

BUYER'S GUIDE

Hire the Right Agent: 8 Questions to Ask

What to ask before you sign a Buyer Representation Agreement



INTRODUCTION

Not all agents are the same. In Ontario, anyone who completes the required RECO courses can become a registered real estate salesperson — but that doesn't mean they understand your market, your situation, or how to actually negotiate on your behalf. Before you sign a Buyer Representation Agreement, ask these eight questions.

01

Are you registered with RECO?

In Ontario, all real estate agents must be registered with the Real Estate Council of Ontario (RECO). You can verify any agent's registration at reco.on.ca. An active registration means they've met the educational requirements and are in good standing. This is your baseline — not a differentiator on its own, but it's the first thing to confirm.

02

How many buyers have you represented in the past 12 months?

Activity level matters. An agent who works regularly has current knowledge of the market — what's selling, what's sitting, how competitive offer nights are getting, and where deals are actually happening. An agent who does a few transactions a year may be perfectly capable, but they may lack the real-time feel that helps you make smart decisions quickly.

03

Do you specialise in the type of property and area I'm buying in?

An agent who works primarily in detached homes in Mississauga may not be the best fit for a condo purchase in downtown Toronto — and vice versa. Ask specifically about their experience with the property type and neighbourhood you're targeting. Local knowledge is hard to fake and easy to test: ask them what a property like the one you want typically sells for.

04

How do you approach offer night and negotiation?

This is where your money is made or lost. Ask for specifics — not just "I negotiate hard." What strategy do they use in a multiple-offer situation? How do they advise on offer price when there are competing bids? How do they handle a seller who counters? You want someone who gives you real, tactical guidance — not vague reassurances.

05

How do you communicate with clients?

Misaligned communication expectations cause more client-agent frustration than almost anything else. Do they respond within hours or days? Do they call or text? Do they send you listings or wait for you to find them? Get clarity on this upfront. In a fast-moving market, delayed communication can cost you a home.

06**Will you be representing me personally, or will I be handed off to a team member?**

Some agents operate as part of a team where junior agents do most of the client work. There's nothing inherently wrong with this — but you should know it upfront. If you're hiring a specific person because of their reputation, make sure they're actually the one showing up to appointments, reviewing offers with you, and negotiating on your behalf.

07**Can you provide references from recent buyers?**

A confident, experienced agent will have no hesitation providing references. Ask specifically for buyers (not sellers) who purchased in the last 6 to 12 months. When you speak to them, ask whether the agent was proactive, transparent, and whether they'd use them again. The answers are usually telling.

08**What does the Buyer Representation Agreement cover, and what are my obligations?**

In Ontario, buyers are now required to sign a Buyer Representation Agreement (BRA) before an agent can show you homes on their behalf. Understand what you're signing: the duration, the geographic scope, the commission structure, and what happens if you want to end the agreement early. A good agent will walk you through it line by line.

Ready to take the next step?

Let's talk about your situation. I work with buyers across the GTA and specialise in helping people make confident, informed decisions in this market.

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