



# Buyer's GUIDE

FOR A SUCCESSFUL DREAM HOME PURCHASE



# Tips for Home Tours

**01**

**Bring a camera, notebook, tape measure**

You think you'll remember everything but you won't. Compare the home's dimensions to those of your couch, dining table, and bed.

**02**

**See how much sunlight the place gets**

Visit during the day. Imagine the trees with leaves—they may block your view or provide welcomed shade.

**03**

**Check the bathrooms for rot and mold**

Look on the ceiling above the shower and along the baseboards by the tub.

**04**

**Look for wavy/discolored siding on the exterior**

the South wall gets the most sun; the North-facing wall is the dampest.

**05**

**Make sure water spouts drain away from the house**

Water gushing from the roof may cause water damage to the foundation.

**06**

**Take stock in storage space**

Moving day is a bad time to realize there's no room for your camping gear.

**07**

**Turn off any music playing in the home**

Listen for road noise or airplane traffic.

**08**

**Peek in the attic**

There should be plenty of insulation.

**09**

**Bring a marble**

Set it on the floors to make sure they are level.

**10**

**Ignore appliances and carpets**

They're easy to replace. Focus on location first and structure second.

**11**

**Check the closets**

If the seller still lives there they might be in less of a hurry to sell.

**12**

**Sellers Disclosures**

Look for lead-based paint, roof age, and wiring that might need to be replaced.

**13**

**Compare tax records to listing details**

If there are discrepancies in the square footage or number of bedrooms and bathrooms, look for evidence of a remodel since the last sale.

**Ask the Agent:**

1. Age of water heater?
2. How old is HVAC?
3. How old is the roof?
4. Has the property flooded?

# STEP 1: *find your home*

**01**

## **Stay ahead of other homebuyers**

Your agent can set you up to receive a notification as soon a new home hits the market. If you see a home you like, don't wait for the weekend to see it. A lot of homes are going under contract after 1-2 days on the market.

**02**

## **Get pre-approved with a LOCAL lender**

Unless you are paying cash for the home, getting pre-approved is a must in order to compete with multiple offers and prove you can get financing. Working with a local lender can also give you an advantage since they are easier to get in touch with and understand the local market. If you can get pre-approved prior to house shopping, it is an extra layer of protection that your financing is solid.

**03**

## **Start the conversation early**

When you think you found the perfect home, let your agent know as soon as possible so they can work with the listing agent to find out what terms matter most to the seller. The seller might be more interested in an extended escrow or an offer that doesn't require any repairs vs the highest purchase price.

**04**

## **Know your limits**

Determine your target price range and calculate what each price increase means for your monthly payment. The most important thing is to know your maximum price so you can decide your highest and best offer.

Make sure to factor in your homeowner's insurance, property taxes, and HOA dues if applicable.

## **Experience Matters!**

You want to make sure that your agent is knowledgeable and has exceptional negotiating skills. An experienced agent will help you make your best and strongest offer based on what you are able to afford.

## STEP 2:

# post-offer tasks

### HOME INSPECTION

If you decide to add a home inspection contingency in your offer, you will have a deadline to waive the condition and proceed with the transaction. The typical timeframe to waive this contingency is between 1-7 days after signing the contract.

As a buyer, you will most likely have to incur the cost of the home inspection. As it depends on the company and its services, you should expect to pay anywhere from \$300-600.

The home inspector is a professional who will do a thorough investigation of the property you want to purchase (this part typically takes around 3-5 hours). Once complete, the inspector will provide a full report of what they found and give you some tips on how to maintain the home should you proceed to purchase it. If any issue is found inside the property, you can accept them as-is, or you can try to negotiate with the seller to get the problems fixed or lower the price. It's important to note that you must be careful not to be overly picky about smaller issues. Still, you will also need to take necessary precautions on potentially significant problems.



Lenders will typically request an appraisal to ensure that the value of the property is justified. Additionally, an appraisal typically helps homebuyers by bringing in a third party to make sure they don't overpay for a home.

Lenders typically hire an appraiser, but buyers incur their fees on closing day.

### APPRAISAL

### TITLE SEARCH

In simple terms, a title is a legal document that identifies the registered owner(s) of a property.

A title search is the process of researching public records to determine a property's legal ownership and find out if there are any claims (such as liens) on that property. A lawyer must complete a title search before closing day, and a clear title must be obtained to transfer ownership.

# STEP 3: *closing prep*

## HOMEOWNER'S INSURANCE

One of the principal tasks includes getting homeowner's insurance, which protects you against events such as floods, fires, and storm damages. We recommend you start shopping early to compare rates and get the best deal possible.

## CHANGE ADDRESSES AND UTILITIES

Another task you will have to complete before closing is changing all the addresses on your subscriptions, bills, banks, etc. Additionally, a few weeks before closing, you should call all utilities to have your name changed and schedule them to service your new home in time for when you take possession.

## START PACKING

While organizing for the big move, you will have to start packing! If you have lots of items to move out, we recommend you start by sorting through all your belongings and donating or selling items that you no longer use. As for things you plan to keep, try dedicating a few minutes or hours every day leading up to move to pack. Additionally, hire a moving company and/or rent a storage unit if you require these services.

**ONCE AN OFFER IS  
ACCEPTED, YOU WILL  
HAVE MANY TASKS TO  
COMPLETE BEFORE  
CLOSING DAY**



# STEP 4: *moving in*

## PRE-CLOSING WALKTHROUGH

A few hours or a day before closing, we will go to your new home together and make sure that the property is in the same condition (minus minor wear and tear) as the inspection. If there are any significant issues, we can bring it up to the seller's representatives before closing on the property. This allows you to have peace of mind during the move.



**CLOSING DAY REFERS TO THE DAY THAT FINALIZES YOUR PURCHASE! AFTER CLOSING, YOU WILL RECEIVE THE DEED + KEYS FROM YOUR LAWYER; YOU ARE OFFICIALLY A NEW HOMEOWNER!**

## SIGN CLOSING DOCUMENTS

At closing, you will be reviewing and signing many documents to finalize the transaction.

Make sure you bring:

- Valid government-issued ID
- Cashier's cheque to pay for closing costs
- Any outstanding documents requested from your lawyer or lender.
- A rested hand

Both the buyer and the seller will incur closing fees. For the buyer, these fees typically include:

- Underwriting fees
- Escrow fees
- Homeowner's insurance
- Title search/Title insurance fees
- Land transfer taxes
- Lawyer's fees
- Mortgage Application fees
- Appraisal fees
- Homeowner's Association (HOA) or condo fees, if applicable

## WELCOME HOME!

Congratulations on the purchase of your new home! It was a lot of hard work, but now you can relax and throw a party to celebrate! Also, if you have any concerns after closing, I am always here to assist you.

# COMMON BUYER *mistakes*

**WHEN PURCHASING A PROPERTY, AVOID MAKING THESE MISTAKES!**

## SHOPPING AROUND BEFORE GETTING A MORTGAGE PRE-APPROVAL

To ensure that your financing doesn't fall through, make sure you receive a commitment from your lender. Shopping around without a mortgage pre-approval may result in heartbreak if you find out you cannot afford or put an offer on properties you love. To do a mortgage pre-approval, your lender will check your credit, verify your employment and downpayment, so start collecting all the paperwork necessary for your qualification. We know great local mortgage brokers and lenders, so if you need help, we'd love to put you in touch with people we trust.

## USING UP ALL YOUR SAVINGS AND NOT ANTICIPATING COSTS

Closing costs are typically 1-2% of the purchase price, and while many fees are found in every transaction (e.g., taxes, lawyer fees, etc.), you may incur extra costs depending on the type of property you purchase and the area. Additionally, keep in mind that you may need to upgrade or fix certain areas of your new home, or you will need an unexpected repair not long after your purchase. Therefore, make sure you don't use up all your savings and budget to pay for closing costs, the down payment, moving expenses, and some extra money in case of urgent repairs.

## BUYING A HOME WITH THE LISTING AGENT

Although the listing agent often knows more about the property you want to purchase, they are still working for the seller. This means that their job is to get the best purchase price and contingencies for the seller, not you. Therefore, purchase a house with a different agent who will work for YOU. Best part? In most cases, you don't pay anything for a buyer agent's services!

## NOT COMPARING OR APPLYING WITH MULTIPLE LENDERS

Just like you will most likely call multiple moving companies to compare services and fees, do the same with lenders! Mortgage interest rates and other costs vary from lender to lender, but many don't bother to shop around. By comparing different lenders, you will most likely save hundreds of dollars, so shop until you find the best lender!

# Recommended Providers



## HOME INSPECTORS

- PRO 1 HOME INSPECTIONS
- GULF STATE HOME INSPECTIONS
- PENSACOLA INSURANCE INSPECTIONS



## WDO INSPECTOR

- HAM'S PEST CONTROL
- ROCKY'S PEST CONTROL
- BUGMEISTERS PEST CONTROL



## SURVEYOR

- EMPIRE LAND SURVEYING
- RUBEN SURVEYING AND MAPPING
- KJM LAND SURVEYING



## INSURANCE

- AFFORDABLE HOME INSURANCE
- UNDERWOOD ANDERSON INSURANCE
- ALL RISK INSURANCE



## LENDERS

- UNIVERSITY LENDING GROUP
- SUPREME LENDING
- FAIRWAY

