

Thinking of
Relocating? Think
Delaware

Delaware Real Estate
**Buyers
Guide**



www.ActiveAdultsDelaware.com

Thinking of Relocating to Delaware, One of America's Top Places for Boomers to Retire?



Delaware is in the heart of the Mid-Atlantic Region. Less than a three-hour drive from both Philadelphia and Washington, DC, the Delaware beaches have been a magnet for retirees over the past several years and Delaware expects that trend to continue.

Rehoboth Beach, one of the most popular resort towns, features dolphins throughout the summer months, a mile-long boardwalk and more than 70 restaurants. Although living in Rehoboth is quite expensive, residents living in nearby communities are only several miles from the beach and can

take advantage of Delaware's favorable tax environment: low property taxes and no sales tax. Social security benefits are exempt from income tax and taxpayers aged 60 and older can exclude up to \$12,500 of investment and pension income.

At Active Adults Realty®, we are constantly gathering information about Delaware and our local real estate market. More and more articles are appearing regularly in leading magazines, including: **Money Magazine: Lewes, Delaware - one of the "Best Places to Retire," Kiplingers: Which states give Retirees best deal? Delaware!, Wall Street Journal: Coastal Charms. After years of vacationing in Delaware's Sussex County, more people are now calling it home.**

We look forward to keeping you informed about life in Delaware.



"Active Adults Realty is about our clients and their lifestyle first...where do you see yourself in this next phase of your life? We work with you to find the communities and homes that fit YOUR next chapter." -

Christine Davis - Owner / Associate Broker

Visit Our Website And Sign Up For Our
Monthly Newsletter

[Boomers and Beyond in Delaware](#)

Why You Need a Buyer's Agent

*Buyer's Agent, what's that?
Why should I care? Should I have one?
I am just driving around looking...*

We get these kinds of questions a lot. The truth is most people don't really understand how this works. For us, it means that we have made a conscious decision to actively seek out and work with Buyers. Helping people find the home that is just right for them. We rather enjoy it.

Why should you care? Buying a home is one of the most stressful things most of us ever do. It is also one of, if not the most important, financial decisions we make. And, many of our clients are relocating from out of state, which can compound the situation. You get the picture.

The best part for the Buyer is - you get all the professional services we offer for virtually no additional cost. I know what you're thinking but NO, you cannot get a better price if you go directly to the builder. It simply isn't true. In fact, it is common for those represented by a REALTOR® to spend less. Let's face it, you don't have easy access to information such as: When does the builder's fiscal year end? What builders are having a blowout incentive next month? What builder had a contract fall through and is now offering a super deal on that house RIGHT NOW!

You will have this information and more if you are being represented by us!

Should I have a Buyer's Agent now if I'm not ready to buy for another year or more?

Yes, for 2 reasons.

1. Builders are happy to work with us and our clients. However, they expect us to be with you when you visit their community. It is not an IMPOSITION, we know you may not be ready for a year; most of our clients are just like you.
2. Most important, by meeting you and spending time with you, we gain insight into what you are looking for and what you like to do. We develop a relationship that allows us to help you decide what is right for you. Remember, we don't represent the Builder or the Seller, we work for you. The commission, however, is generally covered by the Seller or Builder in the listing price.

So, just to review, should you have a Buyer's Agent?

Yes, you should ... and we hope you will choose to work with us.



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Reasons to use a REALTOR® When Buying a New Home

Many people think they can save money by not using a Buyer Agent, a REALTOR® who represents them. If they are interested in new construction, they often go directly to the builder's sales agent. This can lead to costly mistakes.

Consider the following reasons for being represented by a REALTOR® before making a commitment to purchase:

1. A REALTOR® understands the community.

A real estate agent familiar with the community will have the expertise to help you make better decisions when choosing your lot, your floor plan, and any optional upgrades.

2. A REALTOR® represents you, not the Builder

The builder's sales agents represent the builder, not you. They are employees of the builder and are happy to tell you about the community's selling points and each home's fabulous upgrade options. However, at the end of the day, a sales agent's job is to make sales and watch out for the builder's interests.

3. A REALTOR's® services to home buyers are generally covered in the listing price!

While it's true that REALTORS® do not work for free, the builders pay their commissions, not you. Homebuilders know REALTORS® can help them promote their communities. Builders anticipate this cost and factor it into the price of their new homes, whether you use a REALTOR® or not. Builders do NOT discount the price of their homes if you are not represented, so why not have someone on your side, looking out for your best interests.

4. A REALTOR® may help you save money.

While you may be a savvy negotiator, some REALTORS® have specific experience within a community that gives them an edge. They know what promotions may be coming up, and understand the community's history. This is especially helpful when you are buying a home in another state, where you do not know as much about the area.

5. A REALTOR® will consider your investment and the home's resale potential.

A builder's sales agents are primarily focused on the sale at hand. A good REALTOR® will have a more long-term interest in your investment. They will help you think about selling when you buy.

6. A REALTOR® can explain your options.

Builder's sales agents can tell you all the options that are available for new home construction in their communities. Once your REALTOR® knows what you want, they can help you find it – even if that means expanding your search to other communities or even existing homes in the same community.

7. A REALTOR® will know about hidden fees.

Which builder in what community charges impact fees or splits the transfer tax. What are the total closing costs to you? We know the answers and all the questions you don't know to ask.

8. A REALTOR® will make sure you understand the contract.

Even if you've bought and sold real estate before, the sales contract is likely to have some confusing wording. Each builder uses a slightly different contract but the right REALTOR® will help you fully understand everything in the agreement before you sign it.

9. A REALTOR® will even help during construction.

When buying a new construction home, it's a good idea to keep an eye on the progress while it is being built. This is not easy if you are relocating to the area and currently live far away. Fortunately, many REALTORS® are happy to attend construction meetings, take photos or videos, and send you progress reports. This allows you to focus on the steps you need to take to move into your new home.

**Whether Purchasing New Construction Or An Existing Home,
Trust The REALTORS® at Active Adults Realty® To Help!**

Services We Provide

When you team up with Active Adults Realty® to buy a home, here are the exceptional services you can expect from us:

1. We will introduce you to a local lender to find out exactly how much you qualify to borrow.
2. We will make sure that you know about everything for sale that meets your needs. If new construction is your goal, we will help you evaluate builders and communities.
3. We will help you create customized searches on our website, ActiveAdultsDelaware.com, with automatic email notification as new listings arrive on the market.
4. We will schedule showings for all homes that meet your criteria in the area.
5. Our assistance doesn't stop when you have found the right builder or home, we are with you every step of the way until settlement.
6. We have a team of Real Estate Professionals ready to help with all aspects of your purchase: Home Inspection companies, Home Warranty companies, Settlement Attorneys and everything else you could think of.
7. We will prepare and assist with all necessary paperwork and negotiate in your best interest all the time.
8. If you decide on new construction, here are the additional services your Active Adults Realty® agent will provide:
 - We will be with you at contract signing to ensure that you understand the builder's contract and ask all the right questions.
 - We will attend any selection meetings with you.
 - We will attend your pre-construction meeting and pre-drywall meetings and any other meetings with the builder
 - We will attend any meetings on your behalf if you are unable to be there.
9. Attend the walk-through with you to help identify any open issues and be there at settlement.
10. The team at Active Adults Realty® will assist your agent from contract through settlement.
11. After settlement, we will stay in touch and assist you with any questions or problems that may arise.



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Delaware At A Glance

Continuing Education: Opportunities for Continuing education are numerous. Coastal Delaware offers the following colleges and universities which allow people of all ages to further their education, expand their interests or offer their talents for teaching opportunities:

- ✓ *Delaware Technical & Community College -with campuses in Northern, Central and Southern Delaware*
- ✓ *University of Delaware - multiple campuses including the College of Marine Studies in Lewes*
- ✓ *Wilmington University*
- ✓ *Delaware State University*
- ✓ *Academy of Lifelong Learning*
- ✓ *Beebe School of Nursing*

More Ph.D.s: According to a survey by the National Science Foundation, Delaware has more doctoral-level (Ph.D.) scientists and engineers, as a percentage of the population, than any other state.

DELAWARE FACTOIDS

Capital: Dover

1st State Founded: December 7, 1787

State Bird: Blue Hen Chicken

State Tree: American Holly

State Flower: Peach Blossom

No. of Counties: 3, New Castle, Kent and Sussex Counties ... the fewest of any state having counties.

Largest City: Wilmington

Farmers' Markets: Delaware has 2,500 farms and a humid, temperate climate. It is protected from the cold winds of winter by the mountains of Pennsylvania.

Also known as a major dairy producer, livestock, and other related products account for 70% of Delaware's farm income with "Broilers" (young chickens) contributing the largest portion of Delaware's farm income.

Soybeans are Delaware's most important farm crop followed by corn, although farmers also grow barley and wheat. Potatoes and peas are its largest vegetable crops, but many other vegetables and fruits including a large variety of apples (Delaware's largest fruit crop) are found at the many local farmers' markets. Greenhouse and nursery products, flowers, ornamental shrubs and young plants are also cultivated. Make the effort to visit the following markets to support our local farmers.

Sussex County Farmers Markets

Historic Lewes Farmers Market - Saturday mornings, May - Thanksgiving, George H.P. Smith Park

Rehoboth Beach Farmers Market - Tuesday afternoons, starting in May.

Bethany Beach Farmers Market - Sunday mornings, May - September, Free metered parking

Milford Farmers Market - Saturday mornings, April - October, Riverwalk and South Walnut St.

Milton Farmers Market - Fridays late afternoon, April - October, 6 Village Center Blvd.

Kent County Farmers Markets

Fifer Orchards - Farm, Country Store - Camden Wyoming, DE

New Castle County Farmers Markets

Newark Farmers Market

For Detailed List of all of Delaware's Farmers' Markets [Check Out This Article from Delaware Online.](#)

Interesting Facts About Delaware

“The First State”

Delaware was the first state to ratify the federal Constitution - December 7, 1787, becoming the first state in the Union. And because of this, Delaware is given the first position in such national events as presidential inaugurations.

Delaware is the second smallest state in the nation with a total land area of 1,955 square miles.

Delaware shares a semi-circular border with Pennsylvania. The border was drawn at the time of the original land grants to William Penn from King Charles II and the Duke of York.

Today about 500 descendants of the original Nanticoke Indians reside in Delaware. They celebrate their heritage each September with the Nanticoke Indian Pow Wow.

Finnish settlers arrived in Delaware in the mid-1600s and brought with them plans for the log cabin. One of the cabins has been preserved and is on display at the Delaware Agricultural Museum in Dover.

The Lady Bug is Delaware's official state bug.

"Our Delaware" is the official state song. The words are by George Hynson, music by William Brown.

Ebright Road in New Castle County is the highest state elevation at 442 feet above sea level. The lowest elevation is along the coast at sea level.

Colonial blue and buff are Delaware's official state colors.

Delaware was named for Lord de la Warr. He was the first governor of Virginia.

America's newest tall ship, the Kalmar Nyckel is ten stories high and 139 feet long. The original ship landed on the Christina River in 1638.

The Delaware Breakwater at Cape Henlopen State Park was the first structure of its kind in the western hemisphere.

Rehoboth Beach is the state's largest coastal resort town. Methodists who purchase the land for a summer camp and meeting place originally constructed it.

The 87-foot **Fenwick Island Lighthouse** was painted in 1880 for a total cost of about five bucks.

Eleven concrete observation towers along the Delaware coast were constructed during World War II for locating and to direct the firing of the guns during an attack. One tower in particular sat seventy feet high upon the great dune. The peach blossom is Delaware's official state flower and has prompted Delaware's nickname as the peach state.

The state's **Coastal Heritage Greenway** consists of a corridor of open space running along 90 miles of coast and spanning the area between Fox Point State Park and the state line at Fenwick Island.

Thousand Acre Marsh is the largest freshwater tidal wetland in northern Delaware. The **Chesapeake and Delaware Canals** border the marsh.

Augustine Beach was named for Augustine Hermann. He was a Bohemian adventurer who mapped the Delmarva Peninsula and surrounding areas in the mid-1600s.

Odessa possesses one of the finest collections of late 18th and early 19th-century architecture in the Mid-Atlantic region. The center of town is on the National Register of Historic Places and the entire town has been zoned as historic.

The 80-foot Great Dune is the state's highest sand dune. It is located at Cape Henlopen State Park in Lewes.

The Du Pont Laboratories first produced nylon at its plant in Seaford. This earned the town the distinction of being the Nylon Capital of the World.

In recognition of sport-fishing and its overall recreational and economic contributions to the state of Delaware and of the specific values of the weakfish, the state Legislature adopted the weakfish as Delaware's State fish in 1981. This fish is also known as sea trout, gray trout, yellow mouth, yellow fin trout, squeteague, and tiderunner.

The sheaf of wheat, ear of corn, and the ox on the state seal symbolize the farming activities of early Delaware.

The **Delaware Indians** were one of the most advanced tribes of the eastern United States.

Wilmington's Delaware History Center is housed in a renovated, art deco former Woolworth five-and-ten-cent store.

Active Adults Realty® Answers Your Most Frequently Asked Questions

Can I get private health insurance?

This is important to retirees who are not yet 65. There may be a gap of 5 years or more between the time they are no longer covered by the health insurance of the company they worked for and their eligibility for Medicare. Or, perhaps they have been self-employed with coverage by a company that may or may not write insurance policies in Delaware.

For more information, visit the Delaware Insurance Department online.

<http://www.delawareinsurance.gov>

Is there personal property tax on automobiles in Delaware?

No, but when you bring a vehicle into Delaware there is a one-time document fee of 4.25% of the purchase price or NADA book value, whichever is greater. Minimum document fee is \$8.00. For more details please visit the DMV online or call the Delaware Division of Motor Vehicles at 302.853.1000 for Sussex County:

<http://www.dmv.de.gov>

Is School Tax extra?

In Delaware, School Tax is included and billed as part of your County Tax. That is important because homeowners age 65 and over that are Delaware residents for at least 10 years, may get a credit equal to one half of the school property taxes, up to \$400.

Taxpayers must pay their property tax bill in full by the end of each tax year in order to qualify for this credit for the subsequent property tax year. Learn more about how to qualify for the School Property Tax Relief for Individuals Age 65 or over - READ MORE

<http://finance.delaware.gov/publications/proptax/propmain.shtml>

Does Delaware have an income tax?

Yes, Delaware does have an income tax that ranges from a low of 2.2% to a high of 6.6%, depending on income bracket. Standard deductions are \$3250 if you are single and not itemizing or \$6500 if married, filing jointly and not itemizing. For more details, see Delaware's Tax Structure.

<http://revenue.delaware.gov/>

Does Delaware tax Social Security benefits?

No, Social Security and Railroad Retirement Benefits are exempt from Delaware Income Tax.

Have more questions about taxes in Delaware? Ask us!

Email Info@ActiveAdultsRealty.com

Delaware's Tax Structure

State Sales Tax: None

Gasoline Tax: \$.23/gallon

Cigarette Tax: \$1.60/pack

Personal Income Tax

Tax Rates: Low-2.2%; High 6.6%

Income Brackets: Lowest- \$2001 to \$5001;
Highest \$60,000

Number of Brackets: 6

Tax Credits: Single-\$110 • Married-\$220
Dependents-\$110 • Over 60 take additional
\$110

Standard Deduction: \$3250 if single; not
itemizing, \$6500 if married filing jointly;
not itemizing.

Medical/Dental Deduction: None

Federal Income Tax Deduction: None

Retirement Income Taxes: Social Security
and Railroad Retirement Benefits are
exempt. Tax payers 60 years old and older
may exclude \$12500 of investment and
qualified pension income. Out of State
government pensions qualify for the
pension exemption. Under age 60, \$2000
is exempt.

Retired Military Pay: Under 60 years of age
\$2000 is exempt, 60 years of age or over
\$12500 is exempt.

Military Disability Pay: Disability portion
Length of service pay- Member as of
September 24, 1975- no tax; Member after
September 24, 1975-taxed, unless combat
incurred.

Retired pay based solely on disability:
Member on as of September 24, 1975-no tax;
member after September 24, 1975-taxed,
unless all pay is based on disability and
disability resulted from armed conflict,
extra hazardous service, simulated war or
an instrumentality of war.

VA Disability: Dependency and Indemnity
Compensation: Not subject to state or
federal income tax.

Property Taxes: All real property is subject
to tax unless specifically exempt. Personal
property, tangible and intangible property
is exempt. Real Estate is subject to county,
school district, vocational school district
and municipal taxes. The state offers
various property tax relief programs
for residents age 65 and older and for
residents with disabilities. Homeowner age
65 and over that have lived in Delaware for
10 years may get a credit equal to one half
of the school property taxes, up to \$500.

Inheritance & Estate Taxes: In July
2005 the DE legislature eliminated the
requirement to file a Delaware estate tax
return for dates which the federal estate
tax does not allow credit for state death
tax (currently 2005 thru 2010). It also
eliminated the special lien on the gross
estate tax if the decedent dies on a date on
which the federal estate tax does not allow
a credit for state death taxes paid.

**To contact the Property Tax Offices in New Castle
County, call (302) 323-2600; Kent County, call (302)
736-2077 or Sussex County, call (302) 855-7760.**

**To contact the Delaware Division of Revenue,
Call 302-577- 8200 or visit www.state.de.us/revenue**

About Active Adults Realty®

Active Adults Delaware: Since 2006

As part of your research while considering a relocation to Delaware, we encourage our buyers to consider their lifestyle first. How do you envision your day to day life? Do you like to bike? Do you plan to volunteer? Are you still working? Do you want to visit the beach every day? Do you enjoy dining out with friends? Do you like to fish? Do you like to garden? What is your "Why"?

Bill and I are what we like to call "location people". We would rather live in a smaller home without all the bells and whistles in exchange for being close to everything. For others, they don't mind driving a little further in order to get their dream home.

One of the first questions we may ask is why are you considering Delaware for your next move? Most of the time the move is driven by retirement and our desirable property taxes! But you may still be working and need to take that into account. Do you need a home office? Or is a laptop on the kitchen counter sufficient?

Our job is not to sell you a home. We are here to educate and guide you through the process from beginning to end and help you find a home in a community that best fits your anticipated lifestyle. Our founder, Kathy Sperl - Bell, created Delaware-specific FAQ documents on topics that are especially relevant to those over 50, such as health insurance and tax regulations on income, automobiles and social security. You can also find information on a variety of lifestyle topics ranging from farmers markets to the best restaurants to dine with your dog!! These are all located on our blog on our website.

What is important to you in a home? In a community? We encourage you to learn as much as you can about Delaware living by reading our past blogs and signing up for our Newsletter. Our communities page on the website is second to none. The comprehensive descriptions and pictures will paint a picture of each community's makeup and personality.

Thank you for trusting our Brokerage as the starting point for your next move! Are you ready to get the conversation started and find out your why?

Christine Davis - Owner / Associate Broker - REALTOR®



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