

Home Buyer's Survival Guide



JENISE GATO & MERISIA CHALLENGER

Call/Text 786.486.2826



@PeacefulMovesTeam

@ThePeacefulAgent_



FINANCES

The very first step in the home buying process is to obtain a financial pre-approval (proof of funds for cash purchase). We will need this document to accompany any offer we make on a property.

FINANCING

A mortgage lender will be able to take your financial information and determine what amount you will be able to borrow. Having your pre-approval letter in hand before we start searching will save us time and make sure we don't miss out on the perfect home opportunity. The pre-approval letter will accompany an offer.

CASH

If you've got the money in the bank and you are ready to purchase your home in cash, that's great. I will inform you as to your closing costs and we will need a proof of funds to supplement any offers. You can acquire a proof of funds from your financial advisor or your banker to show that you have a balance that meets the purchase price.

MY RECOMMENDED LENDERS

VINCE RODRIGUEZ | 786.208.8112
HIGHLANDS RESIDENTIAL MTG
WWW.VINCECLOSES.COM

ROBIN MORLA | 954.547.2480
CLEAR TO CLOSE HOME LOANS
ROBIN@CLEAR2CLOSEHOMELOANS.COM

JORDAN NICOLOSI | 954.254.7459
PREMIER LENDING CORP
JNICOLOSI@PLCORP.COM

QUESTIONS TO ASK THEM

- WHAT INTEREST RATE CAN YOU OFFER?
- DOES THE RATE COME WITH POINTS?
- IS IT FIXED OR ADJUSTABLE?
- WHEN CAN YOU LOCK MY RATE?
- WHAT FEES CAN I EXPECT FROM YOU?
- WHAT TYPE OF LOAN IS RIGHT FOR ME?
- DO I QUALIFY FOR ANY DOWN PAYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS?

NAME:

COMPANY:

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NOTES:

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?

Home Search Notes

(Print this page to make notes on your home visits)

ADDRESS:

First impression rating
(1-10) of exterior:

First impression rating
(1-10) of interior:

BED/BATH/SQ.FT

PRICE:

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:

BED/BATH/SQ.FT

PRICE:

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!



OFFERS & NEGOTIATIONS

IN ORDER TO WRITE AN OFFER, WE WILL NEED THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:



PRE-APPROVAL LETTER OR PROOF OF FUNDS

The approval process with a reputable lender/bank is the most important process before we start house hunting. This will determine your buying power to know how much you qualify for and to strengthen your offer.

OFFER PRICE

I will help you determine the property's fair market value based on the most recent comps & market demand.

ESCROW DEPOSIT

Usually 1-2% of purchase price. In today's market, due to low inventory, a higher deposit can help make your offer more attractive.

FINANCING AMOUNT

What percentage of the loan are you financing, and how much you are putting down

CLOSING DATE

If getting a mortgage, this is typically 30-45 days from acceptance of offer. This will be the day the keys are handed from seller to buyer

INSPECTION PERIOD

Typically the buyer shall have 15 days, unless otherwise stated on the contract, to perform inspections on the home and terminate or renegotiate the contract if inspection comes back unacceptable. Lower periods will be more attractive to sellers.

WHAT IS THE ESCROW DEPOSIT?

The escrow deposit is also known as "The Good Faith Deposit." It is typically 1-2% of the purchase price that you put down upfront to show the seller you are serious about the purchase. The higher the escrow, the more attractive the offer is to the seller.

Where does it go?

As soon as we have an executed contract, you have approximately 3 days to get the Escrow Deposit to the title company. The title company holds it up until closing, then it will be counted towards your balance due at closing. You can submit your escrow deposit by check, cashier's check or wire transfer.



OFFERS & NEGOTIATIONS

TRICKS FOR HANDLING A MULTIPLE OFFER SITUATION:

Nothing is more frustrating than finding the perfect home for you, and then finding out that someone else thinks it's the perfect home for them too! However, this situation does happen in our market. There are many different techniques we can use to make our offer as attractive to the sellers as possible.

- **Have your pre-approval letter or proof of funds in hand.** You may have a great offer to submit, but if you can't back it up with proof you are qualified to purchase the home the seller may just move on.
- **Make a cash offer if you are able.** If not, make as large a down payment as possible, and use a lender that communicates effectively with all parties.
- **Offer more than the asking price.** Your agent should do a comparative market analysis to give you a good idea on the home value as soon as you decide to make an offer. If it's not too out of line with the CMA or your budget, offer more than the asking price.
- **Keep your offer clean and simple.** Don't ask for contingencies that aren't necessary to closing the transaction.
- **Shorten the inspection period.** Asking for a 5 to 7 day inspection period instead of the traditional 15 lets the seller know that you aren't going to waste anyone's time. Find a home inspector who has availability to schedule your inspection as soon as your offer is accepted.
- **Have your escrow deposit ready.** Offer an escrow deposit that sends the message that you are serious about your offer and have the funds ready to turn in as soon as your offer is accepted. You may want to include a copy of your escrow check with your offer.
- **Offer flexibility with your closing date.** Convey through your agent that you are willing adjust the closing date to suit the seller's needs.
- **Include a personal letter with a family photo.** Let the seller know who you are, what you like about the home, and that you intend to take good care of their former residence. Let them know what it is about the home that has already made it special to you.
- **Offer an additional escrow deposit after the inspection period.** This is another way to let the seller know you are serious about the house and not just trying to get it off the market while you make up your mind or look further.
- **Consider an escalation clause.** Let the seller know your offer isn't the highest you will go by including a clause stating that you will increase your offer, up to a set price, if the seller shows you a higher offer from another buyer.
- **Be diplomatic with negotiations after your contract is signed.** Remember that the seller has other interested parties to fall back on. If you turn ugly after the contract is signed, making additional demands or not following through with your promises, the seller may hand you back your deposit and work with someone else.

ONCE WE GET THE HOME UNDER CONTRACT, FILL IN THE INFORMATION ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE



INSPECTION PERIOD

TIP: SCHEDULE ALL INSPECTIONS IMMEDIATELY, SO IF WE NEED TO NEGOTIATE ANY REPAIRS WE CAN BEFORE THE INSPECTION PERIOD ENDS.

During the inspection period, the buyer has the right to hire a professional to inspect the condition of the home. The inspection will uncover any issues in the home that would have otherwise been unknown.

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. You will receive a written report of the inspection. You may be present for the inspection if you would like to ask the inspector any questions.

ADDITIONAL INSPECTIONS YOU MAY NEED:

Four-Point Inspection may be required by your homeowner's insurance if the home is more than 30 years old

WDO Inspection Ask your lender if your loan requires any certain inspections such as a Wood Destroying Organism (WDO) inspection.

Lead-Based Paint Inspection If the home was built prior to 1978, a lead-based paint inspection is recommended



MY RECOMMENDED INSPECTORS

MAX HOME INSPECTIONS
305.570.4068
INFO@MAXHOMEINSPECTIONS.COM
MAXHOMEINSPECTIONS.COM

FLEET INSPECTIONS
954.752.9443
INFO@FLEET-INSPECTIONS.COM
FLEET-INSPECTIONS.COM

MY FLORIDA INSPECTIONS
DAVID LOPEZ
786.609.2095
INFO@MYFLORIDAHOMEINSPECTORS.COM
MYFLORIDAHOMEINSPECTORS.COM



FINANCING PERIOD

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.

OBTAINING A 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.

HOME INSURANCE:

Your lender will require you to obtain a homeowner's insurance policy. You will need to get the lender this information before closing. Feel free to call my recommendations below for quotes.

TIP: 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.

RECOMMENDED INSURANCE:

DAGLEY INSURANCE
DAGLEYINSURANCE.COM/FATHOM
832.772.4300

MY CHOICE GROUP
305.822.8119
MYCHOICEGROUP.COM

ALL STATE
954.901.8249
TONY.ESPINOSA@ALLSTATE.COM

NSURE.COM





PREPARING TO CLOSE!



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, judgements, 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.



SMOOTH CLOSING CHECKLIST

- Make sure you've obtained homeowner's insurance and provide the lender with the information
- Review the closing settlement statement a few days before closing to ensure you have the funds for closing costs
- Final walk-through
- Wire funds to closing company
- Bring your driver's license or passport to closing table
- Take your keys and move in!

AFTER CLOSING CHECKLIST

- Make copies of all of the closing documents and store them in a safe place.
- Change the locks
- Update any keypads
- Start a home maintenance list
- Update your address on all of the following:
 - Friends and family
 - Work
 - Banks / financial institutions
 - All bills
 - Insurance companies
 - Driver's license / Identification cards
 - Schools
 - Medical offices
 - Subscriptions
- Meet the neighbors!

WHO ARE WE?

A little about *Jenise*



With over two decades in real estate, I'm here to be your seasoned guide in the vibrant South Florida market. Since 2001, I've been dedicated to fulfilling diverse real estate needs, specializing in new construction, short sales, investments, and aiding first-time homebuyers.

As the founder of the Peaceful Moves team, I take great pride in leading a group driven by integrity and a genuine commitment to serve. Our mission is simple: deliver service that exceeds expectations.

My consultative and collaborative style stands out, aiming for peaceful and positive outcomes. A South Florida native, I reside in Miramar with my husband, three daughters, miniature schnauzer, and a beloved cat.

For a seamless real estate experience and a team that prioritizes your peace of mind, turn to me and the Peaceful Moves team.

Move with Peace, Call Jenise & TEAM!

What you can *expect* from me

I'm Curious

I want to have a clear understanding of your goals, who you are, and what your home means to you.

I'm Committed

I bring my A-game to every transaction, and I'm committed to achieving the best possible outcome for my clients.

I'm Proactive

I'm always one step ahead, anticipating potential roadblocks and finding creative solutions to overcome them.

I'm Personal

I believe in building relationships with my clients and treating them like family, because in the end, that's what leads to the best possible results.

WHO ARE WE?

A little about *Merisia*



Experienced local realtor dedicated to exceptional service. Expertise in renting, investing, buying, and selling properties. 15+ years in commercial property management, including roles in municipal government and television media sales.

Strong negotiation and closing skills. Rooted in respect, integrity, and transparency to ensure a positive, trustworthy experience.

Embrace your real estate challenge with confidence. Welcome home!

Move with Peace, Call Jenise & TEAM!

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WHAT OUR CLIENTS SAY



"Jenise Gato has integrity, commitment, and a great heart, which are qualities you want to find in a realtor. She is honest even when faced with challenges and extremely helpful. You can feel completely comfortable asking her questions and trust that she will steer you right. "

IVY FERNANDEZ, SINGLE FAMILY HOME PURCHASED IN 2018

"If there is one word I can use to describe Jenise, it's peaceful! She truly stands by her group name and what it represents, Peaceful Moves! Even when we had two hiccups in a row, Jenise kept her calm (and kept us calm!) and navigated the rough waters in order to find us a 3rd buyer, all within a week's time. She is passionate and driven to meet the needs of her client. At the same time, she is caring and a person who wants to see you reach your dream of homeownership. If you need someone to help you buy or sell real estate, do not look any further! Jenise is awesome!" **FERMIN VAZQUEZ, SOLD TOWNHOUSE & PURCHASED NEW CONSTRUCTION IN 2020**



"Jenise is the best realtor! She helped us buy our first home. She will give you a lot of helpful information throughout the process so you feel knowledgeable and confident when you make your final decision. Also, anytime we had questions she would promptly answer our calls/ emails. She is very positive but also realistic which helps when you're making a big decision like buying your first home."

ROMINA BARRIENTOS, FIRST TIME HOME BUYE 2020



VENDOR LIST

REAL ESTATE ATTORNEY

Strock & Cohen, Zipper Law Group, PA
Bart Strock
2900 Glades Circle, Suite 750
Weston, FL 33327
954.634.1769
bstrock@strocklaw.com
www.strocklaw.com

TITLE COMPANY

NuWorld Title - Meyling Montelongo
786.318.6825
meyling@nuworldtitle.com

First International Title- Marta Nunez
786.587.2158
<https://www.firstintitle.com/>

MOVING COMPANIES

All My Sons
844.207.0741

Raul's Moving
305.266.0859

Two Men & A Truck
954.731.8092

HANDYMAN

Daniel Ariza
786.641.9565
danielariza2306@gmail.com

WINDOW TREATMENTS

BJ&S Blinds
Wayne Halpern
954.448.3805
bjsblindsflorida.com

HOME STAGER/DECORATOR

Diana Gomez
DG Decor, LLC
ig: @dg_decor
305.496.9728

PEST CONTROL

Pest Trooper LLC - Garnett
786.337.1985

FENCE

Samada Fence
954.559.4355

XTreme Fence
954-851-6610
<https://xtremefencefl.co>

HOME INSPECTION

Max Home Inspections
855.338.9596
www.maxhomeinspections.com/

My Florida Inspections
786.609.2095
myfloridahomeinspectors.com

GARAGE

Alpha Garage Solutions
954-495-1636
<https://garagestoragemiami.com/>

POOL COMPANIES

Calypso Pools - Sam
786.367.2589
<https://calypsopools.net/>

ROOFING

Seeber Roofing
954.680.3877
<https://frankseeberroofing.com/>

GENERAL CONTRACTOR

Daniel Santiago
Rogue Construction, LLC
786.973.8861
rogueconstructionfl@gmail.com

THIS INFORMATION IS PROVIDED AS A COURTESY TO MY CLIENTS. I DO NOT RECEIVE ANY TYPE OF INCENTIVE FROM YOUR USE OF THESE VENDORS, NOR DO I MAKE ANY GUARANTEES RELATED TO SERVICES PROVIDED. FEEL FREE TO USE THEM AS A RESOURCE.

VO CAB TO KNOW

Active

The property is actively for sale and on the market. The sellers may have received offers but have not accepted any yet.

Adjustable-rate mortgage (ARM)

After an introductory period that could be 3, 5, 7 or 10 years, the interest rate on an adjustable-rate mortgage will be adjusted by the lender in accordance with current interest rates.

Back on market

This property was under contract with another buyer and their contract fell through, so it is Active again.

CMA

Comparative market analysis or competitive market analysis. A CMA compares the sales price of similar properties in the area to help determine the price of a property.

Closing costs

The fees that the buyer and seller will owe associated with the home-buying process, such as the real estate brokerage commission and title insurance. Most are paid by the buyer, but the seller pays for some.

Contingency

A provision of the contract that keeps the agreement from being fully legally binding until a certain condition is met. For example, the purchase of a home can be contingent upon the buyer selling their home first.

Down payment

The sum in cash that you can afford to pay at the time of purchase. A conventional loan down payment is usually 20% of the sales price, but other types of financing require as little as 3.5% to 15%. A mortgage lender can tell you what types of loans you qualify for.

Expired

A listing has expired and is no longer active, usually because it didn't sell in the amount of time agreed upon by the listing agent and the owner of the home. If you see an Expired listing, the owner may still be interested in selling.

Fixed-rate mortgage

This mortgage's interest rate will never change, even if the term of the loan is 30 years.

FSBO

For Sale by Owner. Often pronounced "fisbo" The owner of the home has it listed without an agent representation. A Buyer's agent can usually still show the home, as many FSBOs will agree to work agents representing a buyer.

Interest

A percentage of the principal that you borrowed from the bank.

Listing

The word "listing" is typically used to refer to the for-sale home itself, although it technically means the agreement between the broker and the owner of the home to market and sell the property.

VO CAB TO KNOW

MLS

The Multiple Listing Service. The MLS is the organization real estate broker's use to search for and list properties. They collect, compile and distribute all information about homes listed for sale. Membership isn't open to the general public, although selected MLS data may be sold to real estate listing websites (How Zillow gets listings on their website).

Pending

The property owner has accepted an offer and are under contract with a buyer. Their agreement may be contingent upon a variety of contingencies: inspections, appraisal, financing, and more. The home is not sold just yet.

Principal

After you make a down payment, the rest of the money you owe on your home is called the principal. This is what you will be paying monthly and paying interest on.

Temporarily off the market (TOM)

The owner has decided to take the listing off the market for an undetermined amount of time. Typically this is because work is being done, or the home is unavailable for showings at the time. It will most likely be back on the market soon.

Title insurance

An insurance policy that protects a mortgage lender's or owner's interest in real property from assorted types of fraudulent claims of ownership. This is typically paid for by the buyer.

Withdrawn

The listing was withdrawn from the market. This could be for various reasons: The owners may have decided they do not want to sell anymore, or maybe they didn't like the offers they received. If you love the listing, we can still reach out and try.

THE PROCESS AT A GLANCE



1

Chat with me

2

Get pre-approved

3

Start search

4

Make an offer & go under contract

5

Inspections, loan processing & appraisal

6

Closing day!

I'm always available to help! Shoot me a text or give me a call for the quickest response. Helping my clients feel comfortable & informed while purchasing a home is what I love to do.

Jenise Gato

786.486.2826

PEACEFULMOVES@GMAIL.COM

LINKTR.EE/THEPEACEFULAGENT

*Move with Peace,
Call Jenise {& Team}!*

