REAL ESTATE EDUCATION SERIES

RE/MAX Properties

Making a Competitive Offer

Make a strong offer and keep room for negotiation

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A competitive offer combines a realistic price, credible financing, and terms the seller can accept. Be ready to negotiate the details while staying within your budget and protecting the conditions that matter most to you.

01 Know the market and your limit

Review recent comparable sales, property condition, time on market, and competing offers with your broker. Decide your comfortable maximum, including repairs and closing costs. A competitive offer should fit both the property and your finances.

02 Show that you are prepared to close

Include a current lender preapproval, or appropriate proof of funds for a cash offer. Confirm your lender can meet the proposed timeline. Preapproval strengthens credibility, but is not a guarantee of final loan approval.

03 Learn what matters to the seller

Ask about the seller's preferred closing and possession dates, included items, and other priorities. A timing change may help bridge a price disagreement. Any post-closing occupancy needs clear written terms, insurance review, and lender approval where required.

04 Make the offer clear and workable

Specify price, earnest money, financing, contingencies, closing date, and a reasonable response deadline. Offer only terms you can fulfill. A larger earnest-money deposit increases money at risk; understand the contract's refund and default provisions before committing.

05 Keep meaningful protections

Discuss financing, appraisal, inspection, title, and other relevant protections before shortening or waiving them. An appraisal-gap promise can require additional cash. Colorado contract deadlines and notice requirements matter; have your broker explain when and how you must act.

06 Trade terms thoughtfully

Treat a counteroffer as a chance to solve the remaining issues. Consider price, closing timing, repairs, or a permitted seller credit as a package. Confirm credits with your lender, and exchange concessions deliberately instead of giving up everything at once.

07 Stay constructive and document the agreement

Focus on the issues that affect value, safety, or your ability to close. Use inspection findings and estimates to support repair requests. Put accepted changes in signed written documents. Compromise when the overall deal works; decline terms that exceed your limits.

A PRACTICAL COMPROMISE

If price is the sticking point, ask whether a modest increase within your limit, paired with the seller's preferred closing date, could resolve it. Check the full cost before agreeing.