

REAL ESTATE



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Q | My neighbor asked for an easement over my property. A friend told me I should give her a license instead. What's the difference?

A | Property rights are often described as a bundle of sticks. If you give your neighbor an easement, you will grant her an interest in your property; you'll give her a stick from your bundle. A license is something less: the privilege of using your property, but not an interest in your property. No stick. An easement must be documented and recorded like a deed, but a license can be written or oral. A license is generally revocable at will, which is probably why your friend recommended it. An easement is generally irrevocable and, unless it includes an expiration date, would permanently encumber (and maybe reduce the value of) your property. Ultimately, whether an easement or license works better will depend on you and your neighbor's goals.