

The Right Agent

The right real estate agent makes a difference when buying or selling a home.

How should you go about choosing a real estate agent?

There are several considerations you should make and steps you should take in your decision process. Be sure to find a real estate agent with strong skills every step of the way: Property knowledge, negotiating skills, attention to contract details and listening skills.

Price shouldn't be the determining factor.

You should NOT check with agents only until you find the one who promises the highest sales price for your home.

Making a decision based on price may result in disappointment. The agent who promised the highest price may not be able to deliver on his/her promise. This will force you to lower your asking price, which does not put you in an optimal negotiating position.

If you're on the buying side, carefully choosing your agent gives you a better chance of having a smooth home search, negotiation and purchasing experience.

Here are a few tips as you consider your real estate agent:

- **Ask for referrals.** Friends and neighbors may be good sources for referrals if they live in the general region where you're searching.
- **Contact official business organizations.** If you don't know anyone in the region where you're searching, contact the Better Business Bureau or Chamber of Commerce and ask for the names of several agents who are members.
- **Interview agents.** It's good to call at least five of these agents and to meet with at least three. Ask each one about background, training, and experience. Ask about homes in the region. What questions does the agent ask you and how well does each agent you interview listen? Can you place your trust in the agent?
- **Strength in knowledge and negotiation.** You're looking for a strong agent with experience and good negotiating skills.
- **Ask to be shown one house.** See how the agent shows it to you and how comfortable your rapport is. Is he/she showing you the kind of home you're looking for?
- **Additional information.** Evaluate what kind of information the agent is able to give you in addition to the information related to properties and negotiations. Many good agents can easily prepare or already have information prepared on local neighborhood schools and conveniences.
- **Find the right one.** Keep looking until you're comfortable with an agent. Take the time to continue looking for the right agent. It will pay off in your results. The more agents you interview, the greater the odds that you'll find the one that will provide the best services to you.



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