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Real Estate Agents Answer: What Are Your Best Relocation Tips?



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Real Estate

I break down real estate concepts for first-time homebuyers.



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Relocating to a new area can be a huge undertaking. In an effort to make that transition easier, I asked real estate agents to share some of their best relocation tips. Read on below to see what they had to say about making the most of your big move.

Get a referral

My biggest tip is to find a real estate agent local to where you live now, who you would trust if you were simply moving down the street. Ask them to connect you to an agent in the area of your upcoming move.

They will often find someone within their network that works in a similar manner and upholds the same values. It's so much easier to work with those who have been recommended to us and they are typically someone with whom we have a better likelihood of building a strong relationship.

David Stroh, a real estate agent with RE/MAX Plus in Frederick, Maryland

Avoid asking your agent for statistics

Asking an agent for “a safe area” or what area has [insert classification] people living there is actually illegal for them to answer. Real estate agents can not give you statistics or numbers for anything that has to do with people. That means you should not ask them about crime, religion, education, nationally or anything close to it.

Asking those questions puts your agent in a weird spot because they want to be as helpful as possible, but also not break the law. Do your own research, there are plenty of websites that track all the stats and have lots of descriptions about neighborhoods.

Travis Carroll, an agent with Oxford Property Group in New York, New York

Do your research

I think it is critical that buyers do their research online, not just for the type of home they may want, but also the area and the neighborhood. Buyers need to consider what is important to them: schools, crime stats, amenities, density, walkability, commute time, outdoor activities.

Jo Ann Bauer, an agent with The Ozer Group of Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage in Scottsdale, Arizona

Plan a visit

Take a weekend to really discover the neighborhoods that you are attracted to – as if you lived there. Walk along the sidewalks, talk to neighbors, visit schools, parks, dine, shop. Become a local and see if the area fits your criteria.

Valerie Burmester, a broker with Marketplace Sotheby's International Realty in Redmond, Washington

Think about renting first

My tip for a potential buyer relocating to a new city is not to actually become a buyer, at least not immediately.

It's very unlikely you're going to find the perfect place without having lived in the city first. Buying in the wrong place or even just one that is less than ideal is a costly mistake.

I recommend renting for a year, seeing different parts of the city, and figuring out where you want to be before taking the plunge into buying.

James McGrath, a broker with Yoreevo, LLC in New York, New York

Consider a rent-to-own property

If you are unsure of the area and where you may want to live, but don't want to “throw away” money on renting, ask your realtor about houses that are being sold lease-to-own or rent-to-own.

This way, if you decide that you do love the house and the location, part of the money you are paying in rent will go towards paying off the house at the end of your lease. If you decide you do not like the house or the location, you can simply move at the end of the lease.

Melanie Hartmann, owner of Creo Home Buyers in Baltimore, Maryland

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