



What Realtors Do for Homebuyers

A Buyer's Agent is a Realtor who works with and REPRESENTS a homebuyer. There are several things that a Realtor helps a homebuyer with.

***It's important to understand the concept of representation. If you're a homebuyer, you'll want a buyer's agent. When you sign a representation agreement with an agent, they are legally bound to look out for YOUR best interests.

If you're a homebuyer, try to avoid working directly with the seller's Realtor. If you mention to the seller's agent that you can go as high as \$200,000, then the Realtor is obligated to pass that information on to the seller, which could hurt you in negotiations. **THE SELLER'S AGENT – REPRESENTS THE SELLER.**

If you're the seller, it's not a good idea to work directly with a buyer's agent because anything you mention about the price and condition of the home will be shared with the homebuyer. Why? **BECAUSE THE BUYER'S AGENT REPRESENTS...that's right! THE BUYER!**

You need to hire someone who represents you -- and only you -- in this transaction.

1. A homebuyer needs to be pre-approved for a mortgage, if they are a serious homebuyer. Seller's won't accept a contract on their property from a homebuyer who is not pre-approved for a mortgage, because it is very risky and could entail them basically 'removing' their property from the market for nothing.

If a homebuyer isn't approved, the Realtor will refer several mortgage companies for the buyer to investigate. All buyers should SHOP their mortgage! Lending fees are not all the same! Interest rates are not the only thing that a homebuyer needs to worry about for a home mortgage.

2. Realtors have FULL access to the Multiple Listing Service – they pay large quarterly and yearly fees for this access. A homebuyer can find properties through Zillow, but that doesn't mean that the property information is correct.

Also – a side note on Zillow. The state of Texas is a NON-DISCLOSURE STATE! This means that no one discloses the sales price to the local tax authorities. This means that Zillow's Zestimate – is less than even a Guesstimate for Texas Real Estate properties! The only people who have real access to true sold prices, which are used as comparables when an appraiser appraises a property for value – is an Appraiser, and you guessed it! **A REALTOR®!**

3. Although everyone has access to property information, experienced Realtors know how to search the database to find the best homes within the buyer's price range. Realtors also know how to read the subtle language in listing descriptions. A "newer roof" is a wholly subjective statement. What is newer to you isn't always 'newer' to me. The roof could be 10 years old! A

"charming" home is a code word for a fixer-upper. A buyer's agent can narrow the listings down to a dozen good fits for the client.

4. Then the Realtor can call the sellers' agents to make an appointment for a showing – usually done through a centralized showing service. Guess who else is one of the few people who have access to a showing service? That's right – a Realtor! Why? Because they PAY for it – and because they are licensed by the state and a member of the board of Realtors!

When it's time to look at the homes, the buyer's agent provides a crucial, objective opinion. Homebuyers have the habit of 'falling in love with a property' because it has a great view or a huge kitchen, but they tend to overlook less favorable characteristics like lousy plumbing or a leaky roof. The buyer's agent can help the homebuyer see the whole picture like repair costs, the neighborhood, the local school system, taxes and so on, and they're not blinded by one or two superficial features.

5. Once the buyer has found a home that he or she likes, the buyer's agent will write a CONTRACT and contract addendum to submit to the seller's agent and seller for review, acceptance, or counter offer. The buyer's agent is the point of contact for ALL price negotiations. The buyer's agent knows how much other homes are selling for in the neighborhood (because only a Texas Realtor knows sold prices) and will fight for the fairest price for the buyer. The Realtor may also arrange a title search to make sure that the seller has a legitimate right to sell the home.

6. Once the buyer and seller enter into a contract agreement for the purchase of the property, the buyer's agent will arrange for a professional home inspection to make sure there aren't any hidden problems with the foundation, plumbing, heating, cooling and electrical systems. They may also schedule termite, radon and mold inspections. When the inspection reports come back, the Realtor will help the homebuyer review them and prepare an official written amendment for repairs or withdraw the offer based on the inspections.

7. If the amendment is accepted by the seller, then the Realtor will walk the homebuyer through the closing and title process, preparing all of the documents to complete the transaction and working with title and mortgage lenders to get you into the home of your dreams!