# Intro to Public Records:  Realist Course Notes

## Realist Overview

Realist is one of the public records tools included with your MLS subscription. Through Realist you can

- Research any property in Florida (all 67 counties).
- Find owner information, property characteristics, FEMA data, valuation trends, deeds and other public record filings, comparable tax and MLS sales, demographics and more
- Develop focused farming/marketing lists.
- Create highly targeted mailing lists and print labels.

## Ways to access Realist

- Stellar Central Workspace
- Tax Tab on home page in Matrix
- Tax ID hyperlink within a listing
- Realist Icons 🏛 🏛 on top of a listing (first icon accesses Property Detail Report and second icon launches multiple tabs)
- Matrix 360 Property Report

Realist can be accessed on any device and is mobile responsive.

## Accessing Realist Reports from a Listing

There are two Realist icons on top of a listing in Matrix.  🏛 🏛 The first Realist icon launches a Property Detail report, which is a synopsis of the property.  This report can also be accessed by clicking the Tax ID hyperlink within a listing. This report cannot be modified and only contains basic property information.

The second icon, which launches the property in Realist, displays it on the Realist map and gives access to multiple report tabs for full property detail report with links, comparable, market trends, neighbors, neighborhood demographic information, and the flood map. The foreclosure information is available if the property is in any stage of foreclosure.

Below is a general overview of the information found on the various tabs.

**Property Detail Report Tab**

- Owner Information - Ownership, address, whether property is owner occupied, type of ownership vesting, etc.
- Location Information – Subdivision, Property Description, Zoning, Flood Zone Code, Date & Panel, etc.
- Tax- PID (**click on hyperlink to access county Property Appraiser's site**), legal description, exemptions, exemption amounts, total taxable value, etc.

- Assessment and Tax – Assessment values and tax amounts for the past 3 years. **Click the "County Treasurer" button to link to the County Treasurer** (Tax Collector) site to see if property is up to date on taxes.
- Characteristics – A wide variety of characteristics on property including square footage, bedrooms, bathrooms, heating type, garage, construction, roofing material, pool, lot size, etc.
- Features – Extra information about garage, pool, porch, etc.
- Sell Score Indicator – This is based on a proprietary algorithm by CoreLogic and Indicates the relative likelihood a property will be listed for sale in the next 6 months.
    - Properties with a Very High Sell Score (831+) represent the top 5% of properties most likely to sell and are 2.6 times more likely to sell than the average property.
    - Properties with a Moderate to High Sell Score (502-830) are more likely to sell than the average property.
    - Properties with a Very Low to Low Sell Score (0-501) are less likely to sell than the average property.
- Estimated Value – The Real AVM value is a proprietary Automated Valuation Model from CoreLogic to provide an estimate on the value of this property.
    - An Automated Valuation Model (AVM) is a computer algorithm that values a property. Most AVMs look for properties in a similar location with a similar lot size, square footage, and characteristics.
    - The range shows a range of potential values and may be more useful than the exact value.
    - The Confidence Score is on a scale of 60-100 and shows the projected accuracy of the Real AVM based on the quality and quantity of comps found.
    - The Forecast Standard Deviation shows the percentage above and below the Real AVM value that the Real AVM Range falls.
- Listing Information – Pulls information from current MLS listing (if applicable) and historic MLS listings.
- Last market sale or history – Shows the sale history of the property. Also, in most cases, a hyperlink is provided to the Deed for each time the property changed hands.
- Mortgage History – shows the history of financing obtained for this property.
- Foreclosure History – will display, if applicable
- Property Map – shows property on the map, including estimated lot dimensions.

**Customize View, Print, and Email Reports**
*Customize View*- some tabs allow you to select information you want to display while other tabs allow you to customize the search criteria. Some tabs allow you to customize both.

For the Property Detail Report, you can remove any section you do not wish to see displayed. Please keep in mind that if you remove a section, it will not be displayed the next time you view a report.

On the bottom of the full set of reports, you have the option to Print, or Email each report.

*Print*- "Quick Print" allows you to print the report/tab that you are currently in. Selecting this option will open the current report and allow you to download it or save it as a PDF. "Customize Print" allows you to select which tabs/reports to print. When you click "Proceed," the selected reports will open and allow you to download or save as a PDF.

*Email –* "Quick Email" allows you to email the report you are currently in, and "Customize Email" allows you to email multiple reports. You may want to email the reports to yourself to see what they look like before sending them directly to a customer. Remember that you also have the option of saving them as PDF documents and attaching them to your own email, if you wish.

**Comparables Tab**

- The Comparable tab allows you to build a mini CMA in Realist, pulling comparable sales from both the Tax Records and MLS sales. This can be a useful tool as it allows a for a comprehensive view of comps, not just comps from the MLS. **Note: Because Realist gets its information from the public records, it does not update in real time. The most recent sold properties may not be displayed in Realist yet. Be sure to check the date Realist was last updated for the County where the subject property is located.**

- You will initially see a map of comps, a summary statistics section, and a grid showing comparable sales. (Note that as Realist is a tax product, it only shows you comparable sales and not comparable listings.) Sales with a corresponding MLS listing have a red "teardrop"  icon by them. Listings that sold outside the MLS do not have this icon.

- "Customize View" at the top right of your screen will allow you to remove any section of the report you do not wish to display.

- Click "Search Criteria" to modify the criteria for comparable. You can now change various filters (distance from subject, sold date range, bedrooms, bathrooms, pool, search time period, etc.). To use these modified criteria only for this report, click "submit." To make these your new default criteria for pulling comps in the future, click "Save and Submit."

- After Modifying criteria, go back to results grid to de-select any properties you do not want to include. Then click "Generate Report."

- Once you generate your report, you can modify what is displayed by going to the "Customize View" option. You can also print or email the report, following the instructions above.

**Market Trends Tab**

The Market Trends tab displays a several gauges and graphs with statistics for a variety of trends in the Zip Code, City, or County. Some of these include

> Closed Sales, Median Sale Price (Tax & MLS), Active Listings, Median Days to Contract, Median Price per Square Foot (Tax & MLS), Number of Sales (Tax & MLS), Change in Sales Activity (Tax & MLS)

You will want to verify the last time this information was updated in the Realist reports.

**Neighbors Tab**

The neighbors tab shows information on nearby (neighboring) properties. To modify search criteria:

- Go to "Modify" and then "Search" on the bottom right of the page
- You can set a maximum number of 10 neighboring properties, a max distance from the subject, and a geographic boundary such as same subdivision or same street.

**Neighborhood Profile**

This tab includes demographic information for the zip code from the US Census Bureau, nearby schools, and nearby businesses. "Customize View' will allow you to remove sections of the report if you wish. "Search Criteria" allows you to set preferences for businesses, distance from subject, and school categories for the report. You have the ability to print and email these reports following the same instruction as above.

- *Demographics* - Demographic information comes from the US Census Bureau and is reported for the zip code of the subject property. Remember that the Census is taken once every 10 years. The last one was in 2020 and the next one is in 2030. While there is valuable information located in the Demographics section, agents should be careful to comply with the Fair Housing Act and not "steer" buyers to certain neighborhoods based on protected classifications.
- *School Information* - The school information is for the nearest schools, not necessarily the zoned schools for this property. Information includes School Name, Distance, Grades Served, Number of Students, Students per Teacher Ratio, and SchoolDigger.com rating. The SchoolDigger.com Rating is on a scale of 1 to 5 and is based on standardized test scores. Some schools also have a Community Rating, which is based on satisfaction survey results from stakeholders. Under the modify/search menu option on the bottom right side of the screen, school criteria can be modified, including distance from subject,

public versus private, and school category (Elementary, Middle, High, College, etc.).

- *Local Businesses* - There are several local business categories available (recreation, dining, organizations, etc.). To set preferences, go to the "Search Criteria." Scroll down to the Business section. The maximum distance from the subject can be set along with the maximum businesses per category and business categories desired.

**Foreclosure Tab**
This tab only appears if a property is distressed. It links to the Lis Pendens, Final Judgement, or any other pre-foreclosure or foreclosure document.

**Flood Map**
This brings up a static flood map along with information on the flood zone of the property. Note the key under the map. Some properties are completely in or out of a flood zone, where others are partially in a flood zone.
**Once you progress through all the tabs, click the "Back" button at the top and go back to original view. **

## Searching Directly in Realist
**Realist Home Page**
Top right of page next to your name:
     "Star" will store favorite properties
     Gear will take you to settings for your preferences
     ? will take you to Realist Help and tutorials
Displays Search forms, map, and results in one view.
"View Results" displays the number of matches and maxes out at 10,000 matches.
Realist displays results for up 3,000 records in sections of 1,000 at a time.
Results will be displayed on the map and are color coded.

- Green: Active listings
- Red: Sold listings
- Yellow: Pending sales
- Purple: Expired listings
- Black: No associated listing activity on the property record

The map tools are on the top left of the map. Hovering over the symbols will display the map feature you can use on the map.

On the top right of the map, you will see the options to display your results in "split" view—map on top/results on bottom; "map" view only; or "list" view, which will just display the results.

At the top of the Search forms on the left, you will see the ability to select or change your preferred counties. You may select up to 8 counties and may change them as needed. When a county is selected, it indicates the last time the public records in that county were updated.

Thus far, we explored the Realist Reports than can be accessed from a listing in Matrix. However, as Realist is a state-wide public records database, it is also possible to search for properties directly in Realist. On the home page of Realist, you will see a search form with two tabs: Quick Search and My Search.

## Quick Search
The Quick Search is very basic and is meant for pulling individual (or small numbers of) specific properties. You can search by address, owner name(s), MLS number(s), or PID(s). To add multiple names or numbers, use the (+) button.

## My Search
Includes search form templates created from the system, and everyone has the ability to create and save their own. Anyone who has used Realist in the past and saved search forms will see them here in this new version as well. You can also create up to 25 of your own saved search forms. There are 2 types of saved searches: saved search form only and saved search form with values. Saved search forms will remember the fields to be searched but will not retain any search criteria. Saved search form with values will remember the fields to be searched and values within those fields.

My Search may also offer several default searches forms such as
- MLS Search: Search by frequently used Listing information, such as Listing Number, Listing Status, List Price, and many other options.
- Foreclosure Search: Locate properties in distress such as Pre-Foreclosure, Auction, or Bank owned/REO for potential customers or to find properties for investors.
- Tax Search: Search public records for any type of property in Florida

**Attributes** (Additional fields of criteria)
In Realist, fields that you see in the My Search pane are called search attributes and can be edited by clicking on "Customize Search." Search attributes can also include the areas of a Map that you search within. Since you can edit and save the attributes contained on your Searches and Forms, you can completely customize My Search for your personal use.

**NOTE: If you are going to add attributes to your search, add them before you begin to enter criteria or you will lose the criteria entered when you go to "Customize Search."**

## Adding Criteria (Attributes) to Searches

The pre-set system search forms in Realist currently do not allow the option to select a specific property type. If you perform a search, you will get all property types in your search unless you customize and save a search form that includes this attribute. The procedure below would be followed for any attribute (criteria field) you wish to add to create custom searches.

1. Select the search form you wish to customize (i.e. Tax Search)
2. Click "Customize Search" at the top of the column
3. Select the attributes you wish to add to your search from the list
   **Tip: The attribute for all the different property types is called "Land Use – CoreLogic."**
4. You may now name and save it or you may click "Apply" to use the criteria for a single search. You will still have the option to save the search from the "My Search" tab, if you wish.
5. Searches may be saved with blank fields, or you may save them with "values," which are specific criteria that you use frequently. You may have up to 25 saved searches.

## SEARCH RESULTS
## Table View

When search results are returned initially, all results on the list are selected and if you are viewing the Realist Map, all the properties will display on the Map. The selected items will also be used if you choose to export, email, or print the search results. The Search Results Table displays columns of data for each property record your search returned. You can show more or less information using the Customize Table menu. You should take note of any columns you remove since there is no option to return the results display to a default view.

**NOTE**: You can select up to 30 columns to display, however, the more columns you select to appear, the more scrolling will be required to view the information.

You can sort your search results by clicking on any of the column headers. Clicking once on any column will sort the results in descending order. Clicking twice will sort the results in ascending order. Once a particular column has been sorted, the Table header will appear with the arrow highlighted in blue.

## CARD VIEW

Card view allows you to view the search results in "card" layout. To view the search results in "card" layout, simply run a property search and then click on the "card" option on the grid to switch the view.

When viewing search results in card view option, there are both fixed and customizable attributes that allow you to customize the most relevant attributes to display on the results cards.

Fixed Attributes (cannot be changed) are the following:
- MLS Photo
- MLS Status Indicator
- MLS Sales Price
- Site Address
- Beds
- Baths
- Building Sq. Ft.

Customizable Attributes: There are up to 3 customizable attributes that you can customize when in card view. Click on "Customize Cards," select what you want, and click "Apply" to save your selection.

## SAVED PROPERTIES

With Saved Properties you will be able to select, while in card view, to add properties to a list for easy access at a later time. Click the "star" in the property card and the property will be added to your saved properties in the "star" icon at the top of the page. You may add up to 50 saved properties

To remove a property from your Saved Properties, open the property card and uncheck the property in the top left corner of the property card.

## Tax Search

This form largely contains fields from the county property appraisers' sites, along with other public record sites. It is great for developing targeted lists of properties and owners meeting certain characteristics.

*Example 1: Larger Homes in a certain subdivision owner occupied for 20+ years*
In this example, you want to send out a highly targeted mailing to a subdivision. Let's pretend that you want to mail to the property owners of Parkland Estates in zip code 33609 (Tampa), but you only want to send to certain owners. You want to try to get listings of property owners who have owned for more than 20 years and who have larger homes (3000 sq. ft. or more). These owners may be ready to downsize.

1) Go to the Tax Search form.
2) If you have not created a search that includes the ability to search for specific property types, go to "Customize Search," and select and apply the attribute for "Land Use – CoreLogic." This will give you the ability to select the property type you wish to search for.
3) Ensure the correct county is selected.
4) Select the appropriate subdivision. (Hint: You may want to also include the zip code in case there are multiple subdivisions with that name in your selected counties.)
5) Optional: Select "Yes" under the *Owner Occupied* field.
6) For the "Living Sq Ft" field, click on the "is between" link and change it to "is greater than." Then enter 3000.

7) For the "Last Mkt Sale" field, click on the "is between" link and change it to "is less than." Then enter 1/1/2000.

8) Click the Search button to run your search.

9) Click "Labels" to create mailing labels or "Export" to export list into a CSV file.

*Example 2: All owners residing in a local zip code with residency in my home state*

In this scenario, an agent who grew up in Massachusetts and who now works in Palm Harbor, FL, wants to send a mailing to all Palm Harbor property owners who reside in Massachusetts (per the Tax Mailing Address).

1. Go to the Tax Search form or your saved search that includes "Land Use-CoreLogic." If you want to include all types of property, you will not need this field.

2. Under Property City, enter Palm Harbor. You may also use a Zip Code or Subdivision.

3. Under Mailing State, select Massachusetts. (Mailing State is where the Tax bill goes.)

4. Click the "Search" button to run your results.

5. Click "Labels" or "Export."

*Example 3: All properties in a city with a certain use code*

For this example, a commercial real estate agent wants to find all of the Hotel/Motel owners in Clearwater, FL. This will require you to add a new field (either Land Use – CoreLogic or Land Use - State) to the Tax Search form.

1. Go to the Tax Search form.

2. Click "Customize Search."

3. Check box the Land Use field you wish to use and click "Apply."

4. Once back in the search form, select Hotel or Motel.

5. Under Property City, enter "Clearwater."

6. Click the Search button.

7. Click "Labels" or "Export" button.

*Hint: By adding in a sale date range, this could be a method to find commercial comps.*

## MLS Search

The MLS search pulls up public property records for properties with corresponding MLS records. This is a great tool to find expired listings!

An agent wants to go after all listings in zip code 33710 (or your preferred area) that expired since July 1, 2021.

1) go to the MLS Search Form.

2) Under MLS Status field, select "Expired."

3) Under MLS Expiration Date field, set parameter to "is greater than" and enter 7/1/2021. (Click on the "Is Between" link to change to "Is Greater Than".)

4) Under Property Zip field, enter 33710 (or your preferred area).

5) Click the "Search" button.

6) Scroll through the results to see if any have the green MLS icon, which would show that the property has been relisted. Deselect any of these properties.

7) Click "Create Labels" or "Export" under the results menu.

## Foreclosure Search

The Foreclosure Search form is a great tool to find properties in pre-foreclosure (owner in default but no judgement yet), upcoming auctions, and bank owned properties in a given area.

### Example 1: Pre-foreclosures

Pre-foreclosures could be a great source of leads.  These are property owners who are in default and the lender has filed a Lis Pendens.  However, the owner still possesses the property and can still sell.

1. Go to the Foreclosure Search form.(If you only want single family properties, you will need to go to "Customize View," and add the "Land Use – CoreLogic" attribute.)
2. Under Foreclosure Stage field, select "Pre-foreclosure."
3. Choose any other criteria, such as Owner Occupied, Last Mkt Sale, etc. to narrow down your search (if desired).
4. Select a Subdivision or Zip Code.
5. Click the "Search" button.
6. Under the results grid, click "Labels" or "Export."

### Example 2: Upcoming Auctions

To search for properties in the Auction phase:
1. Go to the Foreclosure Search Form
2. Select "Auction" under the Foreclosure Stage field.
3. Go to the Auction Date field and set the date as "is greater than" today's date.
4. Enter geographic and other criteria.
5. Click "Search."

Note: By clicking on any property to open the report, there is a Foreclosure section on the Property Report along with a Foreclosure tab.  Here, you can view all of the court documents, see the Auction Date and Time, etc.

### Example 3: REOs

Agents may want to search for Bank Owned Properties is a subdivision or zip code for various reasons, such as finding REOs not yet listed or researching how many properties in a complex are bank owned.

1. Go to the Foreclosure Search Form. (If you want a specific property type, you will need to go to "Customize Search" and add the "Land Use – CoreLogic" attribute; otherwise, you will all property types displayed in your results.
2. Select "Bank Owned" under the Foreclosure Stage field.
3. Enter geographic and other criteria.
4. Click "Search."

## Realist Map

There are several useful interactive tools on the Realist map. Remember that Realist is a "set and forget" system.  If you pin something to your map and do not remove it, it will be their next time you open Realist.

**Drawing Tools**: Draw a shape on the map and then add additional criteria (such as owner occupied) to the search form.  Click search to run results. (You must click search to get results, unlike in Matrix where they automatically populate when criteria are entered). Note that in Realist, as ALL properties are pulled, once the map shape gets too big, the popup showing the area will turn red, indicating that you have too many results to display on the grid.

**Boundaries**: Add boundaries to the map such as flood zones, zip codes, and zoned schools.

**Property and Sales Information:** Place pins on the map for distressed properties, recent sales, corresponding MLS listings, and property characteristics.

**Trend Layers**: See trends (aggregated by zip code) for statistics such as Median Sales price, Real AVM, and number or percentage of properties in foreclosure.

**Points of Interest**: Pin Food & Dining, Banking, Religious Organizations, and other local businesses.

**Driving Directions:** Get Driving Directions to a location on the map.

**Locate on the Map**: Center the map on a particular address.

**Measurement Tool:** Line tool for measuring distances

**Annotation Tool:**  Allows you to write a note on the map.


## Preferences

There is a Preferences tab on the top left corner of the screen.  The following preferences can be set:

Search: Set search defaults such as auto-opening single properties, maximum results to display, etc.

Reports: Set default search criteria for the various Realist reports from here or restore system defaults.

Email Signature: Configure your email signature for when you email reports through Realist.

Map: Configure map settings (i.e. whether you want parcel outlines to appear in the map)