

Selecting a REALTOR® That Suits You and Your Situation



Whether you're looking to buy or sell a property, selecting a REALTOR® to represent you is the first, and quite possibly the most important step you'll take. A home often symbolizes family, rest, and security, so be sure to work with an agent that is a good listener, make you comfortable, exudes trust and confidence and offers a high degree of professionalism and knowledge. Ensure you're picking the REALTOR® that suits you by asking these questions.

1. *How long have you been in residential real estate sales and is it your full-time job?* While experience is no guarantee of skill, real estate, like many other professions, is mostly learned on the job.
2. *What designations do you hold?* Designations, such as ABR®, GRI and CRS®, indicate an agent has taken additional, specialized real estate training.
3. *How many homes did you and your company sell last year?*
4. *How many days did it take you to sell the average home?* Inquire how their answer compares to the overall market?
5. *How close to the initial asking prices of the homes you sold were the final sale prices?*
6. *What types of specific marketing systems and approaches will you use to sell my home?* It's best to look for someone who has aggressive, innovative approaches, and is not just going to put a sign in the yard and hope for the best.
7. *Will you represent me exclusively, or will you represent both the buyer and the seller in the transaction?* While it's usually legal to represent both parties in a transaction, it's important to understand where the agent's obligations lie. A good REALTOR® will explain the agency relationship to you and describe the rights of each party. It's also possible to insist that the agent represent you exclusively.
8. *Can you recommend service providers who can assist me in obtaining a mortgage, finding a home inspection or appraiser, and other services I may need?* REALTORS® will often recommend more than one provider and should tell you if they receive any compensation from any provider.
9. *What type of support and supervision does your brokerage office provide to you?* Having resources, such as in-house support staff, access to a real estate attorney, or assistance with technology, can help your agent be more effective and efficient.
10. *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 real estate agent - fast sales, service, etc. - and determine how closely the agent's goals and business emphasis mesh with your own.
11. *How will you keep me informed about possible leads and other developments?* It's important that your REALTOR® understand your expectations regarding the frequency with which you are updated on the progress of a transaction and your preferred methods of communications (i.e. phone, e-mail and/or personal visits).
12. *Could you please give me the names and phone numbers of your three most recent clients?*

Real estate transactions are complicated, but finding a REALTOR® doesn't have to be. Begin your search by visiting www.mcarealtors.org to locate a REALTOR® in your community.

Information furnished by the Montgomery County Association of REALTORS® and the National Association of REALTORS®.