



How To Pick The Right Real Estate Agent

Learn what to look for and how to find the right person to guide you through the home buying process.

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Buying a home can be one of the largest purchases of a person's life, which is why finding the right agent to help you through the process and find the property of your dreams should not be taken lightly. Doing your due diligence to find the right real estate agent can include a number of different avenues.

Step one is doing your research. Asking your friends and family for real estate agents they have worked with previously is a great start to get an idea of your network's first-hand experiences. Hearing stories about what they liked and disliked about working with various agents will start to give you an idea of what type of person would be your ideal real estate agent.

[Melanie Stone, realtor at Coldwell Banker](#), believes reading reviews is an important part of the

process. “I advise people to read reviews if you have names of realtors to decide between. [Zillow](#) and [Yelp](#) will help you get an idea of how other people’s experiences have been with that particular realtor in the same way you’d read a review on a restaurant for your Friday night out,” said Stone.

Another avenue you can explore is attending an event to meet the realtor in person so you are able to get them to know before committing and having any one on one time with them. That’s a big benefit of Stone’s *So You Want to Buy a Condo* seminar that she presents regularly around Chicago and promotes through social media. It gives potential buyers a taste of her personality and the buying process so they can decide if they’d like to work with her in the future once they are ready to buy.

That’s how Sarah Ostman found out she wanted to work with Stone to buy her one-bedroom condo in the South Loop of Chicago. “I knew that she was knowledgeable about the market, especially for first-time buyers, which was really important to me – I wanted someone who could explain the process from start to finish and knew it inside and out since I didn't have any experience with it,” said Ostman.

With the potentially stressful process of buying a home, you will want to be working with someone you really like and can spend some time with as you look at properties. Make sure you can communicate with your realtor and you are comfortable telling them exactly what you want or don't want in your future home. It’s their job to help you find exactly what you want, but they aren’t mind readers. If you don’t share all of your thoughts on properties with them, they can’t help you.

One thing you will want to look out for is someone who is too aggressive for your liking. Stone said, “Look out for somebody that is very pushy and trying to get you to buy sooner than they are comfortable with. If someone is really enthusiastic about the first place you see, they might not be in it for the long haul and they might be more interested in the sell and not the long-term relationship.”

Real estate agents also have to prove effective as coaches to home buyers during the process by showing their ability to be supportive of decisions, assisting with paperwork and sharing their expertise.

“Buying a condo, especially if it's your first, can be stressful and fast-moving, so you want someone who you can rely on and who can navigate you through the highs and the lows. Gathering paperwork and making sure all my ducks were in a row was a little bit stressful, but that's where your realtor comes in to help keep you on track,” said Ostman.

Overall, the process should be enjoyable for both parties because finding the right home or property for you is an exciting purchase and life moment. Stone explains what she really loves about working with clients, “My favorite part is driving around in my car with clients looking at a bunch of properties and spending time together. We’re really building the relationship at that point. Since it can take you a while to get to places in Chicago, we have time to talk about properties and life. It’s really fun to get to know my clients.”

