

Checklist for House Hunting

If you are thinking of buying a home in the near future, a REALTOR® can provide invaluable help in finding the right home in the right price range in the area you want to live. Through access to the Multiple Listing Service, (MLS®) a REALTOR® can give you a customized list of homes for sale that match your needs and wants and budget.

A house hunting checklist will help you keep track of the advantages and drawbacks of each home. Ensure the checklist includes the basic information regarding location, asking price, annual property taxes, mortgage terms and any applicable zoning restrictions.

Exterior

Jot down your impressions of the exterior of the home, noting the lot size and shape, position of the home on the lot (facing north, south, east or west). Note the condition of the landscaping and whether the yard is fenced.

Check the condition of the siding and note whether the home has an attached or detached garage. Be sure to take a good look at the roof and note its general condition and age. It's also important to examine the foundation of the home for any visible cracks or holes.

Interior

Note whether the home has a separate front hallway. Check the windows to ensure they open and close easily and note the general condition of the doors. The kitchen is an important room in any home, so pay attention to its size, the condition of the appliances, sink, cupboard space, counter tops, flooring, lighting and electrical outlets. Be sure to ask whether any or all of the appliances are included in the sale.

It may be that a separate dining room, a family room and fireplace is important to you. Note also the size of the bedrooms and closet space and whether there are any window coverings or adjoining bathrooms. Also make note of the flooring and room colours.

Make notes on the number and size of bathrooms and the conditions of the fixtures. Check all faucets and flush toilets to make sure they are in good working order and to see if there is adequate water pressure.

Basement

Check whether the basement is full or partial, finished or unfinished and whether there is adequate room for walking about. Note whether there is a utility area and whether the washer and dryer are being sold with the house. It is also very important to ask about the type of heating, water service, plumbing (copper or other), electrical amperage and insulation.

Your REALTOR® will be able to help you with questions you are unsure of. It is also a good idea to have a professional building inspector examine any home in which you are seriously interested.