey, and Buffalo, they treasure the time they get to visit.

Ready when *you are*.

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