

THE TAX NUMBER

Your county assessor sets assessed value under California's property tax rules. It may reflect a purchase from many years ago.

THE SELLING PRICE

Market value reflects recent comparable sales, condition, location, and buyer demand. It is an estimate, not a guaranteed offer.

Why the gap can be big in California

Proposition 13 generally limits annual inflation increases to a property's base year value to 2%. Ownership changes or completed new construction can trigger reassessment, unless an exclusion applies. Similar homes can have different assessments because their owners bought at different times.

Exception: Assessments recovering from temporary Proposition 8 reductions can rise more than 2%, up to the applicable Proposition 13 value. The 2% limit is not a universal cap on your total tax bill.

ASSESSED VALUE

$420,000

ESTIMATED MARKET VALUE

$650,000

Illustration only. The $230,000 difference is not equity; equity also depends on what you owe.

Know what to check. Know what to ignore.

? “My assessment is low, so my home must be worth less.”

Not necessarily. A long ownership history can keep the tax value below today’s likely selling price.

? “My neighbor pays more, so their home is worth more.”

Not necessarily. Purchase timing and assessment history can explain the difference, even for similar homes.

? “An online estimate tells me exactly what I could get.”

It is a starting point. Automated estimates may miss upgrades, deferred maintenance, layout differences, and the quality of nearby sales.

Your 5 minute homeowner check

- ☐ Find the assessed value and tax year on your latest property tax bill.
- ☐ Note when you purchased and any major new construction or assessment changes.
- ☐ For a selling price estimate, compare recent nearby sales with similar size, condition, and features. Asking prices alone are not enough.
- ☐ If you believe the assessment exceeds market value as of January 1, contact your county assessor about a review and verify the applicable deadlines.

My assessed value: _____ Tax year: _____

My question: _____



Want a clearer picture of your home’s value?

Send me your address and ask for a home value review. I’ll help you understand the local sales behind the numbers. No plans to move required.

DEAN RINKER | Heirloom Properties
916.508.5353 | DeanSellsFast.com

General education, not tax or legal advice. Your county assessor can explain your specific assessment.

Sources: California BOE: How Property Is Assessed • Decline in Value
Prepared November 2026. Serving Sacramento, El Dorado, and Placer counties.