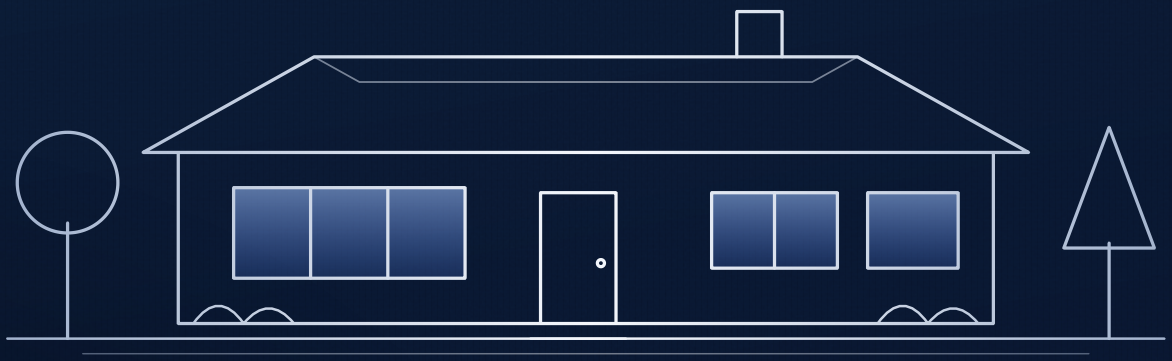
FROM THE FOUNDER OF
BUNGALOWCONNECT

FREE EDITION · BUNGALOWCONNECT CLUB · MEMBERS · FREE FOR MEMBERS

THE BUNGALOW *Advantage*

The insider's guide to finding, winning & profiting from Canada's most-wanted home

ONE LEVEL · ONE LOT · ENDLESS POTENTIAL



WILL BALO

REALTOR® · BUNGALOW EXPERT

A NOTE BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Welcome to the club.

Most people shop for a bungalow the same way they'd shop for any other house. They scroll, they book a few showings, and they hope. Then they lose three bidding wars in a row, or worse, they win one and discover a 60-year-old sewer line the hard way.

Bungalows are different. They're the home nobody is building anymore, wanted by more kinds of buyers than any other style. Downsizers want them. Young families want them. Multigenerational families want them. Investors and builders want the land under them. That's why they sell the way they do, and why they reward people who know exactly what they're looking at.

I built BungalowConnect around one idea: **bungalow buyers deserve a specialist.** We track bungalows, bungalofts, raised bungalows, side-splits, back-splits and 1½-storey homes across Ontario every day: what lists, what sells, what it sold for, and what the next buyer missed.

This book is the short version of everything we've learned. No fluff, no filler. Read it in one sitting, keep the checklist on your phone, and you'll walk into your next showing knowing more than most people in the room.

You're not just on a mailing list now. You're a member. Use us.

Will Balo

Realtor® · Founder, BungalowConnect · RE/MAX Experts, Brokerage

READ TIME

About 25 minutes

Short chapters. Big ideas up front. Tips you can use this weekend.

HOW TO USE IT

Read once, keep forever

Chapter 5's checklist and the roadmap on page 14 are built to bring to showings.

INSIDE THIS BOOK

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01

CHAPTER ONE

Why bungalows win

Most homes appeal to one kind of buyer. A good bungalow appeals to four, all at once. That single fact explains almost everything about how bungalows are priced, how fast they sell, and how they hold their value.

BUYER 01

The downsizer

Wants one-floor living, no stairs to the bedroom, a yard they can still enjoy, and a home they won't have to leave at 80.

BUYER 02

The young family

Wants a real lot, a quiet street, an established neighbourhood, and a basement that can grow with the kids.

BUYER 03

The multigenerational family

Wants parents upstairs and grandparents (or adult kids) downstairs, under one roof and one mortgage.

BUYER 04

The investor & builder

Sees the land, the separate-entrance potential, and the room to add units or rebuild later.

"When four different buyers want the same house, the house doesn't compete with other homes. The buyers compete with each other."

The supply problem nobody can fix

Bungalows spread their living space out instead of up, so they take more land per square foot. In most Ontario cities land is the most expensive part of a home, which is why builders rarely put new bungalows on urban lots anymore. They build up instead. The bungalows we have are, for the most part, the bungalows we'll ever have in established neighbourhoods. And every year, some of them are torn down and replaced.

WILL'S INSIDER TIP

Fixed supply plus broad demand is why well-located bungalows tend to sell faster and hold value better than the average home through slower markets. If you're buying, that's your reassurance. If you're selling one, it's your leverage.

02

CHAPTER TWO

Know your bungalow

“Bungalow” covers six very different homes. Knowing which one you’re looking at tells you how it lives, what it costs to run, and who you’ll be competing with.

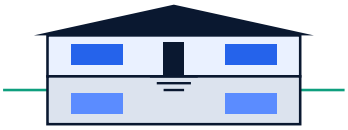


True bungalow (ranch)

Everything on one level, with a full basement below grade. The gold standard for downsizers.

No stairs to bedrooms

Most land per sq ft

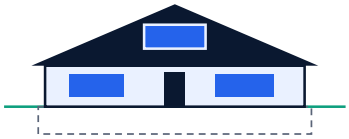


Raised bungalow

Main floor lifted up, lower level half above ground with big windows. The favourite for basement apartments and in-law suites.

Bright lower level

Stairs at the entry

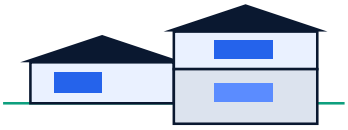


Bungaloft

A bungalow with a loft or bedroom tucked under a taller roof. Main-floor primary suite, plus space for guests or grandkids.

Main-floor primary

Rare and pricey

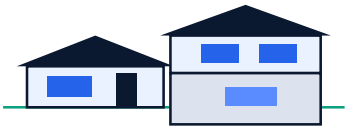


Back-split

Looks like a bungalow from the street; levels step up and down toward the back. Lots of living space for the footprint.

Great value per sq ft

Several short staircases

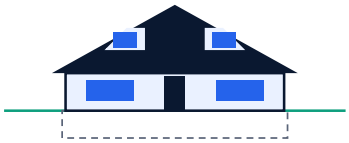


Side-split

Split levels side to side: living on one side, bedrooms up a half-flight on the other. Wide lots, family-friendly layouts.

Wide frontage

Not one-level living



1½-storey

A main floor plus a half-storey under a steep roof, often with dormers. Classic charm, smaller lots, sloped ceilings upstairs.

Character & value

Sloped ceilings

Why it matters: a downsizer and an investor can look at the same listing and see completely different homes. Know which buyer you are, and which buyers you’re up against.

03

CHAPTER THREE

The hidden value

When you buy a bungalow, you're really buying three things: the land, the house on top of it, and the space below it. Most buyers only price the middle one.

LAYER ONE

The land

Wide frontage, a deep lot and a mature street are the parts nobody can renovate in later. Over time, that is where most of the value builds.

LAYER TWO

The house

Kitchens, baths and finishes can all be changed. Judge the bones (layout, roof, foundation, systems), not the paint.

LAYER THREE

The lower level

A bungalow basement often matches the main floor in size. With the right height and entrance, it's a second home.

One lot, up to three homes

Ontario's *More Homes Built Faster Act* (Bill 23, 2022) allows up to three residential units on most serviced urban lots that are zoned for a detached, semi or townhouse. That usually means the main house, a second unit in the basement, and a third in a garden or laneway suite, without a rezoning application. Some cities, Toronto included, have gone further.

A bungalow is the easiest home to do this with: a big footprint, a full-size lower level, and usually a deeper lot than newer homes.

WHAT MAKES A GREAT SUITE

- Basement ceiling height you can stand in comfortably (ideally 7 ft+)
- A side or rear entrance, or room to add one
- Above-grade windows big enough for bedroom egress
- Separate laundry and heating options
- Parking for two households

CHECK BEFORE YOU COUNT ON IT

- The city's zoning and ARU (additional residential unit) by-law
- Fire separation and building-code upgrades
- Whether an existing suite is legal and registered
- Sewer and water capacity for a garden suite
- Conservation authority rules on ravine lots

WILL'S INSIDER TIP

"In-law suite" in a listing doesn't mean legal second unit. Ask for permits or registration in writing before you count rental income in your budget. We'll help you check before you make an offer.

CHAPTER FOUR

04 Read a bungalow by its birthday

Most Ontario bungalows were built between the late 1940s and the 1980s. The year built is the fastest clue to what's behind the walls and what to ask about before you fall in love.

ERA	WHAT YOU'LL LOVE	WHAT TO ASK ABOUT
1945–59	Solid post-war construction, plaster walls, hardwood under the carpet, mature trees, wide lots.	Knob-and-tube wiring, 60-amp panels, galvanized steel water pipes, clay or cast-iron sewer lines, buried oil tanks, vermiculite attic insulation (can contain asbestos).
1960s	The classic suburban bungalow: big picture windows, brick exteriors, generous basements.	Aluminum branch wiring (mid-60s to late-70s), original cast-iron stacks, older furnaces, undersized 100-amp service for today's loads.
1970s	Raised bungalows and split-levels arrive: brighter lower levels, separate entrances.	Aluminum wiring, urea-formaldehyde foam insulation (UFFI), asbestos in some flooring, ceiling texture and duct tape.
1980s–90s	Better insulation, bigger garages, more ensuites, newer neighbourhoods on the edges of town.	Poly-B (polybutylene) water piping from the late 80s–90s, original windows and roofs now at end of life.
2000+	Modern systems, open layouts, main-floor laundry, often in adult-lifestyle communities.	Builder-grade finishes at replacement age, condo or common-element fees, rules on rentals and renovations.

None of these are deal-breakers. They're negotiating points and budget lines. The buyers who get burned are the ones who didn't know to ask, not the ones who found something.

WILL'S INSIDER TIP

Some insurers won't cover knob-and-tube, older aluminum wiring or an in-ground oil tank, or will charge more until they're dealt with. Get an insurance quote *before* your conditions expire, not after.

CHAPTER FIVE · BRING THIS TO SHOWINGS

05 The 20-point showing checklist

Twenty minutes, twenty checks. If a home passes most of these, it's worth a professional inspection. If it fails several, you just saved yourself one.

- [ ] **Roof age and shape**
  Bungalows have a lot of roof per square foot. Ask its age; budget accordingly.
- [ ] **Foundation walls**
  Look for long cracks, white staining (efflorescence) or fresh patching.
- [ ] **Basement ceiling height**
  Bring a tape measure if you're thinking about a suite.
- [ ] **Water pipes**
  Copper and PEX are good; grey galvanized or grey Poly-B are questions.
- [ ] **Furnace and A/C**
  Look for the date on the label. Ask about rental contracts.
- [ ] **Windows**
  Fogged double panes mean failed seals. Count how many.
- [ ] **Signs of an oil tank**
  Fill or vent pipes in an exterior wall are a sign of an old tank.
- [ ] **Hallway and door widths**
  Wider is easier for walkers and wheelchairs later.
- [ ] **Separate entrance**
  Existing, or room to add one at the side or back?
- [ ] **Street and sun**
  Which way does the backyard face? What's across the street?
- [ ] **Eavestroughs and grading**
  Water should run away from the house, with downspouts extended.
- [ ] **Basement smell and floor**
  A musty smell or a new dehumidifier tells a story.
- [ ] **Electrical panel**
  Breakers or fuses? 100 or 200 amps? Any visible old wiring?
- [ ] **Sewer line**
  Large trees out front plus an older home means book a sewer camera scope.
- [ ] **Water heater**
  Owned or rented? Rental contracts transfer to you.
- [ ] **Attic insulation**
  Ask what's up there. Vermiculite looks like grey-brown pebbles.
- [ ] **Entrance steps**
  Count them. For aging in place, fewer is better.
- [ ] **Bathroom layout**
  Can a tub become a walk-in shower? Is there room for grab bars?
- [ ] **Lot and frontage**
  Pace it out. Width matters for value, parking and future plans.
- [ ] **Permits**
  Additions, basements and decks: ask what was permitted.

06

CHAPTER SIX

Price it like a pro

Bungalows are some of the hardest homes to price. Fewer of them sell on any one street, no two are alike, and the most common shortcut, price per square foot, quietly misleads almost everyone.

The number that lies: price per square foot

Listings usually show **above-grade** square footage, the floor above ground. A 1,200 sq ft bungalow often has close to another 1,200 sq ft below it. Compare it with a 2,400 sq ft two-storey on price per square foot and the bungalow looks expensive, when per *usable* foot it may be the better buy.

The five numbers I actually look at

01 **Recent sales of similar bungalows nearby**

Same style, similar lot, sold in the last 3 to 6 months. Not listings. Sales.

02 **Lot frontage and depth**

On older streets the land often carries most of the value. A wider lot can be worth more than a new kitchen.

03 **Sold history at this address**

What did it sell for last time, and what's changed since? Renovations or just time?

04 **Days on market for the area**

Fast-moving streets mean less room to negotiate. Stale listings mean leverage.

05 **Cost to bring it to "done"**

Roof, windows, furnace, electrical, kitchen. Price the work honestly and subtract it.

BUILT INTO YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Every listing on BungalowConnect shows its sold history, so you can see what a home last sold for before you book the showing. Use it on every home you're serious about.

07

CHAPTER SEVEN

How to win the one you want

The best bungalows rarely go to the highest bidder. They go to the best-prepared one: the buyer whose offer is easiest for the seller to say yes to.

BEFORE YOU SEE IT

Be pre-approved, not pre-qualified

A real pre-approval, with your documents already reviewed, lets you move the day the right home appears. Bungalows in good areas don't wait.

BEFORE OFFER NIGHT

Do your homework early

Book your inspection before offers if the seller allows it, read the seller's inspection if there is one, and get an insurance quote.

IN THE OFFER

Make the deposit count

A strong deposit, delivered on time, tells the seller you're serious and that your financing is real.

THE SECRET WEAPON

Give them the closing date they need

Many bungalow sellers are downsizers with their own plans. A flexible or longer closing can beat a bigger number.

"A clean offer on the seller's timeline beats a messy offer with a bigger number more often than you'd think."

If you need conditions, keep them tight

- Shorter condition periods (days, not weeks) feel safer to a seller.
- Bundle your inspection, financing and insurance checks into the same window.
- Explain your timing in a short cover note through your agent. Sellers are people too.

WILL'S INSIDER TIP

Set up instant alerts for your exact area, style and price on BungalowConnect. The buyers who win are almost always the ones who saw it first and showed up ready.

08

CHAPTER EIGHT

The downsizer's playbook

For many people, the move into a bungalow is the biggest real estate decision of the next twenty years. Get two things right, the order of operations and the home itself, and everything else gets easier.

Buy first, or sell first?

SELL FIRST

Certainty on the money

You know exactly what you have to spend and you never carry two homes. The trade-off: you may need a long closing, or a short-term rental, while you find the right bungalow.

Best when: the market is cooling, or most of your budget comes from your sale.

BUY FIRST

Certainty on the home

You lock in the right bungalow and then sell. The trade-off: you may need bridge financing, and your sale price is still a forecast.

Best when: the market is strong, or the right bungalow is rare in your area.

> **The middle path most people miss:** line up both closings on the same day, or a few days apart, with a short bridge loan. It takes planning, but it's the least stressful move you can make.

A home built to age in

- Zero-step or one-step entrance (or room for a ramp)
- Primary bedroom and full bath on the main floor
- Main-floor laundry, or space to move it up
- Doorways around 36 inches, wide hallways
- A tub that can become a curbless walk-in shower
- Solid walls for future grab bars
- Garage with direct entry into the house
- Close to transit, groceries, pharmacy and your doctor

WILL'S INSIDER TIP

Don't pay a premium for renovations you'll redo anyway. A dated bungalow with great bones and a main-floor primary suite is often a smarter buy than a flipped one with the wrong layout.

09

CHAPTER NINE

The money moves

A few government programs and tax credits were practically written for bungalow buyers. Most people never hear about them.

FIRST-TIME BUYERS

Stack your savings

FHSA: save up to $8,000 a year ($40,000 lifetime), deduct it now, withdraw it tax-free for your first home.
RRSP Home Buyers' Plan: borrow up to $60,000 from your RRSP.
Land transfer tax: Ontario refunds up to $4,000; Toronto adds up to $4,475 more.

MORTGAGE RULES

Know your limits

Insured mortgages are available on homes up to $1.5 million with less than 20% down, and first-time buyers can stretch to a 30-year amortization. Expect to qualify at the stress-test rate, which is higher than your actual rate.

ADDING A SUITE

Borrow against the future unit

Since January 2025, insured refinancing can go up to 90% of the home's value, including the value of the new secondary suite, on homes worth up to $2 million, with up to 30 years to repay.

ACCESSIBILITY & FAMILY

Get some of it back

Home Accessibility Tax Credit: 15% back on up to $20,000 of eligible work for seniors or people with disabilities.
Multigenerational Home Renovation Tax Credit: 15% on up to $50,000 to create a unit for a senior or adult family member with a disability.

The basement-suite math, in one example

Raised bungalow · $1,050,000	Monthly
Mortgage · $840K at 4.5%, 25 yrs	**$4,649**
Property tax (about $5,400/yr)	**$450**
Basement suite rent	**– $1,900**
Your effective cost	**$3,199**

An illustration only, with 20% down and assumed numbers. Your rate, taxes, insurance, utilities and achievable rent will differ. Rental income is taxable, and a legal unit may need upgrades first. The point is the shape of the math: the right bungalow can carry a big share of its own cost.

Program details current as of October 2026 and subject to change. Confirm eligibility with your lender, accountant or the CRA before relying on any of them.

10

CHAPTER TEN

Ten costly mistakes

Every one of these has cost a real buyer real money. Read them now, and they won't cost you anything.

01 **Comparing bungalows on price per square foot**

Above-grade numbers ignore the lower level. Compare similar homes that actually sold.

02 **Skipping the sewer camera**

Old clay or cast-iron lines and big trees are a classic combination. A scope costs a few hundred dollars; a new line can cost many thousands.

03 **Assuming the basement apartment is legal**

"In-law suite" is marketing language. Ask for permits or registration in writing.

04 **Buying the staging, not the bones**

Paint and pillows are cheap. Layout, foundation, roof and lot are not.

05 **Ignoring the roof**

A bungalow's roof covers the whole footprint. Know its age and budget for it.

06 **Waiting for insurance until after you're firm**

Old wiring or an oil tank can make coverage hard to get. Quote it during your conditions.

07 **Underestimating "just a few updates"**

Electrical, plumbing and windows add up quickly in a 60-year-old home. Price them honestly.

08 **Shopping listings instead of sales**

Asking prices are opinions. Sold prices are facts.

09 **Waiting for the "perfect" market**

Good bungalows sell in every market. The right home at a fair price beats a perfect forecast.

10 **Working with a generalist**

Bungalows have their own buyers, problems and pricing. Work with someone who lives and breathes them.

KEEP THIS PAGE

Your bungalow roadmap

From “just looking” to keys in hand, one clear step at a time.

✓

DONE

Join the club

You’re in. Your listings, sold history and alerts are unlocked.

2

THIS WEEK

Set your alerts

Area, style, beds, price. Be the first to know, every time.

3

WEEK 1

Book a free bungalow strategy call

Fifteen minutes to map your goals, budget, timing, and buy-first vs sell-first.

4

WEEK 1–2

Get fully pre-approved

With your documents reviewed, so you can move the day the right one lists.

5

WEEKS 2–8

Tour with the checklist

Use the 20 points on page 8. Shortlist on bones, land and layout.

6

WHEN YOU FIND IT

Price it like a pro

Recent sales, sold history, lot, days on market, cost to finish.

7

OFFER DAY

Make the clean offer

Strong deposit, tight conditions, the closing date the seller needs.

8

CLOSING

Get the keys

Final walk-through, keys, and a plan for your first-year projects.

YOUR MEMBERSHIP

What being in the club gets you

This book is your welcome gift. Here's what your BungalowConnect Club membership unlocks from here.

Sold history on every listing

See what a home last sold for, and how it's been priced over the years, before you ever book a showing.

Instant alerts, built around you

Bungalows, bungalofts, raised bungalows, splits and 1½-storeys across Ontario, matched to your exact search.

First access to handyman specials & power of sale homes

Members hear about the fixer-uppers and motivated-seller homes first.

New-build sneak peeks

Early looks and first-in-line access to new projects through our builder partners.

Preferred mortgage rates

Access to member pricing through our lending partners, so your budget goes further.

Bungalow experts on your side

Showings, pricing and offers with one of our preferred realtors who specialize in bungalows.

Book your free bungalow strategy call

Call or text 647-931-3923 · bungalowconnect.com

Let's talk

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Will Balo

Realtor® · Bungalow Expert · Founder of BungalowConnect

Will founded BungalowConnect for one reason: bungalow buyers and sellers deserve a specialist, not a generalist. The platform follows bungalows, bungalofts, raised bungalows, splits and 1½-storey homes across Ontario every day: new listings, price changes, and the sold history behind them.

His approach is simple. Know the home better than anyone else in the room, tell clients the truth about what they're looking at, and build the strategy around their life, not just the sale. Whether you're downsizing, moving your family in together, or buying your first home with a suite downstairs, that's the advantage he brings to the table.

"The right bungalow isn't just a house. It's the next twenty years of your life, on one level."

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Will Balo, Realtor®, RE/MAX Experts, Brokerage · 277 Cityview Blvd, Unit 16, Woodbridge, ON. BungalowConnect is not a brokerage; real estate services are provided through licensed realtors and their brokerages. This guide is general information only, not legal, tax, mortgage or financial advice; program details are current as of October 2026 and may change. Not intended to solicit buyers or sellers currently under contract with a brokerage. © 2026 BungalowConnect. All rights reserved.