

## Beginning your home search

Beaver County – Getting ready to buy a new home is such an exciting time, but where do you even begin?

Sure, you can start on [realtor.com](https://www.realtor.com)<sup>®</sup>, browsing homes in your dream neighborhood and deciding what your must-haves and dealbreakers are, but what do you do when you decide it's time to get serious?

First, you want to visit your lender and get preapproved for a mortgage. This allows you to know how much you can afford in your housing search. If you want to make an offer on a home, you must be preapproved for a mortgage, so it is important to do that before you start looking. Next, it's time to reach out to a REALTOR<sup>®</sup>. A REALTOR<sup>®</sup> guides you through the homebuying process, making it as seamless as possible. If you don't have a real estate professional, ask friends, family and neighbors for recommendations or check out local REALTORS<sup>®</sup> online by visiting [mybcar.com](https://mybcar.com) and using our REALTOR<sup>®</sup> directory.

“In today's hectic market, homebuying has become more stressful,” said Beaver County Association of REALTORS<sup>®</sup> President Judy Plakosh. “A REALTOR<sup>®</sup> will show you houses that fit your criteria and then you can decide how to proceed, if you want to see the property in person and then make an offer if so desired. They will walk you through everything, step-by-step.”

Throughout the second half of 2020 and most of 2021, many areas have been hit with a lack of inventory, so homes are typically moving very quickly on and off the market.

“When someone decides it is time to buy, they need to be ready,” said Plakosh. “The most important things a buyer can do is get preapproved for a mortgage and know their must-have features.”

“Buying a home is one of the biggest financial transactions you will make in your life,” she added. “You should be prepared.”

*The Beaver County Association of REALTORS<sup>®</sup> is the voice for real estate in Beaver County.*