

MOBILE HOME RESEARCH

Mobile Home Guide

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PO Box 5603
Kalispell
Montana 59903

Ph.406-885-7411

Do your homework

Rushing into a mobile home purchase before you do your homework can cost you thousands.

Don't rush into buying a new modular house. Begin by asking friends, relatives and acquaintances for advice about which house dealer (seller) gives the best service and what problems they have had with getting good work and service. If you don't know anyone because you're new to an area, be brave and go seek similar looking homes. Knock on doors and explain to them why you are at their house. Getting **information** about the **selling dealer** will help you avoid poor quality set-up work.

If you have just moved into the area from another state, even more you need to look and ask questions and make phone calls. Call the **Better Business Bureau** or Chamber of Commerce offices, and being from out of the area you don't know good/bad/ugly about a sales lot. Having a **sales lot** doesn't mean you will get quality work, as it's not like having a new car dealership and the "rules" of business are not the same.

DO YOUR

HOMEWORK

- Check out the dealer
- Try your own bank first
- Don't ever go alone
- Drive around the lot
- Avoid the salesperson

Get your own financing

After you made the decision to purchase a modular house or mobile home go to your own bank or credit union or other place and **GET YOUR OWN** line of financial credit worked out prior to talking to a sales person.

Most dealerships offer many lines of businesses that do special financing for manufactured houses, but in most cases the % rate will at least 5% above your own financing. If your credit rating too low for your own line credit, then most dealerships have a handful of places for financing hard-to-finance people. You will pay a higher interest rate, usually in the 7-14% range.

Getting your own house shopping loan in advance will mean a lower monthly payment that is more suited to your family's needs. Don't overlook loans from such places as **VA, Rural Development (govt.), Board of Housing, State**

Getting your own financing can save you thousands. **Board of Housing**, and tons of mortgage businesses offering packages that include land, home, well, and foundation all in one. Although places on the Internet offer financing, it is best to deal locally with building a home and paperwork needed. Plus, banks can help with problems with the selling dealer.

A next to last resort may be a **relative**. Just remember to give your relative some **legal protection** and use an attorney for all transactions. Be sure to check state or government financing by going to their "web site online" and see what they have to offer, maybe a loan at **1%** is possible in some states.

Use the dealer's financing as a **last resort**. They can get you into a house easier, but you will pay more. That doesn't mean you have to give in to the seller, you can/should still make the offer your way. After all, it is your money and you are making the monthly payments, so don't feel obligated to let the sales person write the sale the dealer's way. Many repossessed houses happened because the finance paperwork was written to benefit the dealer and the house was **overpriced**.

Don't ever go alone

So, you decided to go house shopping. Don't go alone, **EVER**.. You will be too overwhelmed to ask all the right questions. Take a friend or relative that is not going to live in the new house. You need another set of "eyes" to act as **Devil's Advocate** toward the sales person and see things you didn't.

You will need the following items for your investigation:

- Paper note pad**
- Ball point pen**
- Highlighter pen**
- Flashlight (small)**
 - The flashlight is to look in closets, look under sinks, and dark places. I would recommend a Mag Light type flashlight as it fits into a pocket/purse easily. Many dealerships won't have electric lights in the houses and you need to see "clearly".
- Camera**
 - You need one with a flash
 - By all means take some pictures and don't trust your memory, **take pictures**.

- Don't rely on brochures from the sales person, as they are very slanted.
- OK, so you don't own a camera; **go buy one** for heavens sake and avoid buying a house that will break your heart then your wallet at the same time. There are cameras anyone can use with just aim and push the button. The small disposable cameras with built-in flash are ideal, and cheap as they are you can buy one for each house you like and this will allow you to keep pictures.

Pick up brochures that are offered by the factory producing the house and use a see through marker (highlighter) pen to mark the important features of that house.

Get a blue print of the "floor plan" and **READ ALL**. Take your time and **NEVER** let the sales person know you have an **urgent need** for a roof over your head as it's like a **shark** drawn to blood.

Take a drive around the sales lot

Before you decide to take a walk through any modular or mobile home that you like, **TAKE A DRIVE** around the sales lot. Drive around and look at how the grounds are kept. Is the business messy or well kept? Are there piles of scrap lumber, old tire piles, plastic bundles, old house parts, etc?

The more a place is junked up, the more chances the work you get on your new house will look like the grounds where you bought the house. Sundays or after business hours is a good time to take a look without being hassled by sales people, and if you can't do thatthen **fake** them out by saying you're looking for some kind of flowery vinyl sheet rock panel for your 3-yearold house. Doing this will give you an idea what kind or how hard some house parts are to get (your future).

If the lot is junky, what kind of job do you think they will do on your house?

Many dealerships don't want to mess with or take the time to talk about **replacement parts**; just selling a new house is the # 1 priority.

Another good "fake out line" is to say you are in need of some plumbing parts or "**valves**" for your shower faucet. **Faucet** parts, all of them in the house, will be a problem if/when you need parts, so this fake out is a good idea. Use it to see how the business is going to help you. If you are told "we can't help you" and that you need to go to a local hardware store, expect that kind of service if you decide to purchase a home from this business.