

Need-to-Knows about Virtual Showings



Remote property tours have become more common since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Buyers may be reluctant or unable to travel, sellers may not want strangers in their home, or local restrictions could prohibit in-person showings.

Fortunately, virtual showings are now an increasingly viable alternative to in-person showings. What do you need to know about buying a home without setting foot in it?

1. Expectations and responsibilities

First and foremost, remember that your buyer's rep may be shooting video for you, but it's up to you to interpret what you see. Your agent will be serving as your "eyes," but any conclusions and decisions are yours.

Expect to be asked to sign a sight unseen waiver, which acknowledges your responsibility to verify that a property meets your requirements, subject to a professional inspection. Discuss this document with your buyer's agent before signing, to ensure you understand it.

2. Define priorities

To ensure a virtual showing addresses all your concerns, it's essential to communicate your priorities in advance. That way, your agent will be better positioned to show you everything you need and want to see and help prevent any unpleasant surprises.

3. Touring the home

Don't hesitate to ask your agent to provide different camera angles and zoom in on any details you want to inspect closer. This is your chance to see rooms and features—and any cosmetic damage—that wasn't visible in the listing photos.

Remember, no home is flawless. The goal is to get a comprehensive look at the property—the good and the bad—before submitting an offer.

While your agent is in the home, be careful about making statements that could hurt your negotiating position if the sellers are listening. Many homes have listening devices and security cameras.

4. Outside the home

Be sure to inspect the home's exterior, too, as well as every corner of the lot and views from the property.

Are you concerned about the proximity or the appearance of adjacent properties? Are you satisfied with the amount of street traffic, access to parks, and other aspects of the neighborhood?

5. Debrief

Once your agent has left the property, review the highlights, lowlights, and questions. Your agent may be able to get answers from the listing agent (such as details on energy costs).

Other questions like a deck's age and structural integrity are best answered by a professional inspector or treated as a contract contingency.

Buying a home remotely may not be ideal, but today's technology makes it much easier and safer. Now, more than ever, it's essential to have a trusted real estate professional by your side, watching out for your interests. That's the benefit of working with an Accredited Buyer's Representative (ABR®).

The Accredited Buyer's Representative (ABR®) designation is awarded by the Real Estate Buyer's Agent Council (REBAC), a subsidiary of the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR).

To learn more about REBAC and access various home buyer resources, please visit [REBAC.net](https://www.rebac.net).

