

# QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN CHOOSING A REALTOR®

These 10 questions will help you find the agent who's right for you.

## **1. How long have you been in residential real estate, and is it your full-time job?**

Experience is no guarantee of quality. But, as in all professions, expertise is gained on the job.

## **2. Do you have any designations or certifications?**

Real estate professionals must pass an agent or broker licensing exam before they can work with clients, and in most states they're required to take continuing education. Many take it further by obtaining designations or certifications. This training helps them gain specialized knowledge and skills that apply to a particular real estate need—from selling resort or second home properties to working with seniors. One designation buyers should look for is the Accredited Buyer's Representative.

## **3. What's your business philosophy?**

While there's no right answer to this question, the response will help you assess what's important to the agent and determine how closely the agent's goals and business emphasis mesh with your own.

## **4. How many buyers did you and your real estate brokerage represent last year?**

This will tell you how much experience they have and how up-to-date they are on the local market.

## **5. What's the typical variation between your buyer clients' initial offers and final sales price?**

This is one indication of the agent's pricing and negotiating skills.

## **6. Will you represent me exclusively?**

When agents represent a client, they act as a fiduciary, bound by law to work in the client's best interest. State law governs agency relationships and duties. Regardless of whether they represent you, agents who are REALTORS® are bound by a Code of Ethics to treat all parties fairly and honestly.

## **7. How are you paid?**

Compensation is negotiable, and you should talk to your agent in detail about how that compensation is defined. As of Aug. 17, 2024, participants in a local broker marketplace (commonly known as a multiple listing service) are required to enter into a written agreement with buyers that outlines exactly what services will be provided and for how much. These written agreements are required before any home tours, live or virtual, occur.

**8. Can you recommend service providers who can help me obtain a mortgage, make home repairs, and so on?**

Practitioners should be able to recommend several providers. Federal law prohibits brokerages from receiving referral fees from settlement service providers (such as lenders and title companies). The law allows for joint marketing and affiliated business arrangements; agents must disclose if their brokerage is involved in such arrangements with recommended vendors.

**9. How will you keep me informed about the progress of my transaction?**

The best answer here is a question. Effective agents pay attention to the way you prefer to communicate and respond accordingly.

**10. Could you please give me the contact information of your three most recent clients?**

Ask their former customers if they would use the agent again in the future.