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For most of us, buying a home is the biggest purchase you will ever make in your life, by a long way.

Because the average family only moves every 7-10 years, it is hard to become an expert in something you simply don't do very often. With the market changing so rapidly the learning curve can be steep.

Here are the key tips I share with my clients, to help them make the best possible decision:

Finding your dream home

1. Learn about the market in your area.

Don't buy the first house you see. Or, at least look at a few other homes in the same area before you offer. Look at what else you can buy for your money. Ask agents for recent

comparable sales and ask how those sales compare to the property you are considering.

Drive past those recent sales and run a google search on those properties because often the professional photos will still be available online, long after the property has sold. Learning the market is the best way to avoid paying too much, or offering too little and missing out (which is often worse).

2. Don't offer on the first visit.

You are buying a massive asset. This is not the time to rush. Take a night to think it over. Have a 2nd look at the property. Drive past it late at night to check out the area. Do you have a family member who could look at it with you? Sometimes a second pair of eyes can be helpful. They will spot things that your emotional connection to the house won't let you see. Try out the commute during rush hour to see what it will be like.

Make a considered decision and you will avoid buyers remorse.

3. Buy for sun.

When friends and family are looking to buy, I tell them to focus on buying a sunny home. If a house gets good sun it usually sells quickly and for a good price.

Sunny houses are warmer, stay drier and are generally considered nicer to live in.

4. Think long term.

If you end up paying a high price for a property you will generally be fine as long as you hold onto it for a while and allow the market time to improve.

In other words, you don't necessarily have to time the market as long as you own your property long enough to ride out any temporary dips if they do come along.

Remember, whether you are looking for a home to live in or an investment, it's more important to buy the **right property** than it is to buy at the **right time**.