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The Expired Seller's *Playbook*

Your home didn't sell. You're frustrated, maybe let down, and wondering what to do next. This guide gives you the honest answers — and a clear path forward.

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— LET'S START HERE

You're Not *Alone*.

Every day in Maryland, dozens of listings expire. Good homes, motivated sellers — and results that never came. If you're reading this, you're in good company.

An expired listing doesn't mean your home is unsellable. It doesn't mean you priced it wrong, or that the market passed you by. In most cases, it means the strategy failed — not the home.

That distinction matters more than you know. Because if the problem was the strategy, the strategy can be fixed. And that's exactly what this playbook is about.



The home didn't fail. The plan did. And a new plan — the right plan — changes everything.

I've spent over 21 years in Baltimore and the surrounding Maryland counties working with sellers whose first attempt didn't go as planned. The stories are different. The frustrations are the same. And in nearly every case, the outcome of the second attempt was dramatically better — because we went in with our eyes open.

This guide is going to be honest with you. Not harsh, not finger-pointing — but honest. You deserve real answers, not another round of vague promises. Let's get into it.

— THE HARD TRUTH

The Real Reasons Listings *Expire*

Most expired sellers already suspect one of these. What surprises them is learning that it's rarely just one thing — and rarely their fault.

01

The Marketing Didn't Do the Job

Putting a home in the MLS with a few photos is not a marketing strategy. Today's buyers are scrolling through hundreds of listings on their phones. Your home had seconds to stop them. If the photography was mediocre, the description was generic, and there was no targeted digital outreach — you didn't get a fair shot. Period.

02

The Agent Went Quiet

Selling a home requires active management — not just listing it and hoping. If your agent wasn't adjusting the strategy based on market feedback, following up on showings, communicating weekly, and staying proactive on your behalf, you were essentially on your own. Passive agents produce passive results.

03

The Price Was Misaligned From Day One

When a home hits the market with a misaligned price, it gets shown less, sits longer, and becomes "stale" in buyers' minds. Price reductions help — but they rarely recover the momentum lost in those critical first two weeks. A well-priced home creates competition. A misaligned price creates silence. The good news? This is fixable — and often the fix is smaller than you'd expect.

04

Presentation Issues That Weren't Addressed

Sometimes the home itself needs a little preparation — staging, minor repairs, curb appeal — that wasn't done. These aren't expensive fixes, but they have an outsized impact on how buyers perceive value. If your agent didn't walk through this with you before going live, that's a gap in the process.

— THE FIX

What Has to Change *This Time*

Relisting your home the same way and expecting a different result isn't a strategy — it's wishful thinking. Here's what a genuine second chance looks like.

An Honest Pricing Analysis

Before anything else, you need a fresh, data-driven look at what a buyer would pay for your home in the current market — not what you may have been told it would sell for six months ago, and not a number designed by a listing agent just to "win" your listing. A real CMA (Comparative Market Analysis) looks at recent sales, active competition, pending sales (what buyers are buying) and market trends. It's the foundation everything else is built on.

A Full Marketing Overhaul

This means professional photography — not iPhone shots — along with video, a compelling property narrative, and a targeted digital strategy that reaches buyers where they actually are. Your home should look like a product launch, not a yard sale.

- ✓ Professional photography with proper staging and lighting
- ✓ Drone/aerial footage where applicable
- ✓ Video walkthrough or 3D tour
- ✓ Compelling, story-driven property description
- ✓ Targeted social media promotion to active buyer audiences
- ✓ Email outreach to buyer agent networks in your price range
- ✓ MLS optimization with complete, strategic data entry

Real, Consistent Communication

You should hear from your agent every week — even if there's nothing major to report. You should get showing feedback within 24 hours. You should know exactly where things stand at every stage. If you had to chase your last agent for updates, that ends now.

A Prep Strategy Before Going Live

The first two weeks on market are everything. A preparation conversation before relisting — addressing presentation, repairs, and timing — can be the difference between a bidding war and another expiration.



Here's something most expired sellers don't expect: when Wayne takes over a listing that didn't sell, he frequently sells it at — or above — the original list price. Not because the price was fine all along, but because the right marketing and the right strategy finally gave the home the audience it deserved.

The problem was never always the price. Sometimes it was simply that not enough of the right buyers ever saw the home.

— PROTECT YOURSELF

How to Interview Your *Next Agent*

You've already been through this once. You don't have to take anyone's word for it this time. Ask these questions — and listen carefully to the answers.

ON PRICING

What data are you using to price my home? Walk me through it.

ON MARKETING

What does your marketing plan look like specifically for my home — not in general?

ON PHOTOGRAPHY

Who takes the photos? Can I see examples from recent listings?

ON COMMUNICATION

How often will I hear from you, and what does that look like?

ON EXPERIENCE

Have you worked with expired listings before? What was the outcome?

ON STRATEGY

If we haven't had an offer in 30 days, what do we do?

ON RESULTS

What is your average list-to-sale price ratio? Average days on market?

ON ACCOUNTABILITY

What happens if I'm unhappy with your performance? What are my options?



An agent who can't answer these questions clearly and confidently — without hesitation or deflection — is not the right agent for your second attempt.

You're not being difficult by asking. You're being smart. Any good agent will welcome these questions because they have strong answers. The ones who squirm are telling you something important.

— YOUR ACTION PLAN

Your Next *30 Days*

Don't let the frustration of an expired listing become paralysis. Here's a simple, clear timeline for getting back on track — and doing it right this time.

Days 1-3

Take a Breath — Then Get Honest

Give yourself a couple of days to decompress. Then sit down and honestly assess what happened. What feedback did you get from showings? What did your agent say (or not say)? Was the price where it needed to be? Getting clear on what went wrong is the first step to getting it right.

Days 4-7

Interview More Than One Agent

Use the questions in Section Four. Don't just call the first person who sends you a letter. Take your time. The right agent for a relisting is someone with a specific plan — not just enthusiasm.

Days 8-14

Prep the Home

Work with your chosen agent on a preparation checklist. This might mean a deep clean, minor touch-ups, some staging adjustments, or curb appeal work. Schedule professional photography only after the home is ready — not before.

Days 15-21

Relaunch Strategically

Time your new listing to hit on a Thursday or Friday, so you capture weekend buyer traffic right away. Make sure the marketing materials are ready before you go live — not after. Your first 14 days back on market are critical.

Days 22-30

Stay Engaged — and Communicative

Attend showings mentally (even if not physically). Review feedback with your agent. If something isn't working, address it quickly — don't wait. The market moves fast, and so should you.

— AN ALTERNATIVE WORTH CONSIDERING

What If Selling Isn't the *Right Move Right Now?*

Sometimes the timing isn't right. The market has shifted, life circumstances have changed, or you simply need more runway. Renting your home isn't giving up — it can be a smart, strategic choice.

If your home expired and you're not in a rush, renting it out while the market stabilizes is a legitimate path. Done right, it can cover your carrying costs, build equity, and buy you time to relist when conditions are more favorable.

But "done right" is the key phrase. Becoming a landlord without a plan — or without the right people managing the property — can turn a financial asset into a serious headache. Here's what to think through:

01

Will the Rent Cover Your Costs?

Before anything else, run the numbers. Will market rent cover your mortgage, taxes, insurance, and a buffer for maintenance? If the math works, renting makes sense. If it doesn't, you may be better off selling now at a realistic price than carrying a loss month over month.

02

Tenant Screening Is Everything

A great tenant is an asset. A bad one is a nightmare. Proper background checks, credit screening, rental history verification, and a solid lease agreement are non-negotiable. This is not the place to cut corners or rely on a handshake.

03

Do You Want to Self-Manage or Use a Professional?

Self-managing a rental property means late-night maintenance calls, rent collection, lease renewals, and legal compliance. A professional property manager handles all of it — typically for 8–12% of monthly rent — and the peace of mind is often worth every penny.

04

Keep Selling as the End Goal

If you do rent, go in with a plan for when you'll sell. A one-year lease gives you time to regroup, build savings, and relist when you're ready. Don't let "temporary rental" turn into a decade of accidental landlordship with no exit strategy.



Whether you decide to sell or rent, you need the same thing: someone who knows the Maryland market, understands investment property, and can help you make the smartest decision for your situation — not just the easiest one.

Wayne works with both sellers and property owners throughout Baltimore and the surrounding counties. If you're weighing the rent-vs-sell decision, that's exactly the kind of conversation he's happy to have — at no cost and with no pressure.

— WHO PUT THIS TOGETHER

About *Wayne Hitt*

I'm Wayne C. Hitt, a Maryland Realtor with over 21 years of experience and a specialty in homes that didn't sell the first time. I work with sellers throughout Baltimore City and the surrounding counties under The Hitt Home Group at Cummings & Co. Realtors.

I wrote this guide because I've sat across from too many sellers who felt let down, burned, and unsure of what went wrong. The answer is almost always simpler than they think — and the fix is well within reach.

I don't believe in pressure or pitch. I believe in honest conversations, real data, and doing the work. If your home expired and you're thinking about trying again, I'd genuinely love to talk.

No obligation. No sales pitch. Just a straight conversation about what happened, what needs to change, and whether we'd be a good fit to work together.

21+ YEARS EXPERIENCE

MARYLAND

EXPIRED LISTING SPECIALIST

CERTIFIED PROBATE REAL ESTATE SPECIALIST (CPRES)

GRADUATE OF REAL ESTATE INSTITUTE (GRI)

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