

Property agent FAQs: Looking abroad

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This is the third of a three-part series where the Council for Estate Agencies (CEA) answers questions about property transactions that involve property agents.

Q I'm thinking of investing in overseas property. What should I look out for?

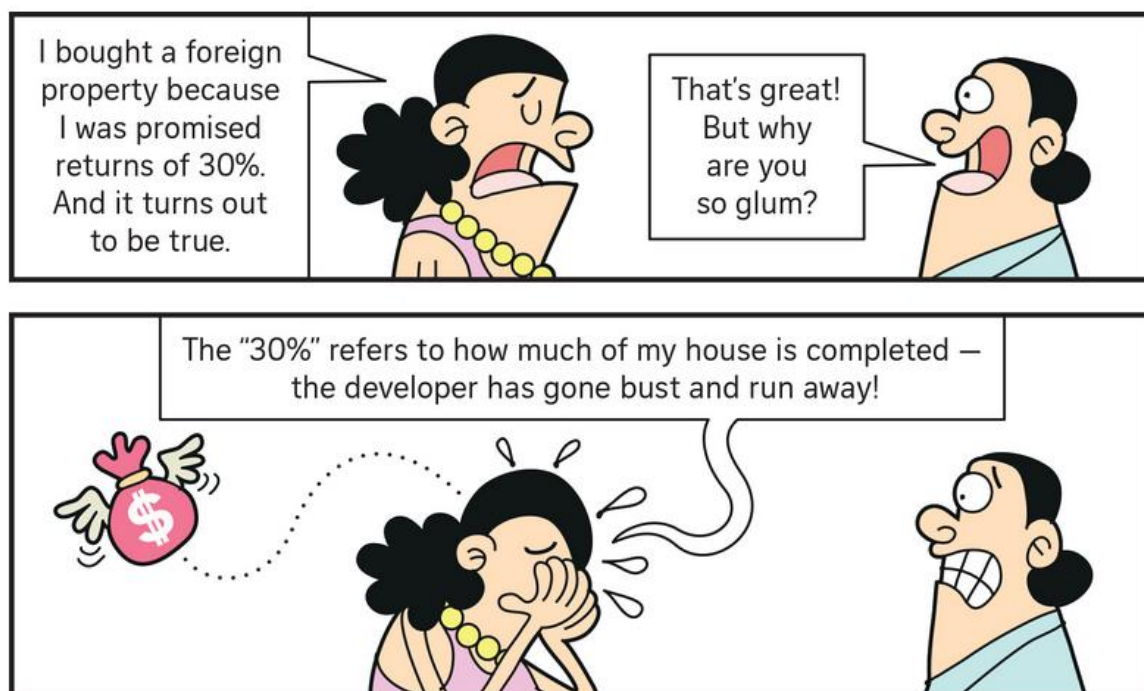
A Buying foreign property can be complex and risky. Look beyond the attractive claims of high returns and do your own research before buying any property.

Check the developer's track record and never assume that the developer has obtained the necessary approvals for the property.

You might even want to visit the site to verify if the property details are accurate, and see how close the purported amenities are.

Consider factors such as laws on foreign ownership of property, the political and geographical climate, and the costs of living.

Have a good understanding of the payment schedule.



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Apart from the upfront costs, be prepared for extra or hidden costs such as taxes, maintenance fees and mortgage interest payments. Consider foreign exchange fluctuations as well.

Read all the terms and conditions carefully, especially the fine print and disclaimers.

Where there are claims of high and guaranteed returns or irresistible promotions, ask for evidence. If you have any doubts, get independent expert advice from professionals such as lawyers, valuers or bankers.

Some foreign developers appoint local property agencies to market their overseas properties in Singapore. Local property agencies must adhere to guidelines set out by the CEA, including performing several preparatory checks and providing pertinent information to potential investors.

However, whether you are buying from the developer directly or through a local agency, exercise due diligence and do not rely solely on the information provided by the sales representatives.

In the unfortunate event that a foreign property investment goes awry, CEA does not have any jurisdiction over foreign developers and overseas properties. While CEA can discipline errant property agencies and agents, you will have to seek legal recourse to recover any monetary losses.

More information on what to look out for when investing in foreign property can be found on [CEA's website](#).

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