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## Why Use a Real Estate Agent? And why a Realtor?

The Internet is full of websites giving intricate details of homes for sale in every conceivable part of the country. A whole new family of do-it-yourself real estate websites has popped up, condensing the whole process down to a blink of the eye and making it all look unbelievably easy. More people than ever are tempted to try the computer approach to home shopping. **Nevertheless, a good real estate agent can be an invaluable resource for finding and buying a new home.**

### What they do -- and why you need them

Agents are specialists, experts if you will. No matter how much time you spend reading new home listings and real estate articles, it's not going to come close to someone who does it for a living. Someone who lives it every day.

The education and experience a real estate agent brings to your home search will pay off immediately. Once you have clearly defined the special features of your search, a good agent will know exactly what neighborhoods and homes to look in and which to avoid. They know their local market and all the recent sales statistics. They will help you become a more educated buyer as you consider your options.

A good real estate agent will help you find the special home you want and navigate the process of making offers and counteroffers until it's yours. Agents also have extensive contacts in their field of expertise, which can provide valuable references for other aspects of purchasing your home, especially if you're not from the area and buying in an area you've just moved to.

### What they don't -- or shouldn't -- do

Good agents are an excellent source of information, statistics, and professional opinions. They should also be good listeners when it comes to your priorities.

A good agent should not try to take priority over your choices. If you feel you're being coerced to make an offer on a house you aren't that interested in, or if an agent continues showing you a style of home you've already said no to, remember - they work for you. You might want to understand their reasoning, but ultimately it's their job to help you find what you're looking for. A good agent will outline the options clearly within your home search guidelines, rather than pushing a different course of action.

## Finding a Real Estate Agent

Real estate agents work for real estate brokers and represent buyers and sellers of homes. They are paid on commission, usually a percentage of the home's sale price. If you are buying a home, you will need a buyer's agent. This agent's commission will often be paid by the seller of the home, but not always -- that is part of the negotiation process when making an offer on a home. (actually, you have probably already reached that agreement with you agent up front, before you started a detailed search for the right home) A buyer's agent may specialize in a certain neighborhood, an area, maybe even a certain price range, or represent particular builders or development. There are also plenty of agents prepared to go anywhere the client wants to look. But, a good agent will help you focus and make your search easier and fun.

One of the best ways to find an agent is word of mouth. Ask friends and coworkers, especially those who have purchased homes within the last couple of years. Good agents work hard and stay busy, and they rely on their reputations to get new business, so references from satisfied former clients are the best form of advertising.

Once you've found an agent you want to work with, you will probably be expected to sign a Broker's Agreement acknowledging that they represent your journey to find your dream home. There are exclusive and non-exclusive contracts, depending on whether you plan to work with more than one agent. A good agent may expect you to sign an exclusive contract because their services will be in high demand and they need to know how to prioritize their time.

It's important to find an agent that fits your personality. You don't have to become best friends, but you need to feel like you are able to communicate effectively, and that they understand your new home goals. You might have to talk to several agents before you find one you can work with, but the extra effort will be worth it in the long run.

## What makes a good Realtor?

Buying a home is a unique experience for every person. And, in the same way that no two homeowners are alike, no two realtors are the same either. When searching for a realtor in the Bergen County area, you may become overwhelmed by your choices. Thankfully, there are a few things you can look for that will help you choose between a great realtor, an OK one and a not-so-great one.



- **Communication:** Buying a home is a big step, and it's easy to get overwhelmed along the way. A good realtor will be constantly communicating with you, helping to explain the whole process and answering your questions in a way that you understand. Find a realtor with a similar communication style as yours, so you can always get your point across, and feel comfortable with the home-buying process. If you are comfortable online then make it clear, but if you prefer the phone then it is easy. It's also good to find out their modes of communication – if they don't have a smartphone, you might be stuck waiting to hear from them for a long time.

- **Accessibility:** When you come across that photo of your dream home, you understandably want to jump on the opportunity to check it out and possibly put in an offer. Having a realtor that's

easy to get a hold of is crucial. Find out if they're a full-time realtor, or if they have another job along with this – that could make a difference in their accessibility. Some offices only have “part-timers” on staff. Simply ask what percentage of people are devoted to full time real estate. It makes a difference in your ultimate experience and satisfaction. And don't be taken in by a relative who is licensed in some remote office and never practices in the profession.

- **Experience:** The longer your realtor has been in the housing market or homebuilding, the more scenarios he or she has run into, making it easier to help you through any type of situation. An experienced realtor can give you insight into possible issues that may arise, you can be better prepared, making the whole process much smoother.

- **Trustworthiness:** Your realtor should have one priority: getting you the best deal on the home of your dreams. If you don't feel like your realtor is fighting hard for you, it may be time to switch to another one. Having a great realtor in your corner can make an incredible difference in your home-buying experience.

A good realtor's job is to make sure you get the best house at the best price. By looking for these characteristics, you'll be able to find a great realtor in the Dallas area that will help make the home-buying experience enjoyable and beneficial.

### **My Commitment to You, My Client**

I measure my success through the satisfaction of my clients. I understand that your success is my success. My promise to my clients is to be the most knowledgeable of or find the best answers for any property, neighborhood and location of interest. And combine that with my personal concern for my clients best interests to make me their outstanding resource for any real estate transaction. I will provide you with sound and trustworthy advice to help you achieve your real estate goals. I am dedicated to helping you meet your real estate goals, whatever they may be.

**You have a goal !, Mine is to help you reach yours!**

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