
Most Commonly Asked Questions About Getting A Real Estate Broker's License

Q. Do I need prior experience in real estate to apply for a broker's license?

A. Generally, you must have had a total of TWO full years of experience as a licensed real estate salesperson within the last FIVE years - or the equivalent thereof (see below). You need not have worked full-time for the two years. That is, the combination of full-and/ or part-time experience must add up to at least two years within the five years preceding the date of your application. If you have only one year of experience within the last five years, you may still qualify if you have a total of two more years of experience between 5 and 12 years ago.

Q. May I substitute equivalent activities for experience as a licensed salesperson?

A. Yes. A combination of equivalent activities may be approved (e.g. work as an escrow or title officer, loan underwriter, or subdivider). Submit BRE form RE227 for approval.

Q. I already have a broker's license in another state. Will the California exam be waived?

A. No. California has no reciprocity agreement with other states.

Q. May I substitute education for experience as a licensed salesperson?

A. Yes. You are exempt from the experience requirement if: (1) you have earned a four-year degree with a major or minor in real estate from an accredited college (submit a copy of transcripts or diploma), or (2) you are a member of California State Bar and have at least two years full-time licensed salesperson experience or have at least two years of real estate related experience practicing law in California. Submit BRE form RE227 for approval.

Q. What if my degree is from a foreign institution?

A. It must be reviewed by the BRE. Submit BRE form RE 223.

Q. Must I be a resident of California in order to apply for a broker's license?

A. No, but out of state applicants must submit a notarized Consent to Service of Process form (BRE Form RE 234).

Q. Do I have to be a U.S. citizen to apply for a broker's license?

A. No, although you will need to submit proof of legal presence in the United States. A U.S. birth certificate is most commonly used, although there are a variety of documents that establish proof of U.S. citizenship or legal alien status. Contact the BRE at 916-227-0931 for more information.

Q. What other qualification must I meet in order to take the broker's qualifying exam?

A. You must be 18 years old and successfully complete the qualifying courses listed below, as applicable.

Q. What courses must I complete to qualify for the Broker's Exam?

A. All of the following FIVE courses *must* be completed.

- Real Estate Practice
- Real Estate Finance
- Legal Aspects of Real Estate
- Real Estate Appraisal
- Real Estate Economics or Accounting*

In addition, THREE of the following eleven courses *must* be completed:

- Real Estate Principles
- Business Law
- Property Management
- Escrows
- Mortgage Loan Brokering and Lending
- Advanced Legal Aspects of Real Estate
- Advanced Real Estate Finance
- Advanced Real Estate Appraisal
- Real Estate Office Administration
- Computer Applications in Real Estate
- Common Interest Developments

* If both Economics and Accounting are completed, only TWO of the remaining courses must be completed.

Q. Is anyone exempt from these course requirements?

A. Yes. Members of the California State Bar are statutorily exempt from the college-level course requirements. Evidence of admission to practice Law in California must be furnished, such as a photocopy of both sides of a California State Bar membership card.

Q. Does the BRE have a website?

A. Yes: <http://www.bre.ca.gov> is the address. It has information for license applicants as well as consumers.

Q. How long after I get my notice do I take my exam?

A. You will be scheduled for the first available date on or after the date you indicate on your exam application, so make sure you're ready!

Q. Is the exam administered in a language other than English?

A. No, the exam is offered only in English.

Q. How long is the broker's exam?

A. 5 hours split into two equal sessions on the same day.

Q. How many questions are on the broker's exam?

A. 200.

Q. What is the minimum passing score?

A. 75% (i.e., 150 of 200 questions).

Q. What type of questions are on the broker's exam?

A. All questions are multiple-choice, with four choices.

Q. What is the BRE fee to take the broker's exam?

A. \$95.

Q. Is there a re-examination fee if I must take the exam again?

A. Yes. It's the same as the original exam fee: \$95.

Q. May I re-schedule an exam?

A. Yes. The first re-scheduling will cost \$20. Each subsequent re-scheduling will cost \$30.

Q. Does the BRE accept credit card payments?

A. Yes, by phone, mail, or fax. For further information, call 916-227-0988. The BRE's fax number is 916-227-0925 (24 hr).

Q. Are there any other State fees?

A. The BRE license fee depends on several factors. Check with the BRE for the most recent fee schedule.

Q. May I get a refund of BRE fees if I change my mind?

A. No, BRE fees are not refundable.

Q. May I ask for an expedited exam date?

A. No, your experience has to be verified.

Q. Is it possible to have the broker's exam waived?

A. No.

Q. What if I have physical limitations that require special accommodations at the exam site?

A. Submit a letter from a physician when you apply for the exam.

Q. Can I check about my exam date by phone?

A. If you haven't received a notice by mail within three weeks, you may phone the BRE Examination Section at 916-227-0900 or you can check on your exam date on the BRE's website.

Q. Can I learn my actual score?

A. Only if you fail. You will also be notified of the percentage of questions answered correctly in different subject areas.

Q. If I fail the broker's exam, do I have to take the qualifying courses again?

A. No! You just have to take the exam again.

Q. How many times may I take the broker's exam if I fail?

A. There is no limit, but the original application for the exam expires after two years. If you wish to take the exam again after the original application has expired, you must file a new application.

Q. Is an Exam Prep course required by the BRE before taking the broker's exam?

A. No, but we think it's indispensable. The broker's exam is widely agreed to be at a *much* greater level of difficulty than most real estate qualifying courses.

Q. What's the difference, if any, between the salesperson's and broker's exams?

A. Many questions appear on both exams, but the broker's exam has many questions that are much more difficult to answer than those on the salesperson's exam.

Q. What happens if the BRE determines that I am not qualified to take the broker's exam?

A. You have two years to complete the qualifications. The clock starts on the date of receipt of the application.