



Portage County Auditor — Property Search & Values Online

The Portage County Auditor's Values & Records Online

————— **An Extended Guide · No. 1778** —————

Tech Made Simple. Service Made Personal.

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SUMMARY

The 60-Second Version

Here is the whole guide in a nutshell. The Portage County Auditor keeps the official record of what every property in the county is worth, who owns it, and what it has sold for. All of that is free to look up online. Start by typing portagecountyauditor.org into your browser yourself, then find the property search. You can search by an owner's name, a street address, or a parcel number. Open a property and you will see its value, its owner, its size, and often its sales history. Remember that in Ohio the Auditor sets the value, while the Treasurer collects the tax payment, which is a separate office and a separate guide. The Auditor also handles the Homestead Exemption and the Owner-Occupancy reduction that can lower a senior's taxes. None of this costs a penny to search. If any of it feels tangled, that is exactly the kind of thing I help neighbors with, so you can always call me.

1. What the County Auditor Actually Does

The office that keeps the record of what property is worth.

The Portage County Auditor is the county's official record-keeper for property. The office decides what every home, lot, farm, and building in the county is worth for tax purposes, keeps track of who owns it, and records when it changes hands. That information is public, which means anyone can look at it, including you.

Think of the Auditor as the keeper of a very large, very organized ledger. For each property there is an entry that lists its owner, its size, its value, and its history. Years ago you would have had to drive to the courthouse and ask a clerk to pull a paper card. Today that same ledger lives online, and you can read it from your kitchen table.

GOOD TO KNOW

The Portage County Auditor is Matt Kelly, and the office is in Ravenna, the county seat. The Auditor does more than property, but property values and records are the part most neighbors come looking for.

2. Auditor Versus Treasurer

Two different offices, two different jobs.

This is the single point that confuses people most, so let us settle it early. In Ohio, two separate county offices handle your property taxes, and they do different things. The Auditor sets the value and keeps the records. The Treasurer sends the bill and collects the payment.

- The Auditor: decides what your property is worth and keeps the record.
- The Treasurer: mails your tax bill and takes your payment.
- The value from the Auditor is part of how the Treasurer's bill is figured.
- If you want to pay, you want the Treasurer; to look up a value, the Auditor.

So if your goal is to see what a property is worth or who owns it, you are in the right place with the Auditor. If your goal is to pay a tax bill, that is the Treasurer's online service, which I cover in a separate guide.

TIP

A simple way to remember it: the Auditor appraises, the Treasurer collects. One tells you the value, the other takes the check.

3. What You Can Look Up Online

A quick tour of what the search can show you.

Before we get into the how, it helps to know what is waiting for you. The Auditor's online search holds a surprising amount of detail about each property, and all of it is free to view.

- The owner's name and mailing address.
- The property's parcel number, which is its unique ID.
- The value the Auditor has placed on the land and buildings.
- The size of the lot and, often, the building.
- Sales history, showing past dates and prices.
- Tax rate information for the area the property sits in.

You do not have to understand every field to get what you came for. Most people want one or two things, such as a value or an owner's name, and the search hands those over in a few clicks.

GOOD TO KNOW

Everything here is public record, kept this way on purpose so that property ownership and values are open and fair. You are not snooping by looking; you are using a public service.

4. Why You Might Search a Property

Good, everyday reasons neighbors use this.

People come to the property search for all sorts of ordinary reasons, and none of them require a special purpose. You are allowed to look simply because you are curious about your own home.

- Checking your own home's value before tax time.
- Comparing your value to similar homes nearby.
- Looking at a house you are thinking of buying.
- Finding your parcel number for a form or a bill.
- Seeing when a property last sold and for how much.
- Settling a family estate and needing the records.

Whatever your reason, the steps are the same. In the chapters ahead I will walk you through each one slowly, so you can follow along at the computer without feeling rushed.

TIP

If you are not sure what you are looking for yet, start by searching your own address. Seeing your own property's record is the easiest way to learn how the site works.

5. What You Need Before You Start

Very little, as it turns out.

The good news is that this does not require an account, a password, or any sign-in at all. The property search is wide open to the public. You just need a device and one piece of information to search by.

- A computer, tablet, or phone with a web browser.
- An internet connection.
- One of three things to search by: a name, an address, or a parcel number.
- A few quiet minutes to read the screen.

That is the whole list. You do not need to prove who you are, and you do not need to pay anything. If you only know part of what you are looking for, that is fine too; the search is

forgiving and you can try more than one way.

GOOD TO KNOW

Because there is no login, there is nothing to forget and nothing to be locked out of. You can come and go from this search as often as you like.

6. Getting to the Real Website

Type the address yourself.

The most important habit with any government website is starting at the genuine address. The Auditor's property search lives at portagecountyauditor.org. Type that into the address bar at the top of your browser yourself, rather than clicking a link from an email or a text.

The county's main government website is portagecounty-oh.gov, and from there you can also find your way to the Auditor's pages. Either way, you are reaching the real office. What you want to avoid is a look-alike site that copies the design and hopes you will not notice.

WATCH OUT

Some private websites gather public property data and then charge you a fee or ask you to sign up. The Portage County Auditor's own search is free and asks for nothing. If a page wants your credit card to see a value, you are on the wrong site.

7. Why the Real Address Matters

How to tell the genuine site from a copycat.

Official county and government sites use trustworthy web addresses that private companies cannot simply borrow. The county's own site ends in dot gov, which is reserved for real government. The Auditor's dedicated search site is well known and linked from that county site, so you can always cross-check.

Copycats often end in an unusual ending, use a small misspelling, or crowd the page with advertisements. When in doubt, close the page and type the address again slowly, letter by letter. A moment of care here saves a lot of worry.

- 1 Type portagecountyauditor.org yourself into the address bar.
- 2 Check that the spelling is exactly right before you press enter.
- 3 If a page looks cluttered with ads or asks for payment, leave it.

- 4 When unsure, start at the county site, portagecounty-oh.gov, and follow its link to the Auditor.

TIP

Search-engine results sometimes put a paid advertisement at the very top. Look past any little 'Ad' label for the real address, or just type it in yourself.

8. Finding the Property Search

Where the search button hides on the page.

Once you are on the Auditor's site, you are looking for the property search, which is sometimes labeled Real Estate Search or Property Search. It is usually offered right on the home page or in the main menu across the top. The wording can vary, so look for anything with the words real estate, property, or search.

When you open it, you will see a form with boxes to fill in. Do not be put off by the number of boxes. You only need to fill in one of them to get started, and the rest are there for people who want to narrow a long list.

GOOD TO KNOW

The same site usually offers a separate Manufactured Homes search for mobile and manufactured homes, which are recorded a little differently. I cover that in its own chapter.

9. Searching by Owner Name

Find a property when you know who owns it.

If you know the owner's name but not the exact address, searching by name is often the quickest path. This is handy for your own property, a relative's, or a parcel you know belongs to a certain family.

- 1 Open the property search on the Auditor's site.
- 2 Find the box labeled Owner or Name.
- 3 Type the last name first, then the first name if there is room.
- 4 Start with just the last name if you are not sure of the spelling.
- 5 Press Search and look through the list that appears.
- 6 Click the entry that matches to open its full record.

A common last name may bring back a long list, so having the first name or a street handy helps you pick the right one. If your first try finds nothing, try fewer letters; sometimes the

records list a name differently than you expect.

TIP

Names are often stored last-name-first in these systems. If 'John Smith' finds nothing, try 'Smith' alone and scan the list for the right John.

10. Searching by Address

The most familiar way to find a home.

For most people, searching by street address feels the most natural. You know the house number and street, and that is usually enough to land right on the property.

- 1 Open the property search and find the Address box.
- 2 Type the house number in its box if there is a separate one.
- 3 Type the street name, usually without the word Street or Road.
- 4 Leave off extra words at first; just 'Main' works better than 'Main Street'.
- 5 Press Search and pick your property from the results.

If you get too many results, add more detail. If you get none, remove detail and try again with just the street name. These searches often prefer the plain street name without Rd, St, or Ave attached, so start simple and add only if needed.

GOOD TO KNOW

Rural and township addresses sometimes read differently in county records than they do on your mail. If the mailing address does not work, try searching by the owner's name instead.

11. Searching by Parcel Number

The exact way, when you have the number.

Every property in the county has its own parcel number, a string of digits that belongs to that one piece of land and no other. If you have it, searching by parcel number takes you straight to the right record with no guessing.

The parcel number is the most precise way to search because, unlike a name or an address, it is never shared with another property. You will often find it printed on your property tax bill.

- 1 Open the property search and find the Parcel or Parcel Number box.

- 2 Type the number exactly as it appears, including any dashes.
- 3 Double-check each digit against your bill or note.
- 4 Press Search to open the record directly.

TIP

Parcel numbers sometimes include dashes or periods. If typing it with the punctuation finds nothing, try it without, and the other way around.

12. Finding Your Own Parcel Number

Where that mystery number comes from.

People often need a parcel number for a form, a deed, or a conversation with the county, and they are not sure where to find it. The good news is that it is written in several familiar places, and the Auditor's search itself will show it to you.

- On your property tax bill from the Treasurer.
- On your deed or closing papers from when you bought.
- In the Auditor's online search, once you find your property by name or address.
- On past valuation notices the Auditor may have mailed you.

So even if you have lost track of the number, you can recover it by searching your own home by address, opening the record, and reading the parcel number right off the screen. Then you can write it down and keep it for next time.

GOOD TO KNOW

The parcel number does not change when the value changes or when taxes are paid. It stays the same year after year, so once you note it, it is good for a long time.

13. Reading the Property Record Card

Making sense of what the screen shows.

When you open a property, you reach what the office calls the property record card. It is simply a page gathering everything the Auditor knows about that parcel. At first it can look busy, but you only need to find the part you came for.

- Owner section: the name and mailing address on record.
- Parcel section: the parcel number and the property's location.
- Value section: what the Auditor has appraised the land and buildings at.
- Land and building details: lot size and, often, building information.

- Sales or transfer section: past sale dates and prices.

Scroll slowly and let your eyes find the headings. You do not need to understand every line. If a term is unfamiliar, it is usually safe to skip past it to the number or name you actually wanted.

GOOD TO KNOW

If the page feels overwhelming, remember that you are allowed to read just one section. Most neighbors only ever look at the owner name or the value and leave the rest alone.

14. Understanding How Values Are Set

Where that appraised value comes from.

The value you see is the Auditor's estimate of what the property is worth, used to figure property taxes. It is not a formal appraisal you ordered, and it may differ from what you could sell the home for. It is the office's best, fair estimate based on the property's features and on sales of similar homes.

Ohio law has the county review and update these values on a regular cycle, so the figure can change over time as the market moves. That is normal, and it is the same process for every property in the county, which is what keeps the system even-handed.

GOOD TO KNOW

If you ever believe your value is clearly wrong, Ohio has a formal process to question it through the county. The Auditor's office can explain how and when that is done; it is a real, orderly path, not something to fear.

15. Market Value and Taxable Value

Why two numbers can appear.

You may notice more than one value on a record, and that can be puzzling. In plain terms, there is the market value, which is the full estimate of what the property is worth, and a taxable value, which is a portion of that used to calculate the tax. They are related, but they are not the same number.

You do not need to do any of this math yourself. The office handles the calculation, and the Treasurer's bill reflects it. Knowing that two numbers can appear simply saves you from worrying that something looks off when it is actually expected.

TIP

If the two values confuse you, the Auditor's office is happy to explain what each one means for your specific property. A short phone call often clears it up faster than staring at the screen.

16. Sales History and Past Transfers

When a property last changed hands.

Many property records include a sales history, showing when the property was sold and for how much. This is public information, recorded each time ownership transfers. It can be interesting for your own home and useful when you are weighing a home you might buy.

Keep in mind that a past sale price reflects what happened on that date, which may be many years ago. It is a piece of history, not a promise of current worth. Still, it helps you see the pattern of how a property has moved over time.

- The date of each recorded sale.
- The price at which it transferred.
- Sometimes the names of past owners.
- The type of transfer, which can vary.

GOOD TO KNOW

Not every transfer is an ordinary sale. Property can pass within a family, through an estate, or in other ways, so an unusual figure is not necessarily an error.

17. Tax Rate Tables Explained

Why the rate differs from place to place.

The Auditor's site also offers tax rate information, often arranged in tables by the taxing district a property sits in. A taxing district is just the combination of school, township, city, and other local bodies that your property helps support. Because those differ across the county, the rate differs too.

You do not need to memorize any of this. The tables are there if you are curious why two homes of similar value can have different tax bills. The short answer is that they sit in different districts with different local levies.

TIP

If you just want to know what you owe, that lives on the Treasurer's bill, not in these rate tables. The tables explain the why; the bill gives the what. The Treasurer has its own guide.

18. Manufactured and Mobile Home Search

A separate search for a different kind of home.

Manufactured and mobile homes are recorded a little differently than traditional houses on land, so the Auditor's site usually offers a separate Manufactured Homes search for them. If you own one, or are looking one up, this is the search to use.

The idea is the same as the regular property search. You enter a name, a location, or a registration-style number, and the site returns the record. If you cannot find a manufactured home in the regular property search, this separate tool is almost certainly where it lives.

- 1 On the Auditor's site, look for Manufactured Homes.
- 2 Open that search instead of the regular property search.
- 3 Enter the owner name or other details it asks for.
- 4 Open the matching record to see its information.

GOOD TO KNOW

If you are not sure whether a home counts as manufactured, try the regular search first. If it does not turn up, switch to the Manufactured Homes search.

19. The Homestead Exemption for Seniors

A real tax break many older owners qualify for.

This chapter matters for a lot of my neighbors. Ohio's Homestead Exemption can lower the property taxes on your home if you are a senior or are permanently disabled, and the county Auditor is the office that handles it. It reduces the portion of your home's value that is taxed.

The program has rules about age, disability, and household income, and those rules can change from year to year. Rather than quote a figure that might shift, the right move is always to ask the Auditor's office what the current limits are and whether you qualify. They deal with this every day and are glad to help.

GOOD TO KNOW

Surviving spouses of someone who had the exemption may still qualify under certain conditions. If you lost a spouse who had this break, it is worth asking the Auditor whether it can continue for you.

20. The Owner-Occupancy Reduction

A smaller break for living in your own home.

Separate from the Homestead Exemption, Ohio offers an Owner-Occupancy reduction for a home you live in as your main residence. It is a smaller reduction, but it is worth having, and it is also administered through the county Auditor.

The key word is occupancy. This reduction is meant for the home you actually live in, not a rental or a second home. If you own and live in your Portage County home, you may well be eligible, and the Auditor can confirm it and help you apply.

- It applies to your primary residence, the home you live in.
- It is separate from, and smaller than, the Homestead Exemption.
- You may be able to have both if you qualify for each.
- The Auditor's office handles the application.

GOOD TO KNOW

Many longtime homeowners already have the owner-occupancy reduction without realizing it. Your property record or tax bill may show it. If you are unsure, the Auditor can tell you whether it is applied.

21. How to Apply for a Reduction

Where the forms live and how to ask.

Both the Homestead Exemption and the Owner-Occupancy reduction use application forms that you file with the county Auditor. The Auditor's website keeps these forms, along with brochures that explain who qualifies, in a forms or applications section.

- 1 Go to portagecountyauditor.org and look for Forms or Homestead.
- 2 Find the brochure that explains eligibility and read it.
- 3 Download or print the right application form.
- 4 Fill it in carefully, asking for help if any question is unclear.
- 5 Return it to the Auditor's office by the method and date they give.

There are deadlines for these applications, and they can differ between the two programs. Rather than risk missing one, check the current deadline on the Auditor's site or by calling the office. It is better to ask early than to wait a whole year for the next chance.

WATCH OUT

No legitimate service charges you to apply for these Ohio tax reductions. Applying through the county Auditor is free. If something asks for a fee to 'get you the exemption,' it is not the real program.

22. Confirming Your Eligibility

When in doubt, just ask.

Tax programs come with details, and it is easy to talk yourself out of applying because you are not certain you qualify. The honest, simplest answer is to let the Auditor's office tell you. Confirming eligibility is part of their job, and there is no cost or risk in asking.

Bring the basics to the conversation: your age or disability situation, whether you live in the home, and a rough sense of your household income. The office can look at the current rules and tell you plainly whether you fit, and which form to use.

WATCH OUT

If the phone feels daunting, you do not have to make the call alone. This is exactly the kind of thing I help with. You can reach me, Bill, at (330) 200-8042, and we can sort out whether to apply.

23. Printing or Saving What You Find

Keep a copy of anything that matters.

When you find a property record you want to keep, such as proof of your home's value or its parcel number, it is easy to save a copy. Keeping one can save worry later if a question comes up or you need the information for a form.

- Use your browser's Print button to print a paper copy.
- Choose 'Save as PDF' in the print window to keep a digital copy.
- Write the parcel number in a notebook as a quick backup.
- Note the date you looked it up, since values change over time.

A small folder, on paper or on the computer, where these records live is one of the simplest and most reassuring habits with any government website. You will be glad to have it if you ever need to show what you found and when.

GOOD TO KNOW

Because values are updated on a cycle, a saved record is a snapshot of that moment. Jotting the date beside it tells you how current it is later on.

24. Making the Text Bigger

Set the page to a size your eyes like.

Property records can be dense, with small print and many numbers. If it is hard to read, you are not stuck with it. Every browser can enlarge a page, and the change sticks for that site while you are there.

- On a computer, hold Ctrl, or Command on a Mac, and press the plus key to zoom in.
- On a phone or tablet, spread two fingers apart to enlarge the page.
- Your device's accessibility settings can raise text size everywhere at once.
- Press Ctrl and zero to return to the normal size if you overshoot.

There is no penalty for making things larger, and it will not change the information one bit, only how comfortably you can read it. Set it where your eyes are happy and take your time.

TIP

Zooming in is especially helpful when you are checking a parcel number digit by digit. Larger print makes it far easier to copy without a mistake.

25. Using a Library or Borrowed Computer

No home computer is no barrier.

Not everyone has a computer at home, and that is no obstacle here. The Portage County District Library and many senior centers have computers you can use for free, and the property search works fine on them. Because there is no login involved, it is a very safe thing to do on a shared machine.

- You can search property records without signing in to anything.
- Close the browser window before you walk away.
- Collect any pages you print; do not leave them at the printer.

- The librarians are used to helping and will not mind a question.

Since you never enter a password for the Auditor's search, there is nothing private to leave behind, which makes a public computer a comfortable choice for this particular task.

GOOD TO KNOW

If you want a printed copy of your property record, a library computer and printer are a fine way to get one. Ask the staff how printing works there.

26. Phone, Tablet, or Computer

The same search on any device.

The property search works on a phone, a tablet, or a desktop computer. The boxes may sit in slightly different places on a small screen, but every step is the same. Use whatever you are most comfortable with.

A larger screen does make it easier to read a busy record card, so if you have a choice and the record is detailed, a computer or tablet can be gentler on the eyes than a phone. For a quick lookup of a value or a parcel number, a phone is perfectly fine.

TIP

On a phone, you may need to turn the device sideways to see a wide table of numbers. Rotating to landscape view often reveals columns that were cut off.

27. Bookmarking the Auditor's Site

Save the real address once.

A bookmark is a saved shortcut to a website, so you do not have to type the address each time. Making one for the Auditor's site removes most of the friction from using it and, because you saved the real address yourself, it quietly protects you from look-alike sites.

- 1 Go to portagecountyauditor.org yourself.
- 2 In your browser, find the star or 'Add bookmark' button.
- 3 Save it with a clear name like 'Portage property search.'
- 4 Next time, open the bookmark instead of typing the address.

With the bookmark in place, getting to the search is one tap instead of careful typing. Keep your bookmarks tidy and clearly named, so the real link is easy to trust and does not hide among a cluttered list.

GOOD TO KNOW

It is worth bookmarking the county's main site, portagecounty-oh.gov, as well. From there you can reach the Auditor, the Treasurer, and other offices when you need them.

28. Checking a Home Before You Buy

A quiet bit of homework.

If you are thinking about buying a home, the Auditor's search is a calm, free way to do a little homework before you ever call anyone. You can see the county's value, the lot size, and the sales history, all from your chair.

- Look at the Auditor's value to compare against the asking price.
- Check the lot size against what you expect.
- Read the sales history to see how the property has changed hands.
- Confirm the owner name matches who is selling.

None of this replaces a professional inspection or the advice of a real estate agent or attorney. It is background, not a decision. But it is honest, public information that helps you walk into those conversations better informed.

TIP

The Auditor's value and a seller's asking price are two different things and often differ. Treat the county value as one data point among several, not the final word on worth.

29. Looking Up a Relative's Property

Public records can help with family matters.

Because property records are public, you can look up a relative's or a neighbor's property as easily as your own. This is often needed when helping with an aging parent's affairs, settling an estate, or simply understanding what a family member owns.

There is nothing improper about this. The records are kept open on purpose. If you are helping settle an estate, the parcel number and the ownership record you find here are exactly the kinds of details lawyers and courts often ask for.

GOOD TO KNOW

Looking up a property tells you what is in the public record. It does not give you any authority over it. Acting on someone else's behalf still needs the proper legal standing, such as being an executor or holding power of attorney.

30. Keeping a Simple Records Folder

A little organization goes a long way.

One plain folder makes property matters much easier to live with. It does not need to be fancy; a labeled envelope or a single document on your computer is plenty. Keeping the key details in one place means you are never hunting when a form or a phone call needs them.

- Your property's parcel number.
- A printed or saved copy of your current property record.
- The dates you looked things up.
- Notes on any reduction you have applied for, like Homestead.

Property information comes up more often than you might think, at tax time, when refinancing, or when sorting out family affairs. A tidy folder turns each of those moments from a scramble into a simple reach for the right page.

TIP

Store this folder with your other important home papers, like your deed and insurance. Keeping them together means one trip to one place finds everything.

31. When the Search Will Not Find It

Small fixes for an empty result.

Sometimes a search comes back empty, and it is almost always a small matter of how the information was typed rather than a missing property. Before you give up, a few gentle adjustments usually turn things around.

- 1 Remove extra words, like Street or Road, and search the plain street name.
- 2 Try fewer letters of a last name in case the spelling differs.
- 3 Switch methods: if the address fails, try the owner's name.
- 4 Check the parcel number digit by digit, with and without dashes.
- 5 Make sure you are using the right search for a manufactured home.

County records sometimes store a name or address differently from how it appears on your mail. Casting a wider net with less detail, then narrowing, is the trick that finds most properties that seemed to be hiding.

GOOD TO KNOW

If a property truly will not appear after several tries, the Auditor's office can look it up for you. A quick call often locates what the typed search could not.

32. If the Information Looks Wrong

What to do about a possible error.

Now and then you may spot something that does not look right: an old owner name, a value that surprises you, or a lot size that seems off. The first step is simply to note what you see and not to panic. Records are maintained by people and are kept as accurate as possible, but questions do come up.

For a plain factual matter, like a name not updated after a sale, the Auditor's office can tell you how it is corrected. For a value you believe is wrong, Ohio has a formal, orderly process to question it through the county, with its own timing and steps. The office can explain the right path for your situation.

TIP

Before deciding something is an error, double-check that you opened the right parcel. It is common to land on a neighboring property with a similar address and think the details are wrong.

33. Scams That Use Property Records

Know the tricks that lean on this information.

Because property ownership is public, scammers sometimes use it to seem convincing. They may know your address or that you own your home and try to use that to earn your trust. Knowing their usual shapes makes them easy to spot and ignore.

- A letter offering to send you a 'certified copy' of your deed for a fee. You rarely need it, and the county charges little.
- A call claiming your property taxes are overdue and demanding immediate payment by gift card. Always a scam.

- An offer to 'get you' a tax exemption for a fee. The real exemptions are free through the Auditor.
- A website that charges to show a value the Auditor shows for free.

The common thread is a fee or a sense of urgency for something the county provides openly and at little or no cost. When in doubt, stop and go to the real site yourself, or call me.

WATCH OUT

A real county office will never demand payment in gift cards and will never threaten immediate arrest by phone over your property taxes. That pressure is the surest sign of a scam.

34. What Is Public and What Is Not

A calm word about privacy.

It can feel strange that your home's value and your name sit online for anyone to see. It helps to know this is deliberate. Open property records keep ownership honest and taxes fair, and they have worked this way long before the internet; the computer simply made them easier to reach.

What the record shows is limited to property matters: the owner of record, the mailing address, the value, the size, and sales history. It does not hold your bank account, your Social Security number, or your private financial details. Those are not part of a property record.

GOOD TO KNOW

If you have a genuine safety concern about your address appearing in public records, Ohio has protections for certain people, such as those in law enforcement or at risk of harm. The county can explain whether any apply to your situation.

35. Helping a Family Member Look It Up

Sit together and go slowly.

Many people learn this search alongside a parent, a spouse, or a friend, and that is a kind thing to do. Because there is no account or password, helping someone is easy; you are just showing them a public website.

Sit together at their device, go to portagecountyauditor.org, and let them do the typing while you read the steps aloud. Searching their own home first is the friendliest way to begin, because the information is familiar and the result feels rewarding.

TIP

Teaching someone to find their own parcel number and value, rather than doing it for them, means they can do it again next year without you. That small bit of confidence is worth as much as the answer.

36. Visiting the Office in Ravenna

In-person help is always an option.

Not everything has to happen on a screen. The Portage County Auditor's office is in Ravenna, the county seat, and the staff there can look up records, explain a value, and hand you the right forms for the Homestead Exemption or Owner-Occupancy reduction. For many people, a short visit settles a question faster than any website.

- You can ask them to look up a property for you.
- They can explain what a value or figure means for your home.
- They have the application forms and can tell you the deadlines.
- They can confirm whether you qualify for a senior tax reduction.

Before heading over, it is wise to confirm the office location, hours, and any phone number on the county site, portagecounty-oh.gov, so your trip goes smoothly. A quick call ahead can tell you exactly what to bring.

GOOD TO KNOW

Government offices keep regular weekday business hours and may be closed on holidays. Checking the hours before you drive out saves a wasted trip.

37. A Few Plain Questions and Answers

The things neighbors ask me most.

Q: Does it cost anything to search property records? A: No. The Portage County Auditor's search is free and open to everyone, with no account needed. Any site charging a fee is not the real one.

Q: Is the value I see what my home would sell for? A: Not exactly. It is the Auditor's estimate for tax purposes and may differ from a sale price. Treat it as one honest figure, not the final word.

Q: I am a senior. Can my taxes be lowered? A: Possibly, through the Homestead Exemption or Owner-Occupancy reduction. Ask the Auditor whether you qualify under the current rules.

Q: Where do I pay my tax bill? A: With the Treasurer, not the Auditor. The Auditor sets the value; the Treasurer takes the payment, and that has its own guide.

TIP

If the question keeping you stuck is not on this list, that is a perfect thing to call me about. A few minutes on the phone often clears it right up.

38. A Calm Word About Public Records

Go slow; nothing here can break.

If looking up property on a computer feels unfamiliar, you are in good company, and there is no rush. Everything in this guide can be done slowly, and the property search is one of the gentlest government tools there is, because you cannot change anything or sign up for anything by looking.

You are only reading a public ledger. You will not break the website by clicking the wrong thing, you will not owe anyone money by searching, and you can always close the page and start again. Every screen can be re-read and every search can be tried another way.

Most people find that once they have looked up their own home a time or two, the whole thing feels ordinary, a quick tool they reach for when a question about property comes up. Getting to that easy, confident place is the whole point of this guide.

TIP

If you would rather not do the first search alone, that is exactly the sort of thing I help with. Call me, Bill, at (330) 200-8042, and we can look up your home together, at your pace.

CHEAT SHEET**Everyday Cheat Sheet**

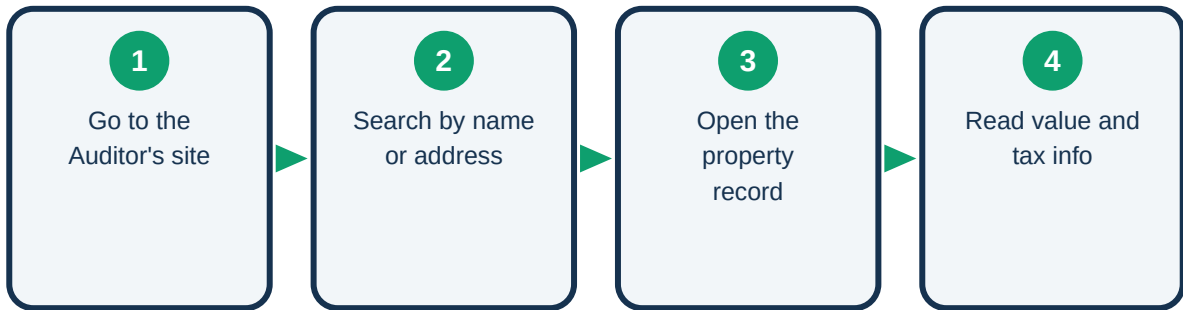
Keep this by the computer. I want to... Get to the site: type portagecountyauditor.org yourself. Find a property: open the Real Estate or property search. Search by name: type the owner's last name first. Search by address: type the house number and street. Find a parcel number: it is on your tax bill or in the search results. See a value: open the property record card. Lower my taxes as a senior: ask the Auditor about the Homestead Exemption. Print proof: use your browser's Print button. Get help: call Bill at (330) 200-8042.

AT A GLANCE

A Picture to Follow Along

Look Up Any Property

Four calm steps from your own computer, free and public.



The property search is free and open to everyone.

Illustration - details vary by device, plan, and provider. Always check your own setup.

AT A GLANCE

A Second Look

Who Does What in Ohio

The Auditor and the Treasurer are two different offices.

Auditor	Treasurer	You Can Find
Property values Ownership Parcel search	Mails the bill Takes payment Due dates	Sales history Tax rates Record cards

Search values with the Auditor; pay taxes with the Treasurer.

Illustration - details vary by device, plan, and provider. Always check your own setup.

BEFORE YOU GO

A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill. I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results.



HOW I CAN HELP

Your Visit — and My Promise

In-home visit — \$99 flat for your first visit. No contracts and no surprise charges, and a 30-day follow-up is included.

Remote Support — \$49 for a screen-share session. I only connect with your permission, you watch the whole time, and you can end anytime. If I can't fix it over the screen-share, I refund the \$49 — and if it turns out you need me in person, that \$49 goes toward your visit. It's included free for Support Plan members (\$39/mo).

GOOD TO KNOW

My promise — If you're not 100% satisfied with your visit, I'll come back at no charge, or refund the full \$99. No questions, no awkwardness. That's how I'd want to be treated.

Call or text **(330) 200-8042** · Book a visit: billshometech.com/book · bill@billshometech.com

This free guide is for general information only — not professional advice, and no substitute for your device's own manual. Any prices or outside products mentioned can change; please confirm current details before you buy. Please use your own good judgment and follow it at your own risk — for anything involving electricity, gas, water, or heights, stop and call a licensed professional. Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results. © 2026 Bill's Home Tech, LLC.