

USE OF REALTOR® MARKS

Realtor® marks include the words, “REALTOR®,” “Realtor®,” and the Realtor® block “R” logo. The Realtor® marks were registered with the United States Patent and Trademark Office in 1949. Realtor® marks let people know that someone is more than just a real estate practitioner; that such real estate practitioner adheres to a strict Code of Ethics that protects clients, the public and other real estate agents. It is a valuable membership benefit that distinguishes members from other licensees.¹

Each Realtor® member is authorized to use Realtor® marks with their individual name. It is the case, however, that members are licensed to use the Realtor® mark only in the context of identifying themselves as a member of NAR. The primary concern is that the term “Realtor®” not be used generically as a substitute for “real estate broker” or “real estate agent.” Compliance with this limitation can be tested by substituting the term “member” for the term “Realtor®.” If the meaning is unchanged by this substitution, then the term, “Realtor®,” is appropriately used. Consider, for example, the following statement:

I make my living as a “Realtor®.”

If we substitute the word “member” for the word “Realtor®” the statement reads as follows:

I make my living as a “member.”

Obviously, a person makes a living as a real estate agent, not as a “member.” Therefore, the statement, “I make my living as a “Realtor®,” is not an appropriate use of the Realtor® mark.

¹ NAR’s preferred form of the word is “REALTOR®” – all caps with the registered trademark symbol. (To type “®,” hold down the ALT key while typing 0174 on the number pad on the right side of your keyboard.)

A member may not use Realtor® marks when identifying their relationship to a team. So, for example, a Realtor® mark cannot be used in a team name such as “John Doe Realtor® Team.”

A Realtor® mark cannot be used in the name of a firm, but may be used in connection with the firm name. So, “John Doe Realtors®, Inc.” is not permitted, but “John Doe Inc.” can identify his firm as a Realtor® firm if he separates his firm name with punctuation. For example: “John Doe Inc., Realtors®” or “John Doe Inc. – Realtors®.”

The term, “Realtor®,” may be used as part of a domain name so long as it refers to a member or a firm (and not a team). With usernames, email addresses and domain names, it is not necessary to separate the member’s name or firm name with punctuation.

“jdoerealtors@gmail.com” would be an acceptable email address.

Local and state associations may use geographic locations with the Realtor® mark, but individual members and firms may not. So, “Up North Association of Realtors®” is acceptable, but “Smith Family UP North Realtors®, Inc.” is not.

A member may not combine the Realtor® mark with words like “my” or “your.” So, for example, “YourFavoriteRealtor@gmail.com” is not an acceptable email address. A Realtor® mark cannot be used adjacent to a descriptive word or phrase. The following are examples of improper uses because they use a descriptive term in connection with a Realtor® mark:

bestRealtor®.com
hometownrealtor®@gmail.com
Number1realtor®.com

A non-member salesperson of a Realtor® firm cannot use the Realtor® mark even if it is used in connection with the firm name.

Blue and gold are the official Realtor® block “R” colors; however, members may use any two colors that sharply contrast. Members and member boards may not use the Realtor® logo block “R” in the absence of identification of the member, the firm or the member board. The Realtor® logo block “R” may be used on merchandise such as t-shirts and pens so long as the item also includes a member’s name or firm name. Members cannot use the Realtor® block “R” as part of a company name, for example, as the “R” in “Ron’s Realty.” A member may not combine the block “R” with additional design elements or otherwise personally “stylize” the Realtor® block “R.” There are also rules on the typeface, size and relative spacing of the elements in the block “R” logo. Rather than create their own block “R” logo, Realtors® are encouraged to download the logo from <https://www.nar.realtor/logos-and-tBtrademark-rules/the-realtor-logo>.

[Perhaps end by discussing MR’s process for obtaining permission to use block “R” on its new building – do we have a sketch/drawing of building showing the block “R?”]