



Compensation, Buyer Access + Your Net

Understand how compensation is documented, then compare each choice with buyer reach, service, negotiation and the seller's realistic net proceeds.

Written buyer agreements

Buyers generally sign a written agreement with their agent before touring homes. The agreement explains the services being provided and how the buyer's agent may be compensated.

Compensation is not displayed in the MLS

Offers of buyer-agent compensation are no longer displayed in the MLS. A seller may still choose to offer compensation, but the amount and method must be discussed and documented outside the MLS.

There is more than one payment structure

The seller may agree to pay some or all of the buyer-agent compensation, the buyer may pay it, or the parties may negotiate another arrangement. The signed agreements control.

Scenario one: limited buyer reach

A seller lists at \$600,000 and does not offer buyer-agent compensation. The home receives fewer showings and no acceptable offer. After a later price reduction, the seller accepts \$565,000. This is only a hypothetical example, but it shows why fee decisions should be considered alongside buyer demand and final net proceeds.

Scenario two: broader buyer access

A seller lists at \$600,000 and negotiates compensation terms that make the property accessible to more qualified buyers. The home receives stronger activity and multiple offers. Again, results are never guaranteed, but broader reach can create more opportunity.

Look at the whole result

Compare the expected sale price, preparation and marketing costs, negotiated credits, agent compensation and closing expenses together. A net sheet is more useful than looking at one percentage by itself.



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Compare the Service + Avoid Assumptions

Similar fees can include very different service. Compare the actual launch, exposure, communication and negotiation plan instead of relying on one claim.

Presentation and launch

Will the agent provide professional photography, staging guidance, accurate property details, video or virtual media when appropriate, and a thoughtful launch plan?

Exposure and follow-up

Ask how the home will be promoted online, through the MLS, to local agents and through social media. Find out how showing feedback and buyer questions will be handled.

Pricing and negotiation

A strong agent should explain the comparable sales, current competition, pricing strategy, offer terms and likely seller net - not simply promise the highest price.

Communication

Clarify who will be your main point of contact, how often you will hear from that person and how quickly questions will be answered.

More years always means better results

Experience matters, but so do current marketing skills, local knowledge, responsiveness and recent results. Ask what the agent has sold recently and how those listings performed.

A large team is always better

A team can offer resources, while an individual agent can offer direct, personal attention. Find out exactly who will handle pricing, communication, showings, offers and escrow.

The lowest commission automatically saves money

A lower fee may be a good value, but only if the service and strategy support your goals. Limited preparation, weak exposure or poor negotiation can cost more than the fee saved.



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Questions About Strategy + Service

Use these questions to compare the plan behind the price and learn who will actually handle the work.

1. What is your marketing strategy for my home?

Ask for specifics about photography, online exposure, video, social media, agent outreach and open houses.

2. What is your pricing strategy?

The agent should explain the comparable sales, current competition, condition and likely buyer response.

3. How will you handle showings and open houses?

Discuss scheduling, security, feedback and how the home will be prepared for each appointment.

4. What is your recent track record?

Ask about homes similar to yours, average market time, list-to-sale price and how often the agent represents sellers.

5. Who will be my main point of contact?

Know whether you will work directly with the agent or with different team members throughout the transaction.



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Questions About Costs + The Right Fit

The answers should be clear, specific and comfortable for you. The right relationship combines trust, preparation, communication and a plan that fits your goals.

6. How do you use video?

Ask how video helps buyers understand the home and how it will be shared beyond a single social post.

7. What costs should I expect?

Request a clear explanation of compensation, preparation, staging, photography and other possible seller expenses.

8. What sets your approach apart?

Look for specific skills, resources and service standards instead of general promises.

9. What happens if the home does not sell quickly?

Discuss the plan for reviewing feedback, competition, presentation, pricing and market changes.

10. Can I see recent reviews or references?

Recent client experiences can help you understand communication, follow-through and problem solving.

My promise to you

I will explain your choices, show you the numbers, be honest about the tradeoffs and keep the process personal. You should always understand what you are paying for and why.

A quick note

Agent compensation is negotiable and must be documented in the appropriate agreements. This guide is general information and is not legal, tax or lending advice.