

How to Pick the Right REALTOR® for You

START WITH YOUR GOAL

Before you start researching REALTORS®, take time to define what success looks like for you. Your goal should reflect both your lifestyle priorities and your timeline — not just a price point.

- Identify your main reason for moving — are you buying your first home, upsizing, downsizing, or relocating?
- Define what success looks like for you. This could mean finding a detached home within walking distance to a specific school, purchasing a condo that's maintenance-free, or completing a sale and purchase within a certain timeframe.
- Clarify your non-negotiables early: desired location, price range, number of bedrooms, or school district.
- Determine your ideal move date and any flexibility you have for closing.
- Write one sentence that combines what you want, where you want it, and when you need it.
- Use this statement to keep conversations with REALTORS® focused on your true priorities rather than general possibilities.
- Remember that clarity helps the right agent design a plan around you, not just your price point.

BUILD A SHORT LIST

- You don't need a long list of options — two or three REALTORS® is enough to compare approaches and chemistry.
- Look for professionals who specialize in your type of move or community.
- Review recent listings to assess photo quality, floor plan presentation, and listing descriptions.
- Read public reviews for consistency in communication, professionalism, and follow-through.
- Confirm that the agent's licence is active with the Real Estate Council of Ontario (RECO).
- You're looking for proof of organization and care, not just volume or awards.

BOOK AN INTRODUCTORY MEETING

- Treat the first meeting as a conversation, not a commitment.
- A strong REALTOR® will listen first, ask about your goals, and reflect them back in clear, practical language.
- You should leave with a basic understanding of how they work, what steps come next, and how communication will flow.
- Pay attention to how they make you feel — confident, informed, and understood, or rushed and uncertain.
- A good fit is about personality as much as process.

ASK FOR A PLAN

If You're Selling:

- Expect a pricing approach grounded in recent comparable sales, not guesswork or inflated promises.
- Review the preparation plan, including suggested updates, staging level, photography, and marketing timeline.
- Ask how they'll handle open houses, feedback, and adjustments if activity is slower or faster than expected.



If You're Buying:

- Expect a clear search plan outlining your preferred neighbourhoods, price range, and must-have features.
- Confirm how you'll be notified of new listings and how quickly showings can be booked.
- Review their offer strategy for both competitive and balanced markets.
- Ask how they'll coordinate with your lender, lawyer, and inspector to ensure a smooth closing.

CONFIRM LOCAL MARKET KNOWLEDGE

- A strong REALTOR® should be able to discuss current conditions in your specific area — not just city-wide trends.
- Ask about a recent sale and an active listing nearby.
- Look for detailed comments on pricing, days on market, buyer interest, and how these factors might influence your plan.
- Specific examples show hands-on experience and real insight, not memorized talking points.

GET CLEAR ON FINANCES AND PAPERWORK

- Review the commission structure and what services are included.
- Discuss estimated closing costs — such as land transfer tax, legal fees, and adjustments.
- Ask for a clear explanation of representation: who the agent works for, how confidentiality is handled, and what multiple representation means in Ontario.
- Understand how deposits, appraisals, and condition timelines will be managed.
- A good REALTOR® will walk you through this patiently and make sure you understand every step.

WATCH FOR RED FLAGS

- Vague or evasive answers about price, timelines, or market data.
- Overly optimistic promises that don't align with comparable sales.
- Pressure to skip preparation or make fast decisions without reason.
- Slow responses during early communication — this rarely improves later.
- Confusing or incomplete explanations of representation or disclosure rules.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Choose the REALTOR® who listens carefully, communicates clearly, and offers a structured plan that makes sense to you. The right professional will simplify your move, protect your best interests, and help you make confident decisions from start to finish. If you leave your first meeting feeling informed, calm, and supported — you've found the right fit.



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