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Home buyers and sellers are hearing a lot of distracting information about the real estate market today. Reports that prices are still too high, there are too many houses on the market, loans are difficult to get and housing just isn't the investment it used to be all discourage consumers from entering the market. The good news is that Mississippi

# IMPORTANT

real estate markets remain a stable and responsible marketplace for home buyers and sellers.

# TRUTHS ABOUT MISSISSIPPI'S REAL



# 1

**All real estate is local. There is no such thing as a national real estate market.**

If you pay attention to the news media, you might think that real estate markets are troubled everywhere. Not true! If you're considering buying or selling a home, pay attention to sales price trends, volume and inventory in your target market. Get the facts straight by talking to a local REALTOR®.

# ESTATE MARKETS

**A house is not a place to make a quick buck. It's a place to call home.**

Despite the recent popularity of television shows like "Flip this House", real estate was never meant to be a quick-in, quick-out proposition.

Homeownership provides shelter, a place to raise a family, a greater sense of community and a better quality of life – not to mention savings accumulated through equity and tax benefits. No paper investment can claim all of these benefits.

**Now is a good time to buy.**

Housing inventory levels in many markets are high and interest rates are at historic lows. Contrary to perceptions, conventional mortgages are widely available at favorable interest rates for the bulk of homebuyers. Buyers with good credit and a realistic view of what they can afford should have no difficulty obtaining mortgage approvals.

# 3



**REALTORS® add value to the real estate transaction – and your bottom line.**

Studies show that sellers who use a REALTOR® get up to 26 percent more for their home. REALTORS® handle hundreds of real estate transactions over the course of their careers and can counsel and guide buyers and sellers through the process. They have the expertise and experience to help sellers protect their investments and help buyers build theirs.



**Purchasing a home in Mississippi is a great long-term investment. Homeownership is still the number one way that Mississippi families build wealth.**

Did you know that 60 percent of the average homeowner's wealth comes from their home's equity? The average renter's net worth is \$4,800, while the average homeowner's net worth is \$171,000. And the average return on a five percent down payment over 10 years is usually three to five times greater than stock market returns. Real estate has delivered the most consistent positive return over any investment over the past 40 years.



**MISSISSIPPI ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®**

## Ten Rules to Follow When Buying a Home

1. Stay put. Commit yourself to your new home for at least a couple of years before making your next move.
2. Money matters. If you're considering a mortgage, shore up your credit and get a copy of your credit report.
3. Get pre-approved. Save yourself the time and grief of looking at houses you can't afford.
4. Determine how large your mortgage can be. Explore different loan options to determine what is best for you.
5. Decide what (and where) you want to buy. Prioritize your needs (i.e., location, schools, amenities).
6. Consider your re-sale value. Even if you don't have school-aged kids, a strong school district is a good thing.
7. Do your homework. Bid based on sales trends of similar homes in the neighborhood.
8. Calculate the hidden costs. Property taxes, insurance, maintenance and association fees can impact your wallet over time.
9. Don't be house poor. Double and triple check to be sure you haven't maxed yourself out on the cost of your home and left nothing for maintenance, etc.
10. Get help. Consider hiring a REALTOR® to get the most for your money. It pays to have someone looking out for your interests.

## Ten Rules to Follow When Selling a Home

1. Hire a good agent. A professional who knows your neighborhood and has a good track record in your community will go a long way in helping to find a buyer.
2. Clean out the clutter. Open spaces look best. Clean, and clean some more to make a good first impression.
3. Spiff up the property. Make any improvements that will improve the show of your home. When possible, stick with the simpler (and less expensive) options to be sure the buying price covers your investment.
4. Determine the worth. Know the fair market value of your home. Your REALTOR® can help you assess the cost. You may also want to have the home appraised.
5. Price it right. A REALTOR® can help you objectively set the price so that it reflects the value of your home and the trends of the surrounding community.
6. Come up with a plan. Are you set on your price, or eager to move? How low are you willing to go to settlement?
7. Get pre-approved for your next move. If you're looking to buy another house, make sure you know your financial situation.
8. Figure out your selling costs. Commission, ad costs, attorney fees, taxes and prorated costs may all come into play. REALTORS® deal with transactions every day and can give you a very close estimate of seller closing costs.
9. Set the stage. Clean the windows, open the curtains, turn on the lights, display fresh flowers. A bright house is a welcoming house.
10. It's show time. Be ready and willing to have your home shown any day, even with short notice. Making it difficult to see will also make it difficult to sell.

Get more home buying and selling information online:  
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