



Choosing an estate agent

Estate agents are experts in selling properties with a wealth of experience. Make sure you choose a good one.

1. You can't beat **word of mouth**, so ask family, friends and neighbours who have moved recently about their experiences and recommendations.
2. Create a **shortlist of local estate agents** with Rightmove's 'Find an Estate Agent' facility. Things to consider are:
 - How do they sell themselves? - Every estate agent on Rightmove has a profile describing their business. See if they seem professional and successful
 - What professional bodies do they belong to? - Some key names to look out for are the Ombudsman for Estate Agents (OEA), the National Association of Estate Agents (NAEA) or Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)
 - What other types of properties are they selling? Are they similar to yours?
 - How are they presenting their other properties online? Are you impressed?
3. Independent research from the British Market Research Bureau found that 1 in 4 buyers **first found their property on Rightmove**, so make sure your agent can advertise your home on the UK's number one property website. Rightmove is visited by millions of homemovers every month so don't miss out on potential buyers!
4. The **sold boards** outside properties are a good indication of which agents are doing well and which are not.
5. **Pay them a visit.** Check out their premises. Is the office clean and professional? Do they have well-presented property displays in the window? Ask to see examples of property details so you can see what yours will potentially look like.
6. **Narrow down your list** to approximately three finalists who you want to invite to do a valuation. The highest valuation is not necessarily the best, as an over-priced house will not sell.
7. A good agent will **invest in marketing** on behalf of the vendor and should, at the very least, take photos of your property and compile a description. Ask agents about Rightmove enhanced advertising options, Showcase and Premium Display to help sell your home faster.
8. **Get advice.** As well as selling your property a good estate agent should be able to offer you help along the way, including advice on conveyancing and financial services. However, you will still need proper legal representation when the official paperwork is required.
9. **Check the small print.** Once you have selected your agent, make sure that you check the terms of appointment. It is your responsibility to know what you have agreed to before signing anything legally binding.
10. It is important that you negotiate with each agent to get the best **commission rate** you can, but remember that the lowest rate doesn't always mean the best service. With such an important transaction, check exactly what they are providing for their fee. You may find it is worth paying more to choose a proactive agent who will ultimately achieve a better price for your property. Finally, always make sure there are no other costs to consider.
11. How often can you expect feedback? Don't forget, estate agents who are members of Rightmove can give you personalised reports on the **interest being shown in your property**, ensuring you are kept informed every step of the way.