

# How to navigate the property market in today's economy



By [Tony Clarke](#)

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Big decisions regarding high value assets can be risky during uncertain times, but is the only option to hang tight until our political future is decided?



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Our property market is definitely going through a period of contraction, but not all of that can really be attributed to politics. We've been seeing a slowdown in growth over the last 18 months. Ups and downs are a natural part of the property cycle, and certainly don't mean there are no opportunities out there.

The market will recover in time, and property will remain a secure and profitable investment over the long term. Buyers and sellers need to adjust their approach to account for current trends.

## Less tolerance for overpriced homes

The cost of finance is rising, and inflation is eating more and more into people's disposable income. That means fewer people are qualifying for bonds, and the ones that do qualify are more likely to be conservative with that spending power. As a result, there are going to be fewer buyers on the market, which means less competition for listings, and far less tolerance for overpriced homes.

This is one of the most vital elements for sellers to consider if they're going to achieve a favourable sale. Buyers these days are very well informed when it comes to value, and can spot an overpriced property from a mile away. During a seller's market, they may be willing to push their budget a little – particularly if there's competition for the purchase – but in the current climate, they're just going to look elsewhere.

This can result in a stagnant listing that sits on the market for months, if not years at a time – a situation guaranteed to drop the eventual sales price far below its true market value. Stagnation is a real risk for sellers in today's market, which makes it incredibly important to ensure your listing is groomed to be as attractive to buyers as possible. It's not just about price, either – it's a combination of great photographs, compelling descriptions, and smart marketing placements that ensure your property gets seen by the right people. A skilled estate agent is really invaluable in this regard.

## **Wading through unsuitable listings**

Buyers may also find the services of a real estate agent particularly helpful at present. People often assume that the best way to find a property is by searching online listings, but if you've ever actually gone through that process, you'll know how frustrating it can be. Properties that aren't already sold by the time you see them often don't live up to their promises in person, and you can spend months wading through unsuitable listings to find one that actually meets your needs.

Getting an agent in your area of interest to actively search for properties on your behalf, however, can dramatically reduce your time investment, and expose you to properties you may otherwise never have seen.

It can mean the difference between finding a home that is workable, and finding a home that's a perfect fit. It also gives you access to in-depth advice on a prospective property's growth potential and the kind of return on investment you can expect – an important consideration in times like these.

## **Expect a lengthier process**

Regardless of whether an agent is involved in the search or not, buyers and sellers should expect a lengthier process in general than during boom times. For buyers, this can be a good thing, as they're under less pressure to make a quick decision, and can take the time to do their research and weigh up their options fully before putting in an offer. For sellers, however, it means every little flaw is going to come under the microscope, so the better shape your property is in, the better the chance you'll make a good sale.

The good news for everyone is that good sales are definitely still happening, and several regions are continuing to experience growth, according to local agents. These kinds of transitional periods are an adjustment, but if you approach the market with the right information on hand, there are still opportunities to be found.

## **ABOUT TONY CLARKE**

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