

Questions to Ask When Choosing a REALTOR®

How long have you been in residential real estate? Is it your full-time job?

Like most professions, experience is no guarantee of skill. But much of real estate is learned on the job.

Do you have any designations or certifications?

Real estate professionals have to take additional specialized training in order to obtain these distinctions. Designations and certifications help define the special skills that an agent can apply to your particular real estate needs. One designation buyers should look for is the ABR®, or Accredited Buyer's Representative.

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.

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.

What's the average variation between your initial offers and final sales price?

This is one indication of a REALTOR®'s pricing and negotiating skills.

Will you represent me exclusively, or might you choose to represent the seller as well?

While it's usually legal to represent both parties in a transaction, your REALTOR® should be able to explain his or her philosophy on client obligations and agency relationships.

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

Practitioners should be able to recommend more than one provider and let you know if they have any special relationship with any of the providers.

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

The best answer here is a question. A real estate agent who pays close attention to the way you prefer to communicate and responds accordingly will make for the smoothest transaction.

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.