



HOMEBUYER'S GUIDE TO SUCCESS



Buying a home is a huge step and there's a lot to learn along the way. Before you get too far into the process, it is important to know what's involved and what it will mean for you. Realty Executives is here to help you get prepared by offering this exclusive Homebuyer's Guide that will walk you through the home-buying process from start to finish.



CHECK YOUR CREDIT

Credit scores are a main factor in qualifying for a mortgage loan. You may get approved to take a mortgage out but it does not necessarily mean you are ready to buy a home. Look at your credit scores and evaluate what you qualify for and the interest rates. A lower score may qualify but the interest will be higher, making monthly payments significantly increase.

Having a fairly good credit score will get you through the home-buying process at a reasonable interest rate. You want to aim for a score of 620 but if you at least have a score of 580, you could still qualify for an FHA loan. Make sure to go through your previous reports as well to try and remove any negative marks. The more you can improve your credit score, the more comfortable you may be with your monthly payment.



PLAN YOUR BUDGET

When planning to buy a home, it is key to choose the right home for you in the right price range. Preparing a budget will allow you to distinguish between what you can and cannot afford for monthly payments, while not neglecting other important parts of your life.

Many homebuyers prioritize homeownership over purchases like cars or vacations. But stretching your home buying budget too far could lead to regret. To avoid this mistake, establish the size, cost and type of house you can afford based on your current income and if your current job.

FIND THE RIGHT REAL ESTATE AGENT FOR YOU

Finding a knowledgeable and personable real estate professional is essential for a seamless home buying experience. Talk to friends, family, co-workers or neighbors for referrals to see what type of experiences they had. Searching online can also be a great way to learn the types of homes local agents are selling, their productivity and inventory. By looking through these, you are able to see which agents have the right expertise and amount of time for your homebuying process.



GET PRE-APPROVED

Sorting out your financing is actually step one in the house hunting process. There's no point in spending weeks or months searching for a home if you don't qualify for a mortgage loan. Getting pre-approved for a mortgage helps you understand how much of a loan you can qualify for so you know what price ranges to explore.

Plus, when you're ready to make an offer on a home, your offer will be stronger if you're pre-approved. The sellers will be able to accept your offer, knowing that you'll be able to secure financing to close the deal. It only takes a few minutes to get pre-approved online, and it will help your house hunting process go more smoothly.

START HOUSE HUNTING

Don't go into the process with a long checklist of requirements. Instead make a list of absolute necessities and another of "wants." Think about location, home type and commute time along with home design to find the right property for you.





MAKE AN OFFER

Make your first offer, your best offer. Great homes can go fast so if you find your dream home and it's located in a competitive market, be prepared to move fast. Don't step out of your budget though- have a top limit and stick to it.

When making an offer, remember that the terms of the offer are just as important as the price. This could mean removing contingencies, accepting contents with an estate sale or changing the closing date, etc. Lastly, expect to compromise. No matter the price range you set for yourself, you're most likely going to have to compromise on some features.

GET AN APPRAISAL

If you're getting a home loan, your lender will require an appraisal. An appraisal is when a professional comes in to the home to make sure you are buying a home for a fair market value. Overall, it protects you from paying more than what the home is actually worth. This is when a professional appraiser takes a look at the home you're buying to estimate its fair market value, and it protects you from paying more than what the home is worth.



HOME INSPECTION

Never skip a home inspection! The seller is expecting it and would be surprised if a buyer didn't request one. It is standard procedure to make an offer contingent or contractually dependent on the results of a home inspection. Remember, if a homeowner is unwilling to do an inspection, it most likely means they are hiding something.

Next, when scheduling the inspection make sure to find the right contractor. You can do re-search online to find lists of professionals for your area or if you are working with a real estate agent, he or she should be able to assist in finding a licensed home inspector.

UPDATE YOUR HOME INSURANCE

When you update your home, it may be a good idea to look into updating your home's insurance. Adding to your home or updating large spaces can be time-consuming but don't forget that when you add value into the property, that you want the value to be protected.



CLOSING DAY

Closing day on your new home can be exciting but stressful. Be sure to check what you need to bring with from identification records to payments. There may be closing costs and escrow items along with numerous fees associated with getting a mortgage and transferring property ownership. You may want to wrap these fees into your loan balance.

Most of your closing day will be signing legal papers. This falls into categories, the agreement between you and your lender and the agreement between you and the seller. Be sure to read all documents carefully before signing and do not sign forms with blank lines or spaces.

MOVE INTO YOUR

DREAM HOME!



Everything becomes worth it when you get the keys to your new home! Gather family and friends to help you move and keep organized during the process. Use labels to know which room boxes should be placed in and streamline the move-in process. Looking to hire a company to move for you? Make sure to read customer testimonials and do your research to ensure your belongings will be carefully handled.



By following this guide, your home buying process should run smoothly. Are you ready to buy a home?