ASPEN BOARD OF REALTORS®

The Voice For Real Estate In The Roaring Fork Valley

What is a REALTOR®?

The term REALTOR® is a registered collective membership mark that identifies a real estate professional who is a member of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® and subscribes to its strict Code of Ethics.

Founded in 1908, NAR has grown from its original nucleus of 120 to today's 720,000 members. NAR is composed of residential and commercial REALTORS®, who are brokers, salespeople, property managers, appraisers, counselors and others engaged in all aspects of the real estate industry. Members belong to one or more of some 1,700 local associations/boards and 54 state and territory associations of REALTORS®. They can join one of our many institutes, societies and councils. Additionally, NAR offers members the opportunity to be active in our appraisal and international real estate specialty sections.

REALTORS® are pledged to a strict Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. Working for America's property owners, the National Association provides a facility for professional development, research and exchange of information among its members and to the public and government for the purpose of preserving the free enterprise system and the right to own real property.

The term REALTOR® is not only a trademark owned by NAR and protected by federal law, it is also a valuable membership benefit that distinguishes members from all others in the real estate business. Watch this entertaining, three-minute video to learn how members can protect the value of the mark by using it properly. Remember, a REALTOR® isn't "just another real estate agent." Being a REALTOR® means more.

Article and video courtesy of the National Association of REALTORS®, www.Realtor.com and Move, Inc., www.move.com

Why Use A REALTOR®?

All real estate licensees are not the same. Only real estate licensees who are members of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® are properly called REALTORS®. They proudly display the REALTOR "R" logo on their business card or other marketing and sales literature. REALTORS® are committed to treat all parties to a transaction honestly. REALTORS® subscribe to a strict code of ethics and are expected to maintain a higher level of knowledge of the process of buying and selling real estate. An independent survey reports that 84 percent of home buyers would use the same REALTOR® again.

Real estate transactions involve one of the biggest financial investments most people experience in their lifetime. Transactions today usually exceed $100,000. If you had a $100,000 income tax problem, would you attempt to deal with it without the help of a CPA? If you had a

$100,000 legal question, would you deal with it without the help of an attorney? Considering the small upside cost and the large downside risk, it would be foolish to consider a deal in real estate without the professional assistance of a REALTOR®.

But if you're still not convinced of the value of a REALTOR®, here are a dozen more reasons to use one:

1. Your REALTOR® can help you determine your buying power — that is, your financial reserves plus your borrowing capacity. If you give a REALTOR® some basic information about your available savings, income and current debt, he or she can refer you to lenders best qualified to help you. Most lenders — banks and mortgage companies — offer limited choices.
2. Your REALTOR® has many resources to assist you in your home search. Sometimes the property you are seeking is available but not actively advertised in the market, and it will take some investigation by your agent to find all available properties.
3. Your REALTOR® can assist you in the selection process by providing objective information about each property. Agents who are REALTORS® have access to a variety of informational resources. REALTORS® can provide local community information on utilities, zoning. schools, etc. There are two things you'll want to know. First, will the property provide the environment I want for a home or investment? Second, will the property have resale value when I am ready to sell?
4. Your REALTOR® can help you negotiate. There are myriad negotiating factors, including but not limited to price, financing, terms, date of possession and often the inclusion or exclusion of repairs and furnishings or equipment. The purchase agreement should provide a period of time for you to complete appropriate inspections and investigations of the property before you are bound to complete the purchase. Your agent can advise you as to which investigations and inspections are recommended or required.
5. Your REALTOR® provides due diligence during the evaluation of the property. Depending on the area and property, this could include inspections for termites, dry rot, asbestos, faulty structure, roof condition, septic tank and well tests, just to name a few. Your REALTOR® can assist you in finding qualified responsible professionals to do most of these investigations and provide you with written reports. You will also want to see a preliminary report on the title of the property. Title indicates ownership of property and can be mired in confusing status of past owners or rights of access. The title to most properties will have some limitations; for example, easements (access rights) for utilities. Your REALTOR®, title company or attorney can help you resolve issues that might cause problems at a later date.
6. Your REALTOR® can help you in understanding different financing options and in identifying qualified lenders.
7. Your REALTOR® can guide you through the closing process and make sure everything flows together smoothly.
8. When selling your home, your REALTOR® can give you up-to-date information on what is happening in the marketplace and the price, financing, terms, and condition of competing properties. These are key factors in getting your property sold at the best price, quickly, and with minimum hassle.
9. Your REALTOR® markets your property to other real estate agents and the public. Often, your REALTOR® can recommend repairs or cosmetic work that will significantly enhance the saleability of your property. Your REALTOR® markets your property to other real estate agents and the public. In many

markets across the country, over 50 percent of real estate sales are cooperative sales; that is, a real estate agent other than yours brings in the buyer. Your REALTOR® acts as the marketing coordinator, disbursing information about your property to other real estate agents through a Multiple Listing Service or other cooperative marketing networks, open houses for agents, etc. The REALTOR® Code of Ethics requires REALTORS® to utilize these cooperative relationships when they benefit their clients.

10. Your REALTOR® will know when, where and how to advertise your property. There is a misconception that advertising sells real estate. The NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® studies show that 82 percent of real estate sales are the result of agent contacts through previous clients, referrals, friends, family and personal contacts. When a property is marketed with the help of your REALTOR®, you do not have to allow strangers into your home. Your REALTOR® will generally prescreen and accompany qualified prospects through your property.
11. Your REALTOR® can help you objectively evaluate every buyer's proposal without compromising your marketing position. This initial agreement is only the beginning of a process of appraisals, inspections and financing — a lot of possible pitfalls. Your REALTOR® can help you write a legally binding, win-win agreement that will be more likely to make it through the process.
12. Your REALTOR® can help close the sale of your home. Between the initial sales agreement and closing (or settlement), questions may arise. For example, unexpected repairs are required to obtain financing or a cloud in the title is discovered. The required paperwork alone is overwhelming for most sellers. Your REALTOR® is the best person to objectively help you resolve these issues and move the transaction to closing (or settlement).

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EQUAL HOUSING REALTOR®

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