

✓ CHECK-LIST FOR HIRING A REAL ESTATE AGENT

- Have each agent you are considering do a presentation of why you should hire him or her. Keep the information the agent provides to be sure the agent follows through with promises. Ask questions pertinent to the type of transaction you are considering.
- Ask to see the agent's Real Estate License pocket card and DMV ID. The business card is not enough.
- Check with DRE to determine if the license has a disciplinary history. Consider the type and elapsed time of any discipline carefully. Look for an H#, R#, or D&R# in the public comment section of the license record. Call DRE for clarification on any discipline taken.
- Ask for personal references of clients (names and telephone number). Then contact these references.
- Ask about specialization in transactions.
- Ask for professional affiliations with Real Estate (RE) or mortgage organizations. If the agent claims professional affiliation, verify with the organization. If they claim to be a specialist, expert, or certified, ask for proof. See DRE alert on warnings about false and misleading designations: www.dre.ca.gov/cons_alerts.html.
- Talk to friends, neighbors and people you trust for referrals.
- Check with the Real Estate Board, Better Business Bureau and Chamber of Commerce. Consider all ratings and complaints.
- Use an internet search engine (like Google, Bing or Yahoo) to look up their personal/business name. Consider what others are saying.
- Ask how long an agent has been in business. Are they experienced in the type of transaction you need them for?



Real Estate MATTERS

Department of Real Estate Office Locations

Sacramento — *Principal Office*

2201 Broadway
Sacramento, CA 95818-2500
(916) 227-0864

Fresno

2550 Mariposa Mall, Suite 3070
Fresno, CA 93721-2273
(559) 445-5009

Los Angeles

320 W. 4th Street, Suite 350
Los Angeles, CA 90013-1105
(213) 620-2072
Spanish Language Consumers (Español)
(213) 576-6878

Oakland

1515 Clay Street, Suite 702
Oakland, CA 94612-1462
(510) 622-2552

San Diego

1350 Front Street, Suite 1063
San Diego, CA 92101-3687
(619) 525-4192

RE 16 (New 7/11)



Department of Real Estate

Finding the Right
Real Estate Agent:

What You Should Do



Real Estate MATTERS

Finding the Right Real Estate Agent: What You Should Do

So, you are going to buy or sell real estate and are looking for a Real Estate (RE) agent. Because a RE transaction is often your biggest and most important investment, we suggest the following to make it a positive experience and to protect yourself. (If you have difficulty, ask someone you trust for help, or visit us!)

General Advice

Use Due Diligence – once you have a list of agents, DO YOUR HOMEWORK!

Contact the Department of Real Estate (DRE). Verify the agent is licensed at www.dre.ca.gov or call (877) 373-4542.

Unlicensed agents are bad news and you should avoid them!

Things to look for on the DRE web site:

- Is the agent's license current (not Expired, Surrendered, Revoked, or Licensed NBA)? If not, do not deal with this person.
- If the agent is a salesperson, be sure they work for a broker. If not, do not hire them.
- If a licensed corporation, is there a Designated Broker?
- Is there a Hearing Number ("H" number) in the license information? If YES, contact DRE for information on the license discipline.
- If performing residential mortgage loan

Protect yourself by choosing the right real estate agent.

activities, do they have a National Mortgage Licensing System (NMLS) license number. If not, do not deal with them.

Find more information in our Consumer Page at: http://www.dre.ca.gov/cons_home.html

If the information provided by the agent does not match with what you learn, be cautious. If you have further questions, contact the DRE.

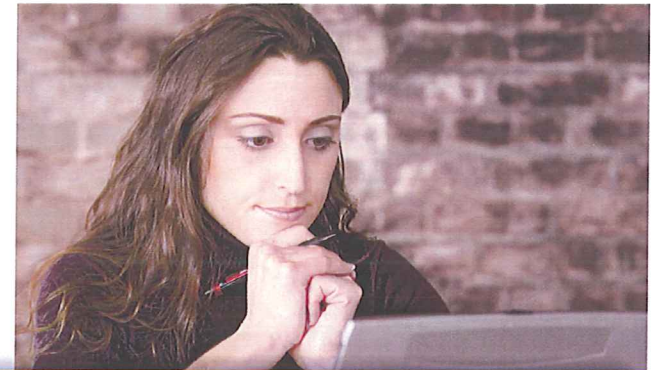
Check Out the Licensee

- Check for any news stories about them.
- Are there any pending criminal charges, arrests or civil actions?
- Are there web site postings from clients about them?
- Look up County Courts online for pending criminal charges or civil actions.
- Where possible, look up their name with the Better Business Bureau (BBB)– www.bbb.org.

- Any complaints? How were they resolved by the agent?
- Are they accredited with BBB?
- What is their BBB rating (A - F)?
- How long have they been in business?
- If the agent claims they are an agent in a current transaction, check with the local Real Estate Board.
- Do they have a business license with the city?
- If a corporation, is it registered with the Secretary of State? Verify at <http://kepler.sos.ca.gov/cbs.aspx>
- Are fictitious business names (DBA) registered with the county and the DRE?

Complaint Forms

If you have a complaint against a licensed real estate agent, complaint forms are available at www.dre.ca.gov or you can call (916) 227-0864 for assistance.



Check out: Answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about "Background" Reviews and Screenings, and Policies, Procedures and Statutory Requirements in Connection with the Issuance and Discipline of Licenses

<http://www.dre.ca.gov/FAQ-RERAPS.pdf>