

Why Use a REALTOR®?

Not all real estate practitioners are REALTORS®. The term REALTOR® is a registered trademark that identifies a real estate professional who is a member of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of REALTORS® and subscribes to its strict Code of Ethics. Here are eight reasons why it pays to work with a REALTOR®.



1. Navigate a complicated process. Buying or selling a home usually requires disclosure forms, inspection reports, mortgage documents, insurance policies, deeds, and multipage settlement statements. A knowledgeable expert will help you prepare the best deal, and avoid delays or costly mistakes.

2. Information and opinions. REALTORS® can provide local community information on utilities, zoning, schools, and more. They'll also be able to provide objective information about each property. A professional will be able to help you answer these two important questions: Will the property provide the environment I want for a home or investment? Second, will the property have resale value when I am ready to sell?

3. Help finding the best property out there. Sometimes the property you are seeking is available but not actively advertised in the market, and it will take some investigation by your REALTOR® to find all available properties.

4. Negotiating skills. There are many negotiating factors, including but not limited to price, financing, terms, date of possession, and inclusion or exclusion of repairs, furnishings, or equipment. In addition, the purchase agreement should provide a period of time for you to complete appropriate inspections and investigations of the property before you are bound to complete the purchase. Your agent can advise you as to which investigations and inspections are recommended or required.

5. Property marketing power. Real estate doesn't sell due to advertising alone. In fact, a large share of real estate sales comes as the result of a practitioner's contacts through previous clients, referrals, friends, and family. When a property is marketed with the help of a REALTOR®, you do not have to allow strangers into your home. Your REALTOR® will generally prescreen and accompany qualified prospects through your property.

6. Someone who speaks the language. If you don't know a CMA from a PUD, you can understand why it's important to work with a professional who is immersed in the industry and knows the real estate language.

7. Experience. Most people buy and sell only a few homes in a lifetime, usually with quite a few years in between each purchase. Even if you have done it before, laws and regulations change. REALTORS®, on the other hand, handle hundreds of real estate transactions over the course of their career. Having an expert on your side is critical.

8. Objective voice. A home often symbolizes family, rest, and security - it's not just four walls and a roof. Because of this, homebuying and selling can be an emotional undertaking. And for most people, a home is the biggest purchase they'll every make. Having a concerned, but objective, third party helps you stay focused on both the emotional and financial issues most important to you.



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Take the Stress Out of Homebuying

Buying a home should be fun, not stressful. As you look for your dream home, keep in mind these tips for making the process as peaceful as possible.

- 1. Find a real estate agent who you connect with.** Home buying is not only a big financial commitment, but also an emotional one. It's critical that the REALTOR® you chose is both highly skilled and a good fit with your personality.
- 2. Remember, there's no "right" time to buy, just as there's no perfect time to sell.** If you find a home now, don't try to second-guess interest rates or the housing market by waiting longer — you risk losing out on the home of your dreams. The housing market usually doesn't change fast enough to make that much difference in price, and a good home won't stay on the market long.
- 3. Don't ask for too many opinions.** It's natural to want reassurance for such a big decision, but too many ideas from too many people will make it much harder to make a decision. Focus on the wants and needs of your immediate family — the people who will be living in the home.
- 4. Accept that no house is ever perfect.** If it's in the right location, the yard may be a bit smaller than you had hoped. The kitchen may be perfect, but the roof needs repair. Make a list of your top priorities and focus in on things that are most important to you. Let the minor ones go.
- 5. Don't try to be a killer negotiator.** Negotiation is definitely a part of the real estate process, but trying to "win" by getting an extra-low price or by refusing to budge on your offer may cost you the home you love. Negotiation is give and take.
- 6. Remember your home doesn't exist in a vacuum.** Don't get so caught up in the physical aspects of the house itself — room size, kitchen, etc. — that you forget about important issues as noise level, location to amenities, and other aspects that also have a big impact on your quality of life.
- 7. Plan ahead.** Don't wait until you've found a home and made an offer to get approved for a mortgage, investigate home insurance, and consider a schedule for moving. Presenting an offer contingent on a lot of unresolved issues will make your bid much less attractive to sellers.
- 8. Factor in maintenance and repair costs in your post-home buying budget.** Even if you buy a new home, there will be costs. Don't leave yourself short and let your home deteriorate.
- 9. Accept that a little buyer's remorse is inevitable and will probably pass.** Buying a home, especially for the first time, is a big financial commitment. But it also yields big benefits. Don't lose sight of why you wanted to buy a home and what made you fall in love with the property you purchased.
- 10. Choose a home first because you love it; then think about appreciation.** While U.S. homes have appreciated an average of 5.4 percent annually over from 1998 to 2002, a home's most important role is to serve as a comfortable, safe place to live.



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