

SELL

10 Crucial Questions to Ask a Real Estate Agent When Selling Your Home

By Cathie Ericson



If you're looking to sell your home, you'll want to hire an amazing [listing real estate agent](#) to help—and there are certain questions to ask so that you can pinpoint the right professional for you.

It's smart to be picky! A great real estate agent can help find buyers to [sell your home fast](#), and for [more money](#). Make the wrong choice, and your listing might languish. Then, the lowballing bargain hunters come circling—it's not pretty.

Here are some important questions to ask a real estate agent when selling your home, to ensure you get a good price.

1. What are your credentials?

As you start out to sell your home, at the very least hire an agent who has a state license and belongs to the local real estate trade association. This

means that they will have [access to the multiple listing service](#), or MLS, and can list your property far and wide to attract buyers.

However, you may want to look further and find someone who's a member of the National Association of Realtors®, which requires additional training and adherence to a code of ethics.

2. How many sales did you close last year?

A real estate agent's past performance doesn't guarantee a quick sale. Their track record of success with buyers and sellers, though, is some assurance that they are professionals who will know what they're doing in selling your home.

Ask potential agents about how many clients they've worked with in the past and about the price range of the homes they have sold. You ideally want someone who knows just which real estate features will be valued by buyers in the appropriate income bracket. You may also want to ask for recommendations from previous clients.

3. Do you specialize in this neighborhood?

Having a local expert can be a huge advantage for sellers. Local agents will be aware of any upcoming developments in the area, plus plans for stores or other amenities that might affect the value of your property, how quickly it will sell, and the price you're likely to get. They'll also know what local buyers are looking for in real estate.

"You want to know that your agent understands the market for your neighborhood right now," says **Ashlie Roberson**, a New York City-based agent at Triplemint. She also advises sellers to inquire about the agent's favorite places in the area.

"Your agent needs to be able to not only sell your home, but your neighborhood."

4. How do you arrive at the listing price?

Few things are as important to a seller as the discussion of how to price your home, and your real estate agent's ability to land on a [listing price](#) that is pitched at just the right level for the local market.

A property that is priced too high will languish, eventually turning off potential buyers; but a home priced too low might leave money on the table.

Make sure your agent is knowledgeable about the local market and what other similar homes have recently sold for. This will help you arrive at the right price to complete your real estate transaction. Be sure to get answers to any of your questions about the process of coming up with a list price.

5. Whom will I be working with?

You want to find out if you will be working with one specific real estate agent or a member of the agent's team. Each scenario has pros and cons for sellers, so ask lots of questions. Different agents work with clients in different ways.

"Having a team of agents makes accommodating showings easier, but specific requests made by the seller can get lost among a big team," says **JoAnn Schwimmer**, associate broker and certified relocation professional with DJK Residential in New York City.

6. How much will selling my home cost?

Ask several questions about the costs that you, as the seller, will be paying in the real estate transaction, such as broker's [commission](#), [closing fees](#), and anything else, so you can plan accordingly—and compare from one agent to the next. This should all be covered in the listing agreement with the real estate agent.

7. What is your sales plan?

A good agent should have a written plan for selling your home that identifies the marketing plan for your property to attract buyers, from listing services to open houses to social media. This helps ensure you'll get a high sales price.

"Don't let them just rely on mailers," says Roberson. She advises using an agent who has the capability to provide professional photography, a custom website, and even video, if appropriate. This will make the best impression on buyers.

"Marketing is the key to a successful sale," she says.

8. What should I do to get my house ready?

See what the agents' advice is for necessary repairs or upgrades or what hacks they might suggest for budget-friendly but impactful improvements that would attract buyers. Find out if they suggest [staging services](#) or just a good cleaning and declutter.

Also ask questions about whether the agents are willing to accommodate your schedule and what days and times they prefer to show houses.

9. How will we communicate?

If you're a texter and your real estate agent prefers lengthy phone calls, that could present a problem. Likewise, you might prefer the personal touch of a call over an email. Knowing the method and frequency of communication can be important in selling your home. Your agent should also be available to answer any questions that you have along the way.

10. How long will the process take?

While no agents can guarantee how fast the sale and full real estate transaction will go, they should be able to give a ballpark range on [how long it will take to sell your house](#). The national average is 65 days, but it depends greatly on where you live.

You can find more sales statistics about your neighborhood by entering your address into [realtor.com/local](https://www.realtor.com/local).