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For many buyers, what is included in the sale of a home is often vague. According to the standard purchase contract used here in Dayton, the sale of a home includes all "real" property (or "real estate") meaning the land and everything that is permanently attached to it (including the house, trees, fences, etc.). Personal property, items that are not permanently attached (such as paintings, area rugs, furniture, etc.), are not included in the sale.

Questions often arise when negotiating a purchase contract, however, over those items of personal property that have been converted to real property by attaching them to the home. These are called "fixtures," and include window coverings, built-in appliances, television antennas, light fixtures, mailboxes and so on. Are these included in the sale price? To a great extent, the answer depends on you.

### **Appliances**

Built-in appliances are usually included in the sale. Often, free-standing appliances, such as the washer/dryer, refrigerator and stove (although technically personal property), can be included if the buyers specifically request them in the purchase contract and the sellers have no need of them in their new location. But don't assume they will stay. Unless they are specifically included in the purchase agreement, the sellers are under no obligation to leave them. It is also wise to remember that any appliances you do request are often not warranted. Make sure they are in good working order before you request them.

If there are appliances you don't want, such as that old freezer in the basement, make sure you put into the contract that the sellers must remove the item before closing. The last thing you want to do when moving into your new house is be responsible for hauling out the previous owner's junk appliances.

### **Fixtures**

Don't make the mistake of assuming that all fixtures will be included automatically in the sale. A good REALTOR® can help you specify items in the purchase contract so that you receive all the items you wish, such as fireplace tools and grate, pool and spa equipment, microwaves, water softeners and all window treatments (including shades, blinds, sheer curtains, draperies, rods, etc.). Bear in mind, though, that sometimes the seller will want to exclude some or many fixtures from the sale of their property for personal reasons. The most common exclusions are unique light systems. It is always wise to be sensitive to these exclusions for the sake of the larger deal. Purchase contracts commonly used in Dayton all include space for buyers to specify which fixtures they desire as well as space to write in items of personal property they would like the sellers to include in the sale.

### **Personal Property**

Some sellers may be annoyed at requests that personal property be included, such as the matching bedspread that goes with the Master bedroom window coverings. In these cases, it is best to ask your

REALTOR® to check with the Sellers, or the Seller's REALTOR®, before you start asking for personal property.

Working with a REALTOR® is the easiest and safest way to make sure your purchase contract is written to your desires, needs and benefit. Your REALTOR® can help you specify those properties and fixtures -- real and personal -- that can help begin making your new house your new home.