Let's find a *home*

A Detailed Roadmap
to Acquiring Your
Dream Home.

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ABOUT ME

Thank you for trusting me with finding you a home. Representing you is truly an honor, and I'm committed to guiding you through this process while ensuring your comfort every step of the way.

If you have any further inquiries, please don't hesitate to reach out. You can send me a text or give me a call for the swiftest response—I'm here to assist you!

RACHEL SADLER

REALTOR® | MOVE ME TO SOUTHWEST CO
BLACKMORE GROUP

"Real estate isn't just a profession; it's my lifelong passion, a journey that has defined my previous years. Assisting individuals whether in the sale or finding their homes is not just a duty but a genuine privilege and source of immense joy for me."

Rachel Sadler

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Rachel guided me through my first home-buying experience and I couldn't have asked for a more motivated, sharp, and caring agent. Her expertise in contracts and knowledge of the Durango market gave me such peace of mind during uncertain times in 2020. Thank you, Rachel, for such a memorable experience!

SOMMER W.

Rachel was a great help in finding the right home. She was very professional and communicated instantly even in the late evening. She stayed in contact throughout the transaction and even after. I was unsure about where we wanted to be exactly and she steered me in the right direction for my family. We are very happy with our new home.

WENDY C.

STEP 1

Finances

- Compile your paperwork
- Secure pre-approval or evidence of financial readiness
- Secure the necessary funds for your down payment
- Ready yourself for any potential extra expenses

STEP 2

Home Search

- Explore available properties through online previews
- Arrange appointments to visit and inspect the properties that capture your interest

STEP 3

Under Contract

- Draft a purchase offer for your preferred property
- Engage in negotiations, finalize the offer, and formally accept the contract
- Place the required funds in escrow, complete the loan application, and request homeowners insurance quotations

STEP 4

Due Diligence

- Perform property inspections
- Address and negotiate any inspection-related concerns
- Have your lender initiate the property appraisal process
- Secure homeowners insurance coverage

STEP 5

Closing Time

- The title company will initiate a title search and arrange for a property survey
- Receive the closing statement and obtain clearance for closing
- Transfer funds electronically to the closing company
- Perform a final property walk-through and complete the closing process
- On closing day, receive the keys to your new property—it's officially yours!

The Mortgage Process

The initial step in the home buying process involves obtaining a pre-approval letter from a lender, indicating the amount for which you qualify. It's essential to inquire with potential lenders and pose questions to ensure they align with your needs.

If you ever find yourself puzzled by something your lender discusses, don't hesitate to seek clarification. This journey towards homeownership belongs to you, and you should have a clear understanding of each phase.

Keep in mind that a pre-approval typically remains valid for 30-90 days. Therefore, while you can initiate discussions with lenders earlier, it's advisable to obtain the pre-approval letter when you're prepared to make a purchase.

Questions to Ask Potential Lenders

1. What type of loan do you recommend for me? Why? There’s no one type of mortgage loan that’s superior to another—but whichever you choose, you need to know why it’s best and how it works.

2. Will my down payment vary based on the loan I choose? If you’re tight on cash or don’t want to be cash poor, let your lender know. Loans vary in their down payment requirements.

3. What is the interest rate and the annual percentage rate (APR)? Everyone talks about the interest rate, but the APR is just as important. It combines the interest rate with the fees a lender charges to originate your loan.

4. Can I lock-in an interest rate? If so, for how long? If you think rates will be moving up, ask if you can lock it in for a set period of time.

5. What will my closing costs be? Are they a part of my loan, or will I pay them in cash at closing? Remember, closing costs usually run 3-6% of your loan value so you need to know how they’ll be covered.

LENDER QUESTIONNAIRE

Use this questionnaire as you talk with and interview different lenders

Name:

Company:

Phone Number:

Email:

What type of loan do you recommend for me and why?

Will my down payment vary based on the loan I choose?

What is the interest rate and the annual percentage rate (APR)?

Can I lock-in an interest rate? If so, for how long?

What will my closing costs be? Are they a part of my loan, or will I pay them in cash at

Notes:

Searching Strategically

Before diving into the home search process, I recommend that my clients create two lists: one for "Needs" and one for "Wants." This helps us prioritize the most important aspects of your future home.

"Needs" encompass the essential, non-negotiable features that your next home must have. These are the aspects you cannot compromise on.

"Wants" are the features you'd like to have, but they are more flexible and can be added or modified later.

Remember that your initial draft doesn't have to be the final one, and, most importantly, you cannot change the lot, location, or the price you pay for the property. So, take ample time to consider these three factors before proceeding further in your search.

Needs might be things like:

- Enough square footage for you and your family
- Sufficient bedrooms and bathrooms
- First floor master bedroom
- Close proximity to work and school
- Attached two-car garage
- Grassy yard for children's or pet's play area

Wants will look more like:

- Specific paint or exterior color
- Pool, jacuzzi, or other exterior water feature
- Fenced-in backyard
- Specific carpet, hardwood floors, or tile
- Kitchen amenities like countertops and appliances
- Walk-in shower or double bathroom vanity in master

Wants vs. Needs

Write down your needs and your wants in your future home.

NEEDS	WANTS

HOME BUYER QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is for you to think about what you're looking for in your home. This will help both of us to be on the same page in terms of what you're looking for.

What area are you looking to buy in?

What do you like about this/those area(s)?

How many bedrooms, bathrooms, and preferred square footage? 1 or 2 story?

Do you have children? Pets?

What's your favorite style of home?

What is the top 5 most important things in your future home?

Anything else we should keep in mind during our search?

Searching Strategically Online

With your wants vs. needs list prepared, it's time to narrow down your choices and select properties for in-person visits. Let's begin by discussing effective online search practices. While you're likely familiar with popular platforms like Realtor.com, Zillow, Redfin, and Trulia, here are some tips to enhance your search results.

- Utilize search filters thoughtfully, avoiding overly strict criteria.

To ensure a broader selection of homes while staying aligned with your wants vs. needs list, consider widening your geographical search and adding 25-50K to your maximum price, as properties often sell below the asking price.

- When you spot an appealing listing, explore Google Street View.

This virtual "street walk" provides a more accurate sense of the house and its surroundings, which online pictures may not convey accurately.

- Don't disregard a property just because it's labeled as "pending" or "under contract."

Pending deals can sometimes fall through, so if it meets your criteria, keep it in consideration, as it may still align with your needs.

Once you've identified several appealing homes, make note of their MLS numbers and addresses. Share this list with me, and I will contact the listing agents to gather essential details and assess the seller's motivation. Now, let's coordinate your schedule and allocate a sufficient block of time for touring the homes on your shortlist. It's wise to allow extra time beyond what you anticipate needing, as you don't want to feel rushed when you encounter a potential dream home.

Making the most of your showings

You're fully prepared to step inside the homes on your shortlist and discover if one of them will become your new residence. While excitement is natural, it's important to approach these showings with composure, poise, and a thoughtful mindset. Here's a brief checklist to help you achieve that:

Before a showing, it's essential to review your wants vs. needs list and revisit your budget.
This ensures you remain objective and focused during the viewing. Capture pictures and videos to aid your memory and facilitate discussions with friends and family later.

Keep in mind that the lot and location are fixed, so ensure they align with your preferences.
I will assist in evaluating whether you'd be the highest-priced home in the neighborhood.

Avoid getting sidetracked by decor or staging, as these are temporary.
Stay focused on elements that are not easily changed.

Take your time during the showing.
If a property leaves a positive impression, express your interest and request additional time to explore. This is a significant investment, so gathering as much information as possible while on-site is valuable.

SHOWING CHECKLIST

Address:

First impression rating (1-10) of exterior:

First impression rating (1-10) of interior:

List 3 pros of the home:

List 3 cons of the home:

Took video tour of home

Circle one: No way | Maybe | Very interested | It's the one!

Address:

First impression rating (1-10) of exterior:

First impression rating (1-10) of interior:

List 3 pros of the home:

List 3 cons of the home:

Took video tour of home

Circle one: No way | Maybe | Very interested | It's the one!

Tips for Making an Offer Stand Out

You believe you've discovered "the one," and you're prepared to submit an offer that truly captivates the sellers. Let's discuss crafting an offer that leaves a lasting impression.

- Attach a pre-approval letter to demonstrate your commitment, qualifications, and readiness to buy.
- Maintain a friendly and approachable tone in your offer to convey your genuine interest and ease of collaboration throughout the closing process.
- Present your strongest offer, considering that you may have only one chance. Use comparable sales and market trends as guidance, but ensure your proposed price is appealing to the seller.
- If you can make an "all-cash" purchase, state it to reduce the seller's concerns about financing.
- Suggest a swift closing timeline and include contingencies only if absolutely necessary.
- To make a lasting impression, consider adding a brief handwritten note with your offer. Sometimes, it's the smallest gestures that leave the greatest impact.

Certainly, when you're prepared, I'll be here to assist you in creating an offer that maximizes your chances of securing the home you've always desired.

We're under contract... now what?

You've submitted an offer, and it's been accepted—let's celebrate! While there are still a few days before you can move in, you're progressing towards finalizing the deal on your future home sweet home.

Here's a brief overview of what occurs once you've made an offer and your new home is "under contract."

- Initially, I will guide you through a thorough review of crucial dates and essential information to ensure a smooth closing process. You can refer to the checklist on the next page for a comprehensive overview of what you need to know and the important dates to keep in mind.
- Next, you'll need to arrange a meeting with a mortgage lender to finalize financing details and secure your interest rate.
- When the home inspection report becomes available (and I highly recommend requesting one), we may need to engage in negotiations with the seller regarding any necessary repairs.
- As the closing date approaches, you can expect a call from your closing attorney's office to schedule the final closing appointment.

UNDER CONTRACT CHECKLIST

Use this checklist to keep track of important due dates and ensure a smooth closing.

- [ ] Escrow deposit. You must send escrow deposit of ______ via check or wire to ________.
IMPORTANT: Be very careful when wiring any funds. Never trust wiring instructions sent via email.

- [ ] Begin loan application. Your loan application needs to be started within 5 days from the executed contract date. During your loan processing, it is <u>VERY IMPORTANT</u> not to make any major job changes, major purchases, or open new credit cards or lines of credit, as any of these activities could alter your qualifications.

- [ ] Schedule inspections. The last date to renegotiate or cancel contract due to anything that comes up in inspections is _____ so I recommend scheduling any inspections immediately

- [ ] Obtain home insurance. Start contacting Insurance companies for quotes immediately, we will need to make sure the home is insurable before the end of the inspection period (_____)

EXECUTED CONTRACT

ESCROW DEPOSIT DUE

LOAN APPLICATION DUE

INSPECTION PERIOD ENDS

EST. CLOSING DATE

ADDRESS:

TITLE COMPANY:

PURCHASE PRICE:
$
ESCROW DEPOSIT:
$

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All About Home Inspections and Insurance

What is a home inspection?

The inspection will reveal any hidden home issues, providing you with a written report. It's advisable to attend the inspection to have the opportunity to ask the inspector any questions you may have.

What does "inspection period" mean?

During the inspection period, the buyer is entitled to enlist a professional to assess the home's condition. If the inspection report identifies any issues requiring attention, the buyer can request that the seller address these concerns by covering repair costs, lowering the sales price, or rectifying the repairs before closing. In the event that an agreement cannot be reached, the buyer retains the right to terminate the contract and receive a full refund of the escrow deposit without any repercussions.

TIP:

Schedule all inspections promptly so that we have ample time to negotiate any necessary repairs before the inspection period concludes.

The home seems fine, do I really need a home inspection?

While you may perceive the home as being in excellent condition, some of the most expensive issues can remain hidden, such as leaks, termite damage, foundation problems, inadequate ventilation, faulty wiring, and malfunctioning appliances. A home inspection offers the opportunity, before you commit, to have a professional inspector assess the property for any issues that necessitate attention, replacement, or repair.

Additionally, if you are securing a loan, your lender will require you to acquire home insurance. Typically, the home insurance provider will mandate specific inspections. To meet the insurance company's criteria and obtain coverage, these inspection reports will need to align with their requirements. This underscores the importance of having inspections conducted as part of the home-buying process.

Inspection Cheat Sheet

Type of Inspection	Description	Average Cost
Standard	The standard home inspector's report will cover the condition of the home's heating system; central air conditioning system; interior plumbing and electrical systems; the roof, attic and visible insulations; walls, ceilings, floors, windows and doors; the foundation, basement and structural components.	$350-$650
Four-Point	The Four-Point Inspection examines 4 main things: Electrical, HVAC, Roof & Structure, and Plumbing. The Four-Point will most likely be required by your homeowner's insurance if the home is more than 30 years old.	$50-$150
WDO	The WDO Inspection is the Wood-Destroying Organism Inspection. Ask your lender if your loan requires any certain inspections such as a WDO inspection.	This is not a standard inspection in Southwest Colorado.
Lead-Based Paint	If the home was built prior to 1978, a lead-based paint inspection is recommended	$200-$400

My Trusted Inspection Companies

Smart Move Property Inspections
Cody Petersen
970.903.7280

Complete Home Inspection
Greg Pohlman
970.846.4712

Pace Property Inspections
David Pace
970.880.4600

Home Insurance Cheat Sheet

Type of Insurance	Description	Average Cost
Homeowners	The standard homeowners insurance covers financial protection against loss due to disasters, theft and accidents	$200-$300 / mo
Hazard	Hazard insurance protects against damage caused by fires, severe storms, hail/sleet, or other natural events	$50-$150 / mo
Flood	Protects against damage caused by a flood	$50-$150 / mo
Windstorm	Protects against damage caused by events such as tornadoes, hurricanes, or gales.	$25-$100 / mo

My Trusted Insurance Companies

Farmers Insurance
Courtney Harshberger
970-946-2144

State Farm
Denise Elliot
970-247-4060

American Family Insurance
Robert Soniat
970-731-3777

Pre-Closing

We are so close to the closing table! Here's what's going to happen leading up to you receiving the keys:

- [x] Under Contract
- [x] Inspections
- [x] Obtain Insurance

■ Appraisal

An appraisal is an estimate of the value of the property by a licensed professional appraiser. Once any problems during the inspection are solved, the appraisal will be ordered by the lender and paid for by you. The goal of the appraisal is to verify the value of the property for the lender and to protect you from overpaying. The contract is contingent upon whether the appraisal comes in at or above the purchase price. If the appraisal comes back short, we will be back to the negotiating table.

■ Obtain Mortgage

You have 5 days from the date of contract execution to begin the mortgage loan application.
During the 30-45 days before closing, the lender will be finalizing your mortgage.

> It is very important not to make any major job changes, major purchases, or open new credit cards or lines of credit, as any of these activities could alter your qualifications for a loan.

■ Survey

Unless the seller already has a recent & acceptable survey of the property, the buyer is required to pay for the survey (this will be in your closing costs). The title company or I will order this for you. The survey is a sketch showing a map of the property lines/boundaries among other things. The survey will show if there are any encroachments on the property.

■ Title

The title company will conduct a title search to ensure the property is legitimate and find if there are any outstanding mortgage liens, judgments, restrictions, easements, leases, unpaid taxes, or any other restrictions that would impact your ownership associated with the property. Once the title is found to be valid, the title company will issue a title insurance policy which protects lenders or owners against claims or legal fees that may arise over ownership of the property. This will also be a part of your closing costs.

■ Clear-to-Close!

The magic words! It means the mortgage underwriter has officially approved all documentation required to fund the loan. All that remains is the actual closing process.

Closing Time!

You've gotten the "clear-to-close" and we've scheduled our closing date and time – let's answer some questions you may have about closing day:

Q: When do we do the final walk-through?
A: The final walk-through is exactly what it sounds like – it allows the buyers to do one last walk through before closing to confirm that the seller made the repairs that were agreed upon and to make sure no issues have come up while under contract. We will typically schedule to do this right before closing.

Q: Who will be at closing?
A: Situations vary, but you can expect some combination of these folks: Buyer (that's you!), seller, real estate agents, closing agent/attorney, mortgage lender, and title company representative.

Q: What will I do?
A: Stretch those fingers and get ready to sign, sign, sign. At closing, the seller will sign ownership of the property over to you, and you'll sign to receive possession.

Q: What should I bring?
A: Bring a photo ID and a cashier's check to pay any closing costs. Your agent will tell you any other documents specific to your situation. The closing process is relatively simple but be prepared for A LOT of paperwork. (And always, always, always ask if you have a question along the way.) The good news is once you've signed the last page, it's time to get a hold of those keys and celebrate!

MOVING CHECKLIST

4-6 WEEKS BEFORE

- [ ] Declutter, discard & donate
- [ ] Collect quotes from moving companies
- [ ] Locate schools, healthcare providers in your new location
- [ ] Secure off-site storage if needed
- [ ] Choose a mover and sign contract
- [ ] Create a file of moving-related papers and receipts
- [ ] Contact homeowner's insurance agent about coverage for moving
- [ ] Contact insurance companies to arrange for coverage in new home

3-4 WEEKS BEFORE

Notify the following about your change of address:

- [ ] Banks + Post Office
- [ ] Credit Card Companies
- [ ] Insurance Companies
- [ ] Family + Friends

Notify utility companies of date to discontinue or transfer service

- [ ] Electric
- [ ] Gas
- [ ] Water
- [ ] Internet
- [ ] Trash
- [ ] TV

2-3 WEEKS BEFORE

- [ ] Notify DMV of new address
- [ ] Discontinue additional home services (housekeeper, gardener/lawn service)
- [ ] Start using up things you can't move, such as perishables
- [ ] Close/open bank accounts
- [ ] Arrange for child and pet care on moving day
- [ ] Notify HOA about upcoming move, reserve elevator usage

1 WEEK BEFORE

- [ ] Confirm final arrangements
- [ ] Arrange transportation for your pets and plants
- [ ] Review your moving-day plan with moving company
- [ ] Take a picture in your home
- [ ] Pack an essentials box for quick access at new home
- [ ] Label moving boxes with the contents inside

THANK YOU

Thank you for entrusting me with your time. It's an honor to guide you through this journey.

Should you have any questions, don't hesitate to text or call for a prompt reply. Assisting clients is my passion, and I'm always ready to address your queries.

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Let's Get Social

@movemetosouthwestco

Do you want a more personalized guide tailored to your wants and needs?

Click the button below to BOOK your FREE CALL with me!

BOOK A FREE CALL