

The SIMPLIFIED Guide to Home Buying

Use this guide to learn about the home buying process and complete the activities to help you start planning!

Includes tools to help you track your tasks and progress throughout the home buying process, prioritize home features/amenities, questionnaires, and more!



Introduction

Achieve the American Dream

Purchasing a home can be a complicated goal to achieve. With all the steps, tasks, and people associated with purchasing a home the process can be difficult to navigate. Even with technology and information easily accessible to consumers, it's in the best interest of the home buyer to work with a real estate professional to guide them through the complicated home buying process. That's why according to the National Association of REALTORS®, ["89% of Americans purchase their homes through a real estate agent or broker."](#)

To help you understand the complex process of buying a home, we created this easy-to-follow guide that simplifies and educates you on the procedure. In this guide, we'll go over the benefits of homeownership so you are aware of all the value you'll get from purchasing a home. Second, we'll share the professionals and steps involved in the home buying process. Third, we'll show the advantages and why it's in your best interest to work with a real estate professional. There are many mistakes home buyers can make during their transaction, so the fourth topic we will cover how you can prevent these mistakes. Then we'll share how mortgage loans work, so you can start your search for a lender and get the best offer.

Finally, we'll give you 2 activities to complete. The first activity helps you prioritize home features, amenities, and your neighborhood preferences. This will help both you and your agent set a basis for the type of homes they'll share with you to purchase. The second activity will help you understand your expectations and preferences for your home search.

This guide also includes a list of common real estate terms to help you understand real estate lingo and a game plan to help you keep track of important tasks.

Are you ready to have a simple stress-free home buying experience? Use this guide to help you understand the home buying process and ensure you have the best experience as possible!

Table of Contents

Contents

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Introduction | 2 |
| Achieve the American Dream | 2 |
| The Benefits of Homeownership | 4 |
| The Players in Real Estate | 6 |
| The Home Buying Process | 7 |
| Advantages of Buying with an Agent | 8 |
| Common Home Buyer Mistakes | 9 |
| How Mortgage Loans Work | 10 |
| Activity 1: Home + Neighborhood Prioritization | 12 |
| Activity 2: Home Buyer Questionnaire | 13 |
| Common Real Estate Terms | 15 |
| Your Home Buying Game Plan | 17 |
| FAQ's About Home Buying | 18 |
| Here are a few questions first-time home buyers typically ask: | 18 |
| Documentation Needed to Start the Home Buying Process | 20 |
| Moving Into Your Brand New Home | 22 |
| Here are some important tasks to remember to do: | 22 |



The Benefits of Homeownership

1. Higher Quality of Life

Compared to renters, most homeowners say they are [happier and healthier](#) since purchasing their home. They are more involved in the community because they've embedded themselves in a neighborhood. With space to entertain, they tend to host more parties with friends and family. They often start new hobbies like gardening, cooking, and grilling. Owning a home takes a lot of work, and because of this, homeowners say it gives them a sense of pride.

2. Better Education Opportunities

According to a National Association of Realtors study, "[Social Benefits of Homeownership and Stable Housing](#)." A purchased home can provide a more stable, nourishing, and enriching environment for children than a rented one. Generally, education opportunities are more common in neighborhoods with higher rates of homeownership and community involvement. Children of homeowners are more likely to achieve high levels of education and higher levels of earnings.

3. No Landlord

Landlords can be nuisance, especially when they are difficult to get a hold of, are late to reply to maintenance requests, or increase rent - you can say goodbye to all of that as a homeowner.

4. Save Money by Avoiding Rent

Depending on several factors, like the length of your tenure, your interest rate, and the price of your home, you could pay less per month for your mortgage than your rent. Plus, the money that you pay, helps you build equity.

5. Accumulate Wealth by Building Equity

Equity is the amount of home you've paid off and actually own - it doesn't include your debt. So, if you paid \$100,000 and have \$100,000 of debt on your \$200,000 home, your equity is \$100,000. You build equity and increase the market value of your home through a larger down payment, by paying off your

loan, if local home prices increase, through home improvements, etc.

6. Long-Term Appreciation Potential

If you're planning on staying in your new home long-term, it's very likely your home will appreciate or increase in value. Home appreciation, also known as return on investment, depends heavily on the location of the home. Generally, the value of the land will increase as the actual structure depreciates over time.

7. Deferred Gains and Capital Gains

Thanks to the [Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997](#), a single person could pay no capital gains tax on the first \$250,000 of profit from selling your home - \$500,000 for married couples.

8. Tax Deductibility of Mortgage Interest

If the principal loan of your mortgage loan is \$750,000 or less, you could deduct interest expenses from your income taxes through itemization or by filing for a standard tax deduction.

9. Tax Deductibility of Property Taxes

You can file a combination of state and local income taxes or sales tax, but only on property you own and have paid for.

10. American Dream

For many people around the world, getting a good job, purchasing a home, and starting a family in the United States is the American Dream. It has been in our culture since the early 1930's and it indicates a milestone or sense of achievement for about 90% of Americans.



The Players in Real Estate

1. The Agent

A professional with a real estate license that represents a buyer and/or a seller during a real estate transaction. Agents act as a liaison between all parties in a real estate transaction and they can help you understand the real estate process, negotiate price, and process paperwork.

2. The Seller's (Listing) Agent

The real estate agent who works with the home seller during a real estate transaction. Some responsibilities of a seller's agent is to list the property they are selling, help set a price for the home, market the home to potential buyers, negotiate offers, coordinate the sale and closing process, and more.

3. The Buyer's Agent

The real estate agent who works with the home buyer during a real estate transaction. They are responsible for providing guidance through the buying process, finding their client a suitable property to buy, schedule showings, negotiates price and terms of sale, and more.

4. The Broker

A real estate broker is an agent that has gone through more training, have passed more exams to receive a more advanced real estate license, and can therefore, own a real estate business and hire salespeople. There are three major types of real estate brokers: a designated broker, who manages and oversees the brokerage; a managing broker, who manages the day-to-day operations like managing salespersons; and an associate broker, who act like salesperson.

5. The Mortgage Lender

The financial institution that lets you borrow money for your mortgage loan. Since you'll be working closely with your lender, even after you close. So, it's in your best interest to choose one with good communication skills and to build a relationship with them. Since a lender can help you determine a price range for your budget for a home, it's recommended that you start working with one before you begin searching for a home to buy.

6. The Appraiser

Is an independent third-party that determines the monetary value of the property. They will do a walkthrough of the home, which includes examining the exterior, interior, amenities, and upgrades.

7. The Home Inspector

Is an independent third-party that presents the buyer or the seller and determines the structural integrity and safety of the property as well as identifies any damages to the home.

8. The Closing Attorney

A real estate attorney who specializes in real estate law. They can provide guidance and help you understand the legal documents associated with a real estate transaction. Since they work with both the buyer and sellers, you will usually encounter them during the closing phase of your transaction.

The Home Buying Process

Use this outline to guide you through the home buying process.

NOTE: The steps may vary depending on the two parties.



Advantages of Buying with an Agent

1. Find a Home

The primary reason home buyers work with an agent is for help finding a home to purchase – about 88% use an agent or broker. We have access to the newest available listings and the most up-to-date information on homes. Plus, we can filter homes by your preference and alert you as soon as a home is available so we can be the first to schedule a showing.

2. Negotiating Skills

Not everyone is an expert negotiator, but luckily your real estate agent is. Not only can they negotiate the price of a home, but also the terms of sale.

3. Dedicated Time

Since a real estate professional works for you, they will save you time by attending appointments and open houses, replying to phone, email and text messages, managing the relationship with the listing agent, scheduling showings, sharing listings filter by your preferences, organizing paperwork, and other tasks on your behalf.

4. Sales Experience

Working with a real estate professional ensures you get the best deal, and that your home buying process is compliant with state and local regulations.

5. Ongoing Guidance and Advice

Buying a home is a complex purchase that involves a large amount of money, several steps, many legal documents, and a variety of parties to complete. Your real estate professional can guide you through the process, offer advice that gets you the most value, recommend services, and prevent mistakes so you have the best buying experience as possible.

6. Service Provider Network

Since many real estate professionals work with a wide range of service providers, we can recommend services like lenders home inspectors, repair companies, movers, and more. If you're from out of town, we can recommend local businesses, public parks, and other types of points of interest in the area.

7. Paperwork Expertise

Remembering all the documents and deadlines required to complete a home purchase isn't easy. We can explain these complex documents, help you keep track of them, and remind you of deadlines, and submit documents to the correct agencies throughout your home buying process.

8. Seller Access

We have a network of connections with constituents in the community that could help you – by offering insider information about a specific neighborhood and neighbors as well as recommendations for schools and local businesses.



9. Local Market Knowledge

We have access to all the listings through the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) and can provide detailed reports on the local market activities, trends, neighborhoods, schools, and local points of interests.

Common Home Buyer Mistakes

- 1. Talking to one lender, home inspector, and/or real estate agent:** Assembling a quality team of professionals will help ease your home buying process. That's why it's important that you interview at least three real estate agents, lenders, and home inspectors before choosing one. By shopping around for options, you'll get a better basis for comparing prices and offerings to ensure your needs are met and you get the best deal.
- 2. Looking for a home before consulting a mortgage lender:** There are many reasons you should apply for a mortgage before looking at homes. First, it helps you set a price range for homes you can afford. Second, it provides proof that you have the financial ability to buy a home. Finally, it signals to sellers and buyer agents that you're serious about purchasing and not just browsing. Gather and organize all your financial documents to paint a full picture of your financial history. It's also important to build a close relationship with your lender because you'll be working with them frequently.
- 3. Buying more house than you can afford or maintain:** When a lender sets and approves a loan, they don't factor in your living expenses like groceries, utilities, or insurance. Additionally, larger homes have higher monthly utility, maintenance, and repair costs, so you could quickly run out of money by omitting these costs from your monthly expenses.
- 4. Mismanaging your finances and/or credit before closing:** Changing or quitting your job, purchasing expensive products like a car or boat, opening an additional line of credit, hard credit checks, and co-signing a loan for someone else are just a few ways you can jeopardize a final loan approval before closing on a home. To ensure you have the best experience, keep your finances in line, don't make any major changes, and spend money conservatively throughout the buying process.
- 5. Overlooking government loan options:** A conventional loan isn't that only option for financing a home purchase. Home buyers with a small amount of savings but good credit can apply for a home loan from government agencies like the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), the US Department of Veteran Affairs (VA), or the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), among other types of loans.
- 6. Underestimating the total costs of homeownership:** Repairs, home improvements, property taxes, landscaping, more utilities like trash and sewage, higher utility costs, Homeowners Association (HOA) dues, homeowner's insurance and furniture are the most common expenses that home buyers don't anticipate or factor into homeownership. These expenses can add up quickly, causing the home buyer to go into debt. Create a list of your possible expenses and research the average rates for your desired locations.
- 7. Not budgeting for closing costs:** In addition to the down payment, you must also plan to pay closing costs for your home purchase. These can be property-related like appraisal and home inspection fees as well as title search and insurances. Closing costs can also be mortgage-related like legal, lender, credit report, application, and other local fees – to name a few. To properly plan for closing costs, consult your agent and/or lender before you start to look for a home.
- 8. Making too small of a down payment:** Take time to save up for at least a 20% down payment or as much as possible. You might feel like you are saving money by paying a smaller down payment, but you could pay more in the long run due to borrowing a larger loan and paying more in interest.
- 9. Only focusing on the home:** Your home purchase includes more than just the home, it also includes the yard, the neighbors, the neighborhood, vehicle traffic, amount of travel for commute to work, school district, and local regulations – some of which can influence the potential value of your home. Do your research, investigate the neighborhood, and get as much information about the surrounding area as you can.



10. Not getting your own home inspector: You never know what a seller's home inspector missed, and the last issue you want is discovering structural damage after you've closed. Find your own reputable home inspector and factor in any repairs or other issues into a contingency.

How Mortgage Loans Work

1. A Mortgage Loan Includes

The loan amount, the interest rate, the term of the loan, and deadlines to repay the loan with interest.

2. Types of Mortgage Loans

A. Conventional Loans: These types of loans can have a fixed-rate or an adjustable-rate. A fixed-rate offers stability because it doesn't change over the lifetime of the mortgage. An adjustable-rate depends on an index and a margin. In addition to the type of mortgage rate, you will also need to choose the mortgage term - length of time that you'll repay the loan. The mortgage term options are 30, 15, and 10 years. Choosing a longer mortgage term usually means you'll have more payments to make with more interest.

B. Government-Back Loans: Home buyers with a small amount of savings but good credit can apply for a home loan from government agencies like the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), the US Department of Veteran Affairs (VA), or the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), among other types of loans.

3. How to Qualify for a Mortgage

Your lender will examine your credit score, debt-to-income ratio, income, and down payment before they determine whether you qualify for a mortgage loan. Therefore, you will need to documentation to prove your financial history like W-2s, your bank account information, etc.

4. Before Shopping for A Mortgage..

A. Interview at Least 3 Lenders Before Choosing One: You want to get the best deal on a mortgage loan, so interview at least three lenders and compare their services as well as what they can offer you.

B. Know Your Credit Score: It plays a major role in getting approved and affects your interest rate. Generally, the higher your credit score is, the lower your interest rate will be.

C. Calculate the Amount You Can Afford: Just because a lender says you can spend X amount, doesn't mean you should. You must also have enough savings to pay for any emergencies like if the water heater unexpectedly breaks. Use an affordability calculator to determine the amount of home you can afford while maintaining enough emergency savings. You must also consider home insurance, property taxes, and closing costs.



Activity 1: Home + Neighborhood Prioritization

Use this list to help you prioritize home features, amenities, and neighborhood preferences.

| Home Features | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|------|------|---------|--------------------------|------|------|---------|
| Feature/Amenity | Need | Want | Neutral | Feature/Amenity | Need | Want | Neutral |
| Number of Bedrooms | | | | Housing Square Footage | | | |
| Number of Bathrooms | | | | Floor Plan | | | |
| Master Bedroom | | | | Carpet Floors | | | |
| Number of Bonus Rooms | | | | Hardwood Floors | | | |
| Number of Stories | | | | Environmentally Friendly | | | |
| Kitchen Size | | | | Energy Efficient | | | |
| Bedroom Size | | | | Air Conditioning | | | |
| Living Room Size | | | | Fireplace | | | |
| Dining Room Size | | | | Water Filtration System | | | |
| Garage Size | | | | Dish Washer | | | |
| Office Size | | | | Garbage Disposal | | | |
| Studio/Workshop Size | | | | Washer/Dryer | | | |
| Basement Size | | | | Roof Condition | | | |
| Backyard Size | | | | Gutters/Downspouts | | | |
| Attic Size | | | | Patio/Deck | | | |
| Den Size | | | | Porch | | | |
| Size of Lot | | | | Lawn/Yard Space | | | |
| Storage Space | | | | Backyard | | | |
| Closet Space | | | | Lawn Sprinklers | | | |
| Storm Windows/Screens | | | | Pool | | | |
| Natural Light | | | | Hot Tub or Jacuzzi | | | |
| Sky Light | | | | Firepit | | | |
| Views | | | | Built in BBQ | | | |
| Overall Feel/Look | | | | Security System | | | |
| Cellphone Reception | | | | Bathtub | | | |
| Age of House | | | | Ceiling Fans | | | |
| Style of Home | | | | Heated Floors | | | |

| Neighborhood Preferences | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--|--|--|----------------------------|--|--|--|
| Near Work | | | | Near Fire Station | | | |
| Near School | | | | Near Hospital | | | |
| Near Daycare | | | | Near Church/Synagogue | | | |
| Near Parks | | | | Near Freeway Access | | | |
| Near Dog Park | | | | Near Public Transportation | | | |
| Near Entertainment | | | | Near Water (Lake/Ocean) | | | |
| Near Family | | | | Zoning Regulations | | | |
| Near Shopping | | | | Pet Restrictions | | | |
| Near Grocery Stores | | | | Street Parking | | | |
| Near Police Station | | | | Other | | | |

Activity 2: Home Buyer Questionnaire

Use this list of questions to better understand your expectations and preferences for purchasing your new home.

| General | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|
| Are you currently working with an agent or broker? If yes, who? | | |
| How long have you been looking for a house? | | |
| How many people will be moving with you? | | |
| Do you have children? If yes, how many? | | |
| Do you have any pets? If yes, how many? | | |
| What is your preferred move in date and why? | | |
| Have you purchased a house before? If yes, where and when? | | |
| Do you need to sell a property before you can purchase a new one? If yes, what's its status? | | |
| Are you currently leasing? If yes, when will your lease expire? | Days | Time |

| Home Preferences | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------|-------------|-------------|
| Will your new home require accommodations for anyone with disabilities, conditions, or other circumstances? Which ones? | | | | |
| Would you rather purchase a... | Resale | New Home | Investment | Fixer Upper |
| What is your price range? | | | | |
| What's your renovation budget? | | | | |
| What's your square footage preference? | For the house | | For the lot | |
| How many bedrooms? | | | | |
| How many bathrooms? | | | | |
| Master bathrooms? | | | | |
| Do you want a garage? If yes, how many spaces? | | | | |
| Do you want an environmentally friendly (or energy efficient) home? If yes, what features? | | | | |

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| What are your preferred neighborhoods and why? | |
| Do you have a preferred school or school district that you want to live near? If yes, which one? | |
| Which amenities do you require? | |
| What are your preferred neighborhoods and why? | |
| Do you have a preferred school or school district that you want to live near? If yes, which one? | |
| Which amenities do you require? | |

Your Finances

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Where are you employed? | |
| Where is your spouse employed? | |
| What is your annual income? | |
| Have you set up financing? If not, would you like help? | |
| Have you been pre-qualified or pre-approved by a lender? If yes, for how much? | |
| What is the name and company of the lender that pre-qualified you? | |
| Can you provide documentation of this amount? | |
| How much cash can you put down to purchase your new home? | |
| Have you set aside enough funds to cover earnest money? (In general, it's around 1% of the purchase price) | |
| What is your monthly budget for payments? | |

Other Information

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| What websites do you use to view properties? | |
| If you have any other preferences or general notes that were not mentioned above, please write them down below: | |
| | |

Common Real Estate Terms

Use this list to help you understand the definitions of important home buyer terminology.

Adjustable-Rate Mortgage (ARM): A loan with an interest rate that changes based on a financial index causing monthly payments to rise and fall.

Amortization: Paying off your debt in incremental payments, instead of one full payment.

Appraisal: A professional report from a 3rd party that estimates the value of a property for you.

Closing: The final meeting where both parties sign the required paperwork and ownership of the property is transferred from the home seller to you.

Closing Costs: Additional fees associated with the transaction, not including the cost of the home.

Contingencies: Required conditions that must be met before the closing. The contract can be cancelled if these conditions are not met.

Debt Ratio: The ratio between your income and debt. A lender will use this ratio to determine the amount of money they are willing to loan you.

Deed: The written document that is used to transfer ownership of a property to you.

Down Payment: The upfront cash payment for a property, the remaining is paid through a mortgage.

Earnest Money: The deposit you pay when you sign the contract to show you're a serious buyer.

Escalation Clause: A clause in a contract that increases your offer when a new offer is made.

ESCROW: Money, deed, and other documents kept in the custody of a 3rd party – closes once all contingencies are met.

Equity: The value of the property minus the amount left on your mortgage.

Federal Housing Administration (FHA) Loan: A mortgage from a lender, insured by the Federal Housing Association – it usually requires a good credit score and a down payment to qualify.

Final Walkthrough: The last inspection of the property before signing the closing documents.

Fixed Rate: The opposite of ARM – a loan with an interest rate that stays consistent.

Foreclosure: When ownership of a property transfers to the lender due to failed payments by the buyer.

Home Inspection: A report by a professional that examines the issues of the property, structure, roof, etc.

Homeowners Association (HOA): A private organization often formed by a real estate developer for the purpose of marketing, managing, and selling homes and lots in a residential subdivision.

Lender: An entity, usually a bank, that issues a loan for you to purchase a home.

Mortgage: The loan from a lender or bank used to purchase your home.

Multiple Listing Service (MLS): The list of properties that are for sale – the most reliable and up-to-date source for listing information.

Pending: When an offer was accepted, the contract is signed, and all contingencies are met.

Pre-Approval: The lender's process of accessing your financial capabilities - based on your income, debts, credit score, employment history and assets.

Pre-Qualification: A lender has pre-determined that you qualify for a loan to purchase a property.

Property Tax: The local taxes you're required to pay – included in your total monthly mortgage payment.

Real Estate Agent: A licensed professional that represents a buyer or seller – not all agents are REALTORS®

Real Estate Broker: A licensed professional with additional training and testing that represents a buyer or seller – they can also own and operate their own real estate business with agents that work for them.

REALTOR®: A designation indicating the agent is a member of the National Association of REALTORS®.

Settlement Statement (aka HUD-1): The document with your sales transaction and closing costs.

Title (aka Title Deed): The legal document that shows the history of ownership and transfers of a property – proves you are the current and rightful owner of the property.

Under Contract: The seller and buyer have agreed to a contract, but contingencies have not been met.

VA (Veteran Affairs) Loan: Mortgages issued to United States veterans – issued by the Department of Veteran Affairs.



Your Home Buying Game Plan

Use the list below to keep track of important tasks to complete, their deadlines, and your progress throughout the home buying process.

To Do:

Date Completed:

Complete Loan Application:

Sign Seller's Disclosure:

Schedule Home Inspection:

Submit Written Notice for all items that you wish to be repaired from the inspection:

Completion of Negotiated Repaired Items:

Submit Title Commitment:

Apply for Insurance:


Loan Approval:

Closing Date:

Moving Date:

FAQ's About Home Buying

Here are a few questions first-time home buyers typically ask:



Frequently asked Questions

1. At which point in the process should I apply for mortgage?

The best time to apply is before you select a home. Getting a Pre-approval will give you more negotiating power with the seller as well as make the process smoother because you will know within what price range to be shopping.

2. How long will it take for our loan to be approved?

After you have submitted your application, loan approval typically takes just a few days if the documentation we ask to be provided is complete. The more complete the information, the more quickly we can act.

3. What is the process after the loan is approved?

Assuming you have a sales contract signed for a new home, the next step is to make sure all conditions are clear. Many of these conditions are standard and are provided by third parties, such as obtaining an appraisal and clear title. The quicker these conditions are received, the smoother the settlement process.

4. What is the difference between pre-approval and pre-qualification?

A pre-qualification is an opinion on whether you are qualified for the mortgage and does not mean that the information provided has been verified or the file has been underwritten. A pre-approval means that relevant information has been verified and the file has been underwritten and approved. The file typically would be approved subject to a ratified sales contract, satisfactory appraisal on the property selected and locking in a rate and loan program.

5. When can I lock in a rate on the loan?

Typically you can lock in the rate after the application is complete and a sales contract is ratified. Rates change daily and often more than one time per day. We will keep you informed as to how the markets are changing.

6. Can I buy a home and sell my current one at the same time?

Yes, you can—but it's the real estate equivalent of walking a tightrope. On the one hand, if you buy a home before you sell the one you're in, you're overextended financially; if you sell before you buy, you might need to rent awhile before finding a new place. But there are ways to do both at once, and one option is to instate a "sale contingency" in your contract. This means you only agree to buy a home if you can sell the one you're in. The only downside is if your seller doesn't agree (which is possible if they want the timing set in stone).

7. How many homes should I see before making an offer?

Up to you! While home shoppers these days can look at hundreds of homes online, they only hoof it to check out 10 homes on average before they put in an offer. But keep in mind, "This varies tremendously for each person," says Will Johnson, a Realtor® in Hendersonville, TN, and founder of Sell and Stage. "Some people find their home within hours of hunting. For others, it takes months." If you want to streamline the process, it can help to really hone in on a particular neighborhood you're keen on; that said, if you feel limited by your options, it may be time to expand to surrounding areas.

8. What do you think the seller will accept as a fair price?

As a rule of thumb, knocking 5% off the list price won't ruffle any feathers. If it's been sitting on the market for months, you can venture below that, but the bottom line is, you don't know as they have different motivations for selling their home.

9. How quickly can I close?

"Typical escrow periods are 30 to 45 days," says Rina Camhi, a Houston, TX-based agent and founder of 10MinRealty. "This gives you enough time to do the investigation on the property and get a loan completed." And yes, this due diligence counts.

10. When can I back out if I change my mind?

While buyers can always back out of a deal, doing so without good reason may forfeit their earnest money (the cash put down to secure the offer, typically around 1%-2% of the home's price). But there are some ways to walk with your earnest money in hand.

"Contingencies are great loopholes," says Bridges. "For example, upon an unsatisfactory home inspection, the buyer can ask for their deposit back. Another loophole is 'subject to appraisal.'" That means you can back out if the lender for your loan doesn't think the property is worth what you offered.



Documentation Needed to Start the Home Buying Process

Personal Identification

- Legible copy of Driver's License or Passport.
- Legible copy of Resident Alien Card if not a U.S. citizen.

Personal Identification

- Copy of ratified contract and all addenda for present home if you are selling a property.
- Copy of lease for present home if you are going to rent the property
- Copy of listing if home is not sold as of yet
- Name and address of landlord if currently renting present residence.
- Copy of Present mortgage information if refinancing the home.

Personal Identification

- W-2 OR 1099S for the past two years.
- Most recent paystubs covering 30 days of employment. Must include employer's name and year-to-date income.
- If self-employed or you have rental, commission or other variable income, two years signed federal tax return.
- If self-employed, year-to-date profit and loss statement if returns do not cover the previous quarter.
- Two years Federal Corporate or Partnership tax returns for entities owned.
- Diploma or Transcript if full-time student during past two years.
- Leases for current rental properties owned.
- Divorce decree and evidence of 12 months proof of receipt of payments for child support/alimony (only needed if you desire to use this income to qualify).
- For retirement or social security income, a copy of the latest annual disbursement/distribution statement and most recent 2-years 1099 statements.

Assets & Liabilities

- Complete current statements covering transactions for the past two months for all bank, stock and retirement accounts. One statement if it covers a quarterly period.
- If liquidating stocks to complete transaction, proof of liquidation must be supplied as well as evidence of depositing funds into a liquid account.
- Name and address for any private mortgages or loans outstanding.
- Copy of ratified divorce decree or separation agreement for alimony or child support owed.

Home You Are Purchasing

- Ratified contract and all addenda.
- Copy of listing.
- Front & back of cleared check used for deposit on home you are purchasing.
- Contact information for Title Company and Homeowners Insurance Agent.



Moving Into Your Brand New Home

Congratulations! You have just purchased your very first home. Now you can enjoy the best and most exciting part of the whole process - moving in.

Here are some important tasks to remember to do:

- Redirecting mail through USPS Post.
- Connecting utilities such as internet, electricity, gas and water.
- Organizing a trash and recycling bin if your property does not have one.
- Getting the carpets cleaned.
- Identifying the fuse box and circuit breaker.
- Updating your contact information with your new address.
- Setting up home and contents insurance.
- Organizing a moving company for your furniture.
- It's best to obtain a few quotes for removal companies before you decide on one.
- Remember, the cheapest isn't always the best. You may even wish to consider getting insurance for the moving process to protect your valuables.
- When packing, make sure you mark boxes clearly with the rooms they will be going to.
- Give the removalists a copy of your new home's floor plan so they are aware of which room is which.
- A move is a great opportunity to clear out things you no longer use or need.
- A garage sale is a good idea, or donate your unwanted possessions to a charity.
- On moving day you may consider having your smaller children cared for as the change is routine can be unnerving for them.
- It's important to make your young children feel at ease quickly, so set up their rooms first.

Once you have moved all of your furniture into your home you can now take the time to get to know your neighbors and enjoy what the area has to offer.

I hope you find this ebook valuable.
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