

SO MANY SITES TO SEARCH & HALF THE TIME THE PROPERTY ISN'T FOR SALE???!!!!

If you've ever searched for a property, and most of us have – and find when you call an agent for more information you're hit with the news that the property is already sold? Or that it sold months . . . even years ago? This is an all too common occurrence when searching for a home or property, and can be contributed to many factors. Many real estate websites are outdated, and don't keep current when updating their listings, especially if they are not using an automated IDX feed. It can also be in part - because real estate information trickles to many different sites through many formats, and when they go to "pending" or "sold" status, the site isn't set up to update that information, leaving properties out there that LOOK available, but in fact are not.

Another common issue when searching for a property is information overload. Many of the properties start to look similar, you forget if this house had 3 bedrooms, that house had acreage, just a lot of information and no way to organize it.

With so many websites out there vying for your attention; it's hard to know which ones are actually a reliable source for getting the information you want. I'm not here to tell you NOT to look at any specific sites. As a consumer you have more information now than ever before available to you – and that includes the many sites that you can search FOR properties. Each one has their own unique qualities. Some sites are more user friendly than others, while some sites provide other quality links to help inform you about the buying and selling process, helpful buying & selling tips, etc.

So this in a nutshell is a basic description of some of the most popular sites, how they work and what to know when searching them. This is all based on my opinion and experience when I step to the side of the consumer –

1. **Realtor.Com** - Realtor.com is an online resource for home buyers, and sellers with a comprehensive database of for-sale properties and the information, tools and professional expertise to help people purchase a home. It is official site of the National Association of REALTORS. What that means to you is that when you search a property through Realtor.Com, unless a property JUST went under contract, or has some special conditions that prevent the Realtor from moving it to "pending" status, if it shows for sale on Realtor.Com you can confidently make a phone call and not hear "oh that home was sold months ago". Realtor.Com is the website that every MLS feeds into giving you every Realtor's listings in one single site. Realtor.Com also offers virtually any other Real Estate information link you might need in a transaction including helpful Financing information, What's Your Home Worth Information, Area Specific Information, How to Find a Realtor and so much more. Realtor.com is very user friendly and even offers the opportunity to save searches, and will automatically email you when new listings come up that meet your search criteria. I do feel that when using on a laptop or tower the ability to search for land only is not as beneficial as the residential search. Either one of those searches you stand to have the most accurate and up to date listing when you ask your Realtor to set you up with an automatic search that feeds directly from their MLS association. It is at no cost to you. Realtor.Com is my number 1 go to choice when searching for a home next to have a personalized link set up by a Realtor. Realtor.com also offers an International site as well.
2. **Zillow.Com** - Zillow Group, or simply Zillow, is an online real estate database company. Zillow has become a very popular choice to view by potential buyers. It is user friendly – gives you many information link options. The problem I have experienced with Zillow is as mentioned above; outdated information. Zillow also does not provide ALL MLS listings, as some Realtor's have opted out of Zillow's use, and some Realtors have not uploaded their listing information - not aware there is the need to do so, and properties will show still active and for sale long after

they have been entered as pending sale, leading to confusion on the consumer side. Zillow's Zestimate is also not a reliable source of valuation of your home or property. The actual valuation of a home requires the most current market value in your particular area, and the sources of data used to compile for the estimates makes the Zestimate off skew many times. This in turn can mislead potential sellers, and can cost the seller exorbitantly if the seller uses that to base the sale of their home and sells way under actual market value, or in turn can create too much time on the market and loss in valuable potential buyers if the seller lists at a price that is actually way too high for their current market. This is why using a reputable realtor to get a current market value based off current comparable sales is vital. Overall I like Zillow, I just wouldn't use it as my number one source of finding a home or property. It is an incomplete database.

3. **Trulia.Com** – Trulia.Com is an online residential real estate site for home buyers, sellers, renters and real estate professionals in the United States. It lists properties for sale and rent as well as tools and information needed to be successful in the home search process. Trulia is virtually the same as Zillow as far as the positives & the negatives. Zillow actually owns Trulia.
4. **Landwatch.Com** – Landwatch.Com helps you find investment or recreational property, land for sale, hunting land, land auctions, farm and ranches for sale, waterfront properties, and premier properties (over 1 million). But the downside to Landwatch is it is consistent with outdated information. I get many calls from buyers on properties that have sold years ago. It does seem to have a current feed to most properties currently on the market, and is reasonable user friendly, the main downside is the out of date properties not for sale that still show up.

There are numerous other sites out there but the main goal of this editorial was to give you an insight to the most popular. If you are serious about your search my strongest advice is to let a Realtor know what you are looking for so they can help you with that search. Using one of our associates as your Realtor when you are the buyer DOES NOT COST you. We co-broke with other Realtors to split the commission being paid by the seller, so it's a win win for you. We can set you up with that link to fit your criteria at no cost to you and it keeps you informed on the most current & up to date properties on the market. Once the link is set up you get your own "property page" to mark properties you like, trash the ones you don't, highlight the ones you want to think about, etc. No one calls you, or prompts you to make a move forward, you get to look at properties at your own pace. Then when you are ready to make a move, or need more information, all you have to do is give one of us a text, email or phone call, and we will go to work gathering information for you or scheduling showings if you are ready to make that move. No matter where you look for properties it is always a good idea to find someone you can trust to help you through the process, help you find a lender, and so much more. We want to be that go-to company for you. We also offer a free one hour no-obligation to buyers and/or sellers – anytime. We can help make your search – find - & purchase easier and less stressful, and we work free to you!

Send questions or comments anytime!

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