

PROSPECT REAL ESTATE

BUYER'S GUIDE

A COMPLETE GUIDE FOR THE HOME BUYING PROCESS



Before you buy: understanding the home buying process.

There's many steps, tasks, and requirements to buying a home and you may be anxious about making an expensive mistake. To demystify the process, here's a rundown of what you need to consider before you buy and what you can expect from the buying process:

- get to know our brokerage
- buyer questionnaire
- financing tips
- buying step by step
- Initial process
- house hunting
- inspection and more
- closing time
- buyer mistakes
- real estate terms
- buyer resources



email NAME@prospectrealestate.com
for more information.



Prospect Real Estate

GET TO KNOW OUR REAL ESTATE BROKERAGE

Prospect Real Estate is a boutique real estate firm with over 40 years of experience in the Austin market. Prospect has been responsible for the successful sales of over \$459M+ in locally developed real estate including residential homes, single-family communities, and condominium developments.

Whether you're looking for a house or condo, Downtown Austin or outside the city limits, investment property, or a new home - a Prospect Real Estate agent can help. Our team has the most up-to-date property information with off-market listings and exclusive access to new-build inventory you can't find anywhere else.



Buyer QUESTIONNAIRE

When starting your home search, there are a few key criteria to think about. Having a general understanding of what you're looking for, before starting your home search will help me to provide listings that meet your wants and needs.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

DESIRED LOCATION

Do you have a location in mind? A neighborhood, subdivision, or area of Austin?

PRICING & FINANCING

What is your price range? If you need financing, are you pre-qualified yet?

TIMEFRAME

Do you need to sell a current home? Are you leasing? When does your current lease end?

INTERIOR

Number of Bedrooms? Bathrooms? Total square feet? Other interior requirements?

EXTERIOR

Lot size? Garage? Pool? Pet needs? Other exterior requirements?

In a competitive market, sellers will ask for proof of pre-approval. This document can help strengthen your offer! Make sure to get a pre-approved letter before we start viewing homes.



Financing Tips

GET YOUR CREDIT IN CHECK

Make sure you're financially prepared for homeownership. Do you have a lot of debt? Plenty saved for a down payment? What about closing costs? Ask yourself "how much house can I afford?" before you go further. Additionally, know that lenders look closely at your credit score when determining your eligibility for a mortgage loan. Check your credit score and do anything you can to improve it, such as lowering outstanding debt, disputing any errors and holding off on applying for any other loans or credit cards.

FIND THE RIGHT LENDER

Just like you want to get the home that best suits your needs, you'll want to find a lender that best suits you. We suggest you consider using a broker to help you find a lender, talk to your agent—we are here to help, ask friends and family for referrals, and compare at least three lenders.

BE PREPARED

A lender will need information from you in order to get you pre-approved and through the home buying process. Here are a few things to have ready for them:

- W-2 forms from the past two years
- Pay stubs from the past 30 days
- Federal tax returns from the past two years
- Proof of other sources of income
- Recent bank statements
- Details on long-term debts such as car or student loans
- ID and Social Security number

*If you're self-employed, you may have to provide extra proof of your financial stability, including having a higher credit score or large cash reserves, and possibly providing business tax returns.

STEP BY STEP

Buying

01

CONSULTATION

Meet with your Real Estate Agent! Discuss what you are looking for.

02

PRE-QUALIFIED

If you need financing get pre-approved by a lender or bank.

03

HOME SEARCH!

Your agent will narrow down options for your review.

04

MAKE AN OFFER!

Negotiate the offer and get it accepted!
Contingent on inspection.

05

HOME INSPECTION

Discuss Results, decide if any repairs are needed and if you want to move forward.

06

APPRAISAL & TITLE SEARCH

The bank or lender orders the appraisal, title search and final financing is set.

07

CLOSING

Sign papers and pop the bubbly! Congratulations, you are home owner.



THE INITIAL PROCESS

1. CONSULTATION

I would love to chat with you about your needs, wishes and wants in your new home! Prior to our meeting, please fill out

- How long have you been looking for a new home?
- What areas and neighborhoods are you looking at?
- What is your Plan B, if you can't find the home you have in mind?
- What are some of your must have items?
- What are deal breaker items?



2. PRE-APPROVAL

This is a quick necessary process that helps narrow down and determine how much you can afford!

Lenders typically recommend a home that costs no more than three to five times your annual household income, with a 20% down payment. However, there are MANY different financing structures that they can make work for you!

*Did you know?
88% of all Buyers work with Realtors!*

HOUSE HUNTING

3. FINDING "THE ONE"

I will tailor listings based on your criteria. I funnel all properties and pick the best to view, and will filter out the homes that will not work.

Most buyers look at approximately 10 properties and are then ready to make an offer. At that time, if you have not found a home you are looking for - it's HIGHLY recommended that we sit down and review your criteria to make sure that we are still looking for the right house!

Once you find one you love... it's time to determine the market value of that property. I will compare that home to others that have sold and from there we will determine the value for the home!

4. MAKING AN OFFER

Now is the exciting time! When you are ready to write an offer, I will walk you through the contract. It is important to write a fair offer or you can run the risk of the seller not responding or even losing the property to another buyer making an offer.

- Write the Offer
- Negotiate the Offer
- Satisfy Conditions



INSPECTIONS AND MORE

5. HOME INSPECTIONS

The immediate step after your offer is accepted is to schedule a home inspection. You will have a certain number of days to complete this inspection after the offer was accepted. This also includes termite inspection if you are in an area where you would be effected.

Your home inspection letter will verify that all items considered defective or problems relating to the safely of the home corrected prior to closing.



6. APPRAISAL, TITLE SEARCH & LENDER APPROVAL

The title is right to own, possess, use and control of a property. When purchasing a home you are buying a sellers title to the home. Before closing a title search is done to ensure there are no liens, or problems that might prevent a clean title for you to close on the home.

An appraisal is an estimate of the property value. The approval is not only to justify the lender's investment but to help keep the buyer from overpaying on a property. Your lender will typically hire an appraiser and charge you the fee at closing.

When your lender approves your loan, your annual percentage rates, monthly fees, and repayment info for the loan will be finalized and shared with you.

CLOSING TIME

7. THE CLOSING

The closing process finalizes the purchase of your home.

A FEW THINGS TO BRING

- A valid government-issued photo ID
- Cashier's check payable for the total amount due. Note - you will receive your closing statement approximately 3 days prior to closing. This is referred to as the "cooling off period".

CLOSING COSTS

Closing costs are an assortment of fees—separate from agent commissions—that are paid by both buyers and sellers at the close of a real estate transaction. On average, fees typically total 2% - 6% of the total purchase price and can include:

- Escrow Fees
- Recording fees
- Application and underwriting fees
- Appraisal Fees
- Pre-paid Taxes
- Homeowners Insurance
- Homeowners Association Fees



MOVE-IN DAY

8. MOVING IN

Remember, you will not get keys to your property and cannot move in until the transaction has been funded. Funding takes place when all money is exchanged and proceeds have been wired to the title company. This is often several hours after closing, **maybe even a day**. Give yourself and the movers some breathing room and don't schedule your move on closing day if at all possible.



CELEBRATE

9. CELEBRATE BEING A HOMEOWNER

Congratulations!

It's time to celebrate your new home! I wish you many years of happiness and amazing memories in your new home. Cheers!



Buyer Mistakes

AVOID THESE MISTAKES WHEN BUYING YOUR HOME

GETTING TOO EMOTIONAL

Think it's impossible? It's actually not. Once you decide to buy a home, start thinking of yourself as a businessperson and investor rather than just a future homeowner. In fact, forget that you're the "Buyer" altogether. By looking at the transaction from a purely financial perspective, you'll distance yourself from the emotional aspects of buying the property. While it is important to factor in certain emotional aspects, don't let it cloud the process. Real estate IS an investment. Don't let emotions distract you from that.

SHOPPING BEFORE GETTING PRE-APPROVED

It's more fun to look at homes than it is to talk about your finances with a lender. So that's what a lot of first-time home buyers do: They visit properties before finding out how much they are able to borrow. Then, they are disappointed when they discover they were looking in the wrong price range (either too high or too low) or when they find the right home, but aren't able to make a serious offer. How to avoid this mistake: Talk to a mortgage professional about getting pre-qualified or even preapproved for a home loan before you start to seriously shop for a place. The pre-qualification or preapproval process involves a review of your income and expenses, and it can make your bid more competitive because you'll be able to show sellers that you can back up your offer.

EMPTYING YOUR SAVINGS

If you buy a previously owned home, it almost inevitably will need an unexpected repair not long after. Maybe you'll need to replace a water heater or pay a homeowner's insurance deductible after bad weather. How to avoid this mistake: Save enough money to make a down payment, pay for closing costs and moving expenses, and take care of repairs that may come up. Lenders will give you estimates of closing costs, and you can call around to get estimates of moving expenses.

CHOOSING THE WRONG LENDER

Shopping for a mortgage is like shopping for a car or any other expensive item: It pays to compare offers. Interest rates vary from lender to lender, and so do fees such as closing costs and discount points. But according to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, almost 60% of borrowers don't shop for a loan. How to avoid this mistake: Apply with multiple mortgage lenders. A typical borrower could save \$430 in interest just in the first year by comparing five lenders. All mortgage applications made in a 45-day window will count as just one credit inquiry.

REAL ESTATE LINGO

buyers Need to Know

APPRAISAL

A DETERMINATION OF THE VALUE OF SOMETHING, IN THIS CASE, THE HOUSE YOU PLAN TO BUY. A PROFESSIONAL APPRAISER MAKES AN ESTIMATE BY EXAMINING THE PROPERTY, LOOKING AT THE INITIAL PURCHASE PRICE, AND COMPARING IT WITH RECENT SALES OF SIMILAR PROPERTY.

CLOSING COSTS

MORTGAGE CLOSING COSTS ARE FEES AND EXPENSES YOU PAY WHEN YOU SECURE A LOAN FOR YOUR HOME, BEYOND THE DOWN PAYMENT. THESE COSTS ARE GENERALLY 3 TO 5 PERCENT OF THE LOAN AMOUNT AND MAY INCLUDE TITLE INSURANCE, ATTORNEY FEES, APPRAISALS, TAXES AND MORE

APPRECIATION

INCREASE IN THE VALUE OR WORTH OF AN ASSET OR PIECE OF PROPERTY THAT'S CAUSED BY EXTERNAL ECONOMIC FACTORS OCCURRING OVER TIME, RATHER THAN BY THE OWNER HAVING MADE IMPROVEMENTS OR ADDITIONS.

MLS

A COMPUTER-BASED SERVICE, COMMONLY REFERRED TO AS MLS, THAT PROVIDES REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONALS WITH DETAILED LISTINGS OF MOST HOMES CURRENTLY ON THE MARKET. THE PUBLIC CAN NOW ACCESS MUCH OF THIS KIND OF INFORMATION THROUGH WEBSITES LIKE

ZONING

THE LOCAL LAWS DIVIDING CITIES OR COUNTIES INTO DIFFERENT ZONES ACCORDING TO ALLOWED USES, FROM SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL TO COMMERCIAL TO INDUSTRIAL. MIXED-USE ZONES ARE ALSO USED. ZONING ORDINANCES CONTROL SIZE, LOCATION, AND USE OF BUILDINGS WITHIN THESE DIFFERENT AREAS AND HAVE AN EFFECT ON TRAFFIC, HEALTH, AND LIVABILITY.

CONTINGENCY

A PROVISION IN A CONTRACT STATING THAT SOME OR ALL OF THE TERMS OF THE CONTRACT WILL BE ALTERED OR VOIDED BY THE OCCURRENCE OF A SPECIFIC EVENT, USUALLY BY SPECIFIC DATES LEADING UP TO THE CLOSING.

ESCROW

THE HOLDING OF FUNDS OR DOCUMENTS BY A NEUTRAL THIRD PARTY PRIOR TO CLOSING YOUR HOME SALE. THIS IS TYPICALLY DONE BY A TITLE COMPANY.

HOME INSPECTION

AN EXAMINATION OF THE CONDITION OF A REAL ESTATE PROPERTY. A HOME INSPECTOR ASSESSES THE CONDITION OF A PROPERTY, INCLUDING ITS HEATING / COOLING SYSTEMS, PLUMBING, ELECTRICAL WORK, WATER AND SEWAGE, AS WELL AS SOME FIRE AND SAFETY ISSUES.

TITLE

OWNERSHIP OF REAL ESTATE OR PERSONAL PROPERTY. WITH REAL ESTATE, TITLE IS EVIDENCED BY A DEED (OR OTHER DOCUMENT) RECORDED IN THE COUNTY LAND RECORDS OFFICE.