

Non California Residents

To get your property taxes reduced on the basis of the recent decline in market value:

1. Search Yahoo! or Google to find the Web site for your County Tax Assessor's Office or Tax Collector's Office.
 2. Go to the Forms section and look for a form with the words "reassessment request" or "decline in market value." If you can't find it, give the office a ring and ask them to fax, mail or email the form to you. Usually the request will ask you for (a) an estimate of the current market value of your home, and (b) a list of recent, comparable sales in your neighborhood supporting that estimate of value.
 3. Call up the Realtor who sold you the house and ask them to complete the form for you or to at least provide the information you need about comparable sales. They want to keep you as a long-term friend, client and referral resource, so 9 times out of 10 they'll do it for you.
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1. Alternatively, find a trustworthy online comparables site, like CyberHomes.com, Zillow.com, Redfin.com, Realtor.com, HotPads.com, or PropertyShark.com where you can get both an estimated value and a list of the comparable sales on which it was based. They vary on quality depending on your area.
 4. Keep in mind that you are trying to make the case that your property value is significantly lower now than when you bought it, so list legitimate comparable sales which support that argument or you are wasting your time! And keep in mind that if you bought your home 10 or 20 years ago, your property's assessed value might not be out of whack with current market values, even though your home's market value may have declined from the peak of the market.
 5. Sign it and mail it! Allow several weeks, then call and check on the progress of your request. If it's accepted, you're golden -- for this year. Most areas require you to revisit the reassessment issue every year. If it's denied, there will be a more formal application and appeals process available to you, and you can decide at that time whether it makes sense to undertake that.
 6. **DON'T MISS THE DEADLINE TO RETURN THE APPLICATION**