

Negotiation is an ability which pays. Here are a few ways you can become a better negotiator:

- Make sure you know what you are talking about and show you know it. Let everybody know that you have viewed plenty of homes, and that you understand the property market and how much the home should be worth. Asking well-informed questions is one way of showing you are not a customer who can be easily conned.
- Keep cool and don't look overly keen. If the seller sees how much you are in love with a home, they know you will be willing to pay more. Play a bit hard to get, and make sure they know you have seen a lot of houses. Don't rush into making an offer; take the time to think about it.
- Stay polite, however stressed or angry you feel. Aggression will not get you anywhere. Remember that if a seller has two equal offers, they will probably go for the buyers with whom they are on good terms.
- It is best to negotiate in person, not over the phone. This way you can better gauge the other person's reactions to what you say and respond accordingly.
- Estate agents are hard-nosed professional negotiators - be prepared for their ruthless bargaining tactics and don't let yourself be bullied. Take what they say with a pinch of salt, and try to look and feel confident.
- It can be worth contacting the seller directly, and there is nothing to stop you from doing so. Just remember they might be even tougher than the agent.
- While it is good to play it cool, don't be overly cautious or evasive, especially if you know the seller has received other offers or needs to sell very quickly. Assess your own and the seller's positions and act accordingly - if your position is not that strong, worrying over a relatively small sum of money could lose you your dream home.