

BUYER'S GUIDE



Vesta Preferred Realty



*Your Step-by-step Guide to Buying a Home
with Confidence and Expert Support.*



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WELCOME

Welcome to your Home Buyer Guide! Whether you're a first-time buyer or returning to the market, purchasing a home is one of the most exciting and important milestones in life. This guide is designed to walk you through each step of the home buying process with clarity and confidence, from understanding your finances to closing on your new home. You'll find practical tips, checklists, and expert insights to help you make informed decisions along the way.

Buying a home involves many moving parts, but with the right preparation and support, it doesn't have to be overwhelming. As your trusted advisor and advocate, I will guide you through every step of the home buying process. I'm committed to protecting your best interests, keeping your personal information confidential, and helping you make confident, informed decisions. I also promise to treat all parties involved with honesty, fairness, and professionalism throughout the entire transaction.

Samsara Lueg | Real Estate Agent

samsara@vestapREFERRED.com | (773) 974-9097

MEET YOUR AGENT

We help you to find your dream home!

Samsara Lueg



Hi, I'm Sam and I'm here to help you find your perfect home. Buying a home is one of the biggest decisions you'll ever make, and I'm honored to be your guide through it.

With years of hands-on experience in the real estate industry, I've helped buyers navigate everything from first-time home purchases to complex negotiations in competitive markets. I stay up to date on market trends, local inventory, and contract strategy so I can give you a clear advantage.

Phone: (773) 974-9097

Email: samsara@vestapREFERRED.com

Website: vestapREFERRED.com

I'm here not just to help you find a house, but to make sure it feels like home - while protecting your interests and making the process as stress free as possible.



COMMITMENT

24/7 commitment to your satisfaction regardless of outside influence, 365 days a year



EXPERTISE

Simplifying the homebuying process with proven knowledge and being your resource for answers



RELIABILITY

Prompt, transparent, and consistent communication during the home buying process and beyond

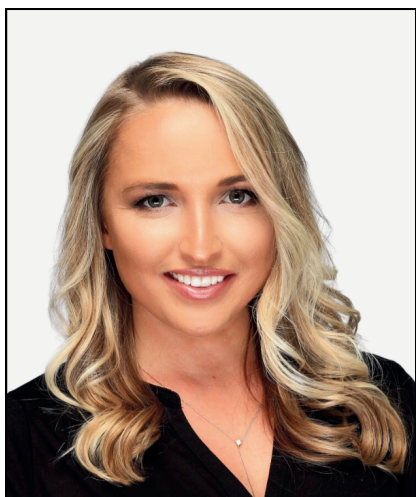
MEET THE TEAM

Your home matters to us!

At Vesta, we are more than just one agent working on your behalf. You gain access to an entire team dedicated to making your homebuying journey seamless.

Along with your agent and once under contract, our transaction coordinators ensure every deadline and detail is handled with precision, while our network of trusted lenders and attorneys is available to provide additional support whenever needed.

From start to finish, you'll have a team of experts working together to give you clarity, confidence, and peace of mind.



JENNY SHAMSUTDINOVA

Transaction Coordinator

Jenny helps guide you through the closing process once we are under contract, facilitating all communication between parties and ensuring everything stays on track.

jenny@vestapREFERRED.com



JORDAN PRINGLE

Transaction Coordinator

Jordan takes care of all of your transactions needs prior to closing. She will be your go to for any listing paperwork, HOA questions and other scheduling needs.

jordan@gohaylo.com

HOME BUYING

process

1

FIND THE RIGHT AGENT

Work with your trusted agent, who will serve as your advocate throughout the homebuying process. With expertise in the market and neighborhoods, our team will guide you every step of the way.

2

GET PRE-APPROVED FOR A MORTGAGE

Decide the best type of loan for you and which one you'll qualify for. Get pre-approved for a mortgage. A pre-approval letter shows seller and agents that you're a serious buyer who can get financing.

3

START HOUSE HUNTING

We will help you search for houses within your budget. We'll define your must-haves and preferences, then explore homes that match your goals. I'll schedule showings and provide insights on each property.

4

MAKE AN OFFER & NEGOTIATE

Once you've found "the one," I'll help you craft a competitive offer based on current market conditions. I'll also negotiate terms to ensure you get the best possible deal.

5

GET A HOME INSPECTION & APPRAISAL

After your offer is accepted, we'll schedule a home inspection to check for any issues and your lender will order an appraisal. Based on the results, we may request repairs, credits, or adjust terms before moving forward.

6

CLOSING DAY – FINALIZE & CELEBRATE

We'll coordinate with your lender, title company, and all parties to finalize paperwork and transfer ownership. Once everything is signed and funded, you'll be handed the keys to your new home!



AGENCY DISCLOSURE

New Real Estate Rules

When you buy a home, it's important to understand who your real estate agent is representing. This is called an agency relationship, and by law, it must be clearly disclosed to you in writing. Knowing your agent's role helps you make informed decisions and ensures you're fully protected. Be sure to review and sign the agency disclosure form before moving forward with any home search or offer.

Since August 17th last year, a new legal requirement is in place for all Realtors Nationwide. We are now required to have a signed agreement stating our working relationship before going to any showing. It outlines my role, how I'm paid, and protects both of us. My service fee is 2.5% of the purchase price and it's typically paid by the seller. At Vesta, we have a \$0 cancellation fee and \$0 retainer fee you can cancel anytime by sending me an email.

We typically start with a 1-day buyer agreement, giving you the flexibility to experience how we work. If we decide to continue together, the agreement can easily be extended.

HAVING THE AGREEMENT IN PLACE MEANS I CAN:

- Share the most accurate, up-to-date listings (including off-market opportunities)
- Negotiate on your behalf with full access to my network and resources
- Guide you through each step so nothing gets missed
- Do a comparative market analysis for the property you decide to offer on
- Write up contracts
- Get you into your dream or ideal place!

WHY HIRE A BUYER'S AGENT?



HELP YOU UNDERSTAND THE MARKET

A buyer's agent knows current pricing trends, neighborhood data, and what homes are really worth. This prevents you from overpaying or missing out on good opportunities.



HANDLE THE PAPERWORK

Real estate contracts are legally binding and often full of complex terms and deadlines. Your agent reviews everything carefully and makes sure you don't miss anything critical.



COORDINATE THE MOVING PARTS

Buying a home involves lenders, inspectors, appraisers, title companies, and more. Your agent keeps everyone on schedule so you can close smoothly and on time.

SPOT RED FLAGS YOU MIGHT MISS

An experienced agent can recognize warning signs like foundation issues, flood zones, or overpriced homes. They protect you from costly mistakes by asking the right questions early on.

YOUR OWN RESPONSIBILITIES

As a buyer, it's important to stay informed and responsive throughout the home-buying process. Your responsibilities include securing mortgage pre-approval, reviewing and signing necessary documents (like the buyer representation agreement), attending inspections, and staying within your agreed timelines for contingencies and closing.

FIND AN AGENT

You have the freedom to select the real estate professional who best fits your needs and to negotiate all terms, including services provided and compensation.



BUYER'S AGENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- ✓ Help buyers understand the local housing market
- ✓ Analyze buyer's wants and needs
- ✓ Make appointments to tour homes
- ✓ Help buyers evaluate the price and value of a home
- ✓ Explain the buying process and closing disclosure
- ✓ Recommend trusted home inspectors
- ✓ Coordinating the work of other professionals
- ✓ Negotiate with the selling agent and other parties
- ✓ Double-checking paperwork and deadlines

Why choose me?

EXPERIENCE

With years of experience in real estate, I've guided clients through all types of markets and situations. You can count on me to handle every step with professionalism.

AVAILABILITY & COMMITMENT

I'm responsive, dependable, and here for you when it matters most. I take pride in staying available and keeping you informed throughout the entire process.

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

I know the neighborhoods, school districts, market trends, and what makes each area unique. This local insight helps you make confident, well-informed decisions.

MY COMPENSATION

This is how we do compensation at Vesta Preferred - I'll help you with everything: from finding homes and scheduling tours to writing offers, negotiating, provide you with contractors and guiding you all the way to closing. Compensation for this is **2.5% and typically paid by the seller.**

2.5% of the Purchase Price

A photograph of a bright, modern living room. In the center is a white brick fireplace with a black metal insert, where a fire is burning. Above the fireplace is a white mantel. To the left and right of the fireplace are built-in white shelves. The left shelves hold various decorative items like books, a small figurine, and a plant. The right shelves hold a television, a lamp with a white shade, and other decor. In the foreground, there is a light-colored sofa with patterned pillows on the left and a dark grey sofa with patterned pillows on the right. The overall atmosphere is warm and inviting.

BEST PRACTICES

What Makes a Great Buyer's Agent?

NO STEERING BASED ON COMPENSATION

As a Realtor, I am committed to treating all properties and sellers fairly. I am prohibited from steering you toward or away from any property. My role is to help you find the right home based on your needs, preferences, and budget. You will always receive honest, unbiased guidance so you can make fully informed decisions.

PUTTING YOUR INTERESTS FIRST

As your Realtor, I have a fiduciary duty to represent you with honesty, loyalty, and care throughout the entire buying process. This means I'm legally and ethically obligated to put your best interests first. Not mine, not the seller's. I will inform you of all available homes that meet your criteria, regardless of commission or listing source, and I'll help you evaluate each one objectively.

When it comes time to make an offer, I'll work hard to negotiate the best possible terms on your behalf: price, timeline, repairs, and contingencies. So you feel confident every step of the way. My job isn't just about helping you buy a home, it's about protecting you, advising you, and advocating for your success.

FINANCES

Time to talk to your lenders

It's recommended to talk to a lender and get pre-approved before beginning your home search. During the mortgage preapproval process, lenders will look at your income, assets and credit score. This information determines what loans you could be approved for, how much you can borrow and what your interest rate might be.

QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN CHOOSING A MORTGAGE LENDER

- Which type of mortgage is best for me?
- How much down payment will I need?
- What interest rate can you offer?
- How long will it take to close the loan?
- Are there any penalties for paying off early?
- What is your credit score requirement?
- Any charges for prepaying this loan?
- What other costs will I pay at closing?
- Do you charge for an interest rate lock?
- Do I qualify for any special discounts?



DOCUMENTS FOR PRE-APPROVAL

- Personal identification
- Tax returns
- Pay Stubs, W-2
- Other income sources
- Bank statements
- Credit history and score
- Income verification
- Rental history

RECOMMENDED LENDERS

Not all lenders are the same. Some offer better rates, lower fees, or more flexible options for first-time buyers. When comparing lenders, ask about their interest rates, closing costs, estimated monthly payments, and whether they charge points or extra fees. If needed, we have recommended lenders we have worked closely with for years that always aim to beat market rates and provide exceptional service for our clients, ensuring you get the best financing tailored to your needs. Let me know if you need an introduction!



ZILLOW HOME LOANS

★★★★★ 5/5

Contact: Yvette Lechuga

Phone: (949) 593-8014

Email: yvettel@zillowhomeloans.com



STONEHAVEN MORTGAGE

★★★★★ 5/5

Contact: Billy Burns

Phone: (815) 600-4055

Email: billy.burns@stonehavenmtg.com



ZILLOW HOME LOANS

★★★★★ 5/5

Contact: Bryan Van Le

Phone: (818) 442-5974

Email: bryanvan@zillowhomeloans.com

LOAN TYPES

Loan Type	Best For	Down Payment	Key Features
Conventional Loan	Buyers with good credit and steady income	No government backing	No government backing; private mortgage insurance (PMI) if under 20% down
FHA Loan	First-time buyers or lower credit scores	3.5% minimum	Backed by the government; easier to qualify; upfront & monthly mortgage insurance
VA Loan	Active-duty military, veterans, or spouses	0%	No down payment; no PMI; must meet service eligibility requirements
USDA Loan	Buyers in eligible rural areas	0%	Income limits apply; must be in USDA-approved area; lower mortgage insurance
Jumbo Loan	High-value homes above conforming loan limits	Typically 10–20%	Not backed by Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac; stricter credit & income requirements

SHOP AROUND FOR LENDERS

Comparing offers from at least 2–3 lenders can help you find a better rate or lower fees. All mortgage credit pulls done within a short period (usually 14–45 days) count as one inquiry on your credit.

DEBT-TO-INCOME RATIO MATTERS

Most lenders want your monthly debt payments to be under 43% of your income. Paying down credit cards or avoiding new debt can improve your DTI and approval chances.



PRE-APPROVAL & downpayment

PREQUALIFIED VS PREAPPROVED

With prequalification, lenders pull your credit and ask questions about your income and assets to estimate what you can afford. A prequalification that involves checking your credit score can be more accurate than a standard prequalification that doesn't include this step.

After you've been prequalified, getting preapproved is the next step. You'll need to speak to a home loan expert and provide documentation to verify your income and assets. Lenders will provide a conditional commitment in writing for an exact loan amount. Real estate agents typically want to see your preapproval letter before they show you houses. This ensures they don't waste time showing you homes outside your budget.



HOW MUCH SHOULD YOUR DOWNPAYMENT BE?

A typical down payment is between 5% and 20% of the home's purchase price, depending on the loan type and your financial situation. Some loans allow as little as 3% down, but putting more down can lower your monthly payment and avoid mortgage insurance.





CHOOSE THE RIGHT LOCATION

When searching for a home, location should be your top priority. It affects your daily life more than anything else. Consider factors like commute time, nearby schools, safety, noise levels, and access to shops or parks. A great home in the wrong area can lead to long-term dissatisfaction.

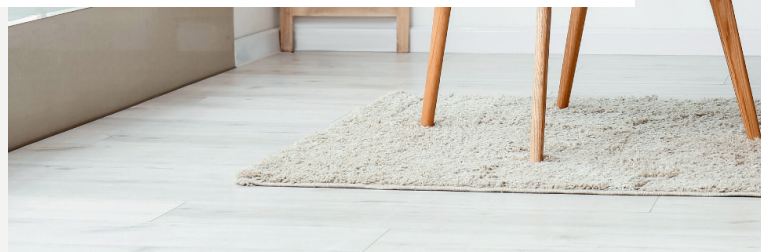
CREATE A MUST-HAVE LIST

Before you begin your search, take the time to ask yourself key questions that will uncover your real estate preferences. Creating a “must-have” list helps you stay focused and avoid emotional decisions during your home search.

- What is important to you in a new home? (Light, space, views, wheelchair accessibility, distance to work, school zone, etc)
- What property type are you looking for? (Condo, townhouse, a single-family or a multi-family home?)
- What neighborhoods are you considering?
- Do you want a turnkey home or are you willing to renovate?
- How long do I plan to stay in my new home?

HOME SEARCH

Vesta Preferred Realty





HOME SEARCH

You'll receive curated listings from Zenlist, which provides more accurate and up-to-date data than public sites like Zillow or Redfin. Your agent will help you schedule private showings, virtual tours, or attend open houses based on your availability and preferred neighborhoods.

During showings, have questions ready and use your phone to take notes and photos. Your agent will pay close attention to details such as the condition of the roof, windows, flooring, plumbing fixtures, and signs of moisture or cracks in walls. Don't forget to evaluate practical things like natural light, room size, closet space, kitchen layout, noise from nearby roads, and cell service. It's also smart to visit the neighborhood at different times of day to get a full picture of what daily life there might feel like. Your agent will guide you through evaluating pros and cons of each home, help you stay focused on your priorities, and watch for red flags that could affect your resale value or budget.



HOME TOUR

Before you begin touring homes with a real estate professional, it's required that you enter into a Buyer Representation Agreement. Agents are not allowed to show properties — either in-person or virtually — unless a written Buyer Representation Agreement is signed. This written agreement outlines the working relationship between you and your agent, detailing the services they will provide and how they will be compensated.

This policy ensures that buyers are informed, protected, and working with a licensed professional who has clearly defined responsibilities. Signing this agreement doesn't lock you into anything long-term unless you agree to those terms — it simply ensures you receive proper representation and understand the scope of services.



What we'll watch out for during a home tour:

- Check walls, ceilings, and floors for cracks, stains, or signs of water damage
- Test light switches, outlets, and faucets to ensure everything works properly
- Open and close windows and doors — check for drafts or sticking
- Be aware of strong smells that may be hiding mold, pet odors, or smoke
- Examine the exterior: look for roof issues, foundation cracks, and drainage problems
- Watch for signs of pests, like droppings, chewed materials, or traps
- Consider natural light, room layout, and overall space flow
- Listen for noise — from neighbors, traffic, or nearby businesses
- Walk around the neighborhood to get a feel for the location and surroundings

MAKE AN OFFER

Presenting a strong offer

COMPARATIVE MARKET ANALYSIS

Before putting in an offer, your realtor will do a Comparative Market Analysis to evaluate similar homes that have recently sold, are under contract, or currently on the market. This ensures your offer is competitive while protecting you from overpaying.

Your real estate agent will help you make an offer on a home while considering the following:

- How long the home has been listed
- Comparable homes in the area
- Necessary repairs and renovations
- Make sure you can live comfortably with the monthly mortgage payment
- Market consideration: compare the most recent sales in the area



NEGOTIATION

The most obvious thing to negotiate is the price of the home. You also can ask the seller to pay some of your closing costs or to make repairs that come up during the home inspection. If you like some of the furnitures in the home, you also can ask the seller to include them in the sale.

If the seller counters, I'll guide you through each option and negotiate on your behalf to protect your interests. Don't skip the home inspection as it gives us leverage if issues come up. Stay flexible, respond quickly, and always keep your must-haves in mind to stay competitive.

MAKE AN OFFER

How to Bid on a House with Multiple Offers



To make an offer, we'll first review comparable sales to determine a fair and competitive price. I'll then prepare the offer contract, which includes your offer amount, earnest money deposit, financing terms, inspection contingency, preferred closing date, and any personal property you'd like included. Here are some steps you can take to make your offer stand out:

- Present an offer with no contingencies
- Offer a larger down payment and earnest money deposit
- Waive the appraisal contingency
- Present an all-cash offer
- Include a Purchase Price Escalation Addendum
- Position yourself as flexible
- Write a personal letter to the seller
- Assure the seller you won't ask for repairs

In a multiple-offer situation, we may strengthen your offer by offering above asking price, increasing your earnest money, waiving certain contingencies (if appropriate), or shortening the inspection period.



CONTINGENCIES

Why contingencies matter

Buyers usually include contingencies, like a home sale contingency or financing contingency, within their offer to protect themselves in case certain conditions aren't met. They allow you to cancel the deal or renegotiate without penalty if certain conditions aren't met. Including contingencies gives you a legal way out if something goes wrong, while keeping your earnest money deposit safe. Our contracts always include financing and inspection contingencies, so that if inspection or financing falls through, we can walk away and you'll get your earnest money back.



CONTINGENCIES

Common types of Contingencies

HOME INSPECTION CONTINGENCY

This gives you the right to have the home inspected. If major issues are found (like mold, foundation problems, or a bad roof), you can ask the seller to repair them, reduce the price, or let you walk away.

FINANCING (LOAN) CONTINGENCY

This protects you in case your mortgage loan falls through. If you're unable to get final loan approval, you can cancel the contract without losing your deposit.

APPRAISAL CONTINGENCY

If the home appraises for less than your offer price, this contingency lets you renegotiate or walk away.

TITLE CONTINGENCY

This ensures the seller has legal ownership of the home and the title is clear of liens or claims. If issues are found during the title search, you have the right to back out or delay closing until they're resolved.

SALE OF BUYER'S PROPERTY CONTINGENCY

If you're relying on selling your current home to buy a new one, this contingency gives you time to complete that sale first. If your home doesn't sell in time, you can exit the deal.

HOA CONTINGENCY

This allows the buyer to review HOA documents and potentially withdraw if they are not acceptable.

HOME INSPECTION

A home inspection for a buyer is a professional evaluation of a property's condition, conducted by a certified inspector, to identify potential issues before finalizing a purchase. It helps buyers understand the property's state, potential problems, and make informed decisions.

The buyer typically pays for the home inspection. This is because the inspection is primarily for the buyer's benefit, helping them assess the condition of the property before finalizing the purchase. While it's more common for the buyer to pay, the cost can sometimes be negotiated as a seller concession, especially in a competitive market, or in cases where the seller proactively gets a pre-listing inspection. Our preferred inspector costs around \$400.

WHAT IT COVERS

- **Structural Integrity:** Inspectors examine the foundation, walls, roof, and other structural components for damage, defects, or potential issues.
- **Mechanical Systems:** They assess the condition and functionality of the electrical, plumbing, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems.
- **Major Appliances:** Inspectors may also check the condition and operation of major appliances included with the property.
- **Safety Hazards:** They look for potential safety hazards like faulty wiring, inadequate ventilation, or evidence of pests.
- **Overall Condition:** The inspector evaluates the overall condition of the property, including its systems, components, and any visible issues.





POTENTIAL OBSTACLES

APPRAISAL GAPS

If a home appraises for less than the agreed purchase price, lenders may only approve a loan based on the appraised value — not the offer amount. This can require the buyer to make up the difference in cash or renegotiate the purchase price with the seller.

INSPECTION ISSUES

During the inspection, the inspector may find significant problems like foundation cracks, outdated electrical wiring, roof leaks, or mold in the attic. These issues can lead to serious repair costs and might affect your decision to move forward. Buyers often negotiate with the seller to make repairs or offer a credit — but if an agreement isn't reached, the deal could fall apart.



TITLE OR LEGAL DELAYS

Before closing, the title company may discover issues such as unpaid property taxes, an old lien from a contractor, or an ex-spouse still listed on the deed. These legal complications must be resolved before the property can officially transfer to you. While not always deal breakers, they can delay closing by days or even weeks and require legal review.





HOME APPRAISAL

A home appraisal is an unbiased estimate of a property's value, conducted by a licensed appraiser. It helps ensure the home is worth the price you've agreed to pay. It is especially important because lenders will only approve a mortgage based on the appraised value, not the offer amount.

The appraisal takes place after your offer is accepted and you've signed the purchase agreement, but before the loan is finalized. Once you're under contract, your lender will order the appraisal — usually within the first 7-10 days after the inspection. It's a required step to move forward with your mortgage approval and must be completed before closing.



FINAL CHECKLIST

INSURANCE REQUIREMENT

Most lenders require buyers to have homeowners insurance. An insurance agent can help you learn more about the minimum amount of insurance you need for the value of the home you're buying and to meet the lender's requirements. You may also need to purchase flood or fire insurance for your new home, depending on the location.

CLOSING DISCLOSURE

You should receive the Closing Disclosure from your lender at least 3 days before closing. Pay attention to items such as the loan terms and costs, and make sure they match what you agreed to in the loan estimate. The Closing Disclosure will also outline buyer and seller costs; make sure this matches your purchase offer. If you have any questions, talk to your lender as soon as possible before closing day.

FINAL WALKTHROUGH

Work with your Realtor to schedule a final walk-through of the home to ensure everything is as you expect. If you find problems — such as repairs not completed, or items missing that should have been included. Find out how the seller plans to correct the problems or if they will give you a closing cost credit to make up for the problems.



CLOSING DAY

Congratulations! You made it to closing!



WHAT TO BRING TO CLOSING?

- Cashier's check (or wire transfer)
- Proof of homeowners insurance
- Government-issued ID such as a driver's license, state-issued ID or passport
- Any documentation requested by the bank
- The closing disclosure

SOME OF THE MOST COMMON FEES INCLUDE:

- Escrow fees
- Recording and notary fees, if applicable
- Title search and title insurance
- Origination, application and underwriting fees from lender Appraisal fees
- Local transfer taxes
- Homeowners Insurance
- Home Owners Association fees, if applicable
- SIDs and/or LIDs
- Inspection
- Appraisal

WHAT TO EXPECT

On the closing date, you'll meet at the title company to sign a settlement statement listing all costs related to the home sale. This is when you pay your down payment and closing costs. You'll also sign the mortgage note, which states that you promise to repay the loan. Finally, you'll sign the mortgage or deed of trust to secure the mortgage note.

Once everything is signed, the title company will verify that funds have been received from your lender and you. They will then record the deed with the county, which officially transfers ownership to you. This process usually happens the same day or within 1 business day, depending on the time of signing and the county's recording schedule. As soon as the recording is confirmed, you'll receive the keys and take legal possession of your new home. Congratulations!

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



BEFORE buying a home

Q: Do I need to be pre-approved before seeing homes?

A: Yes, a pre-approval shows sellers you're serious and gives you a clear budget. It also strengthens your offer in a competitive market.

Q: How much money do I need for a down payment?

A: It depends on the loan type. Conventional loans can start as low as 3–5%, FHA is 3.5%, and VA/USDA loans may require no down payment. Many buyers also put 20% down to avoid mortgage insurance.

Q: Besides the down payment, what other costs should I expect?

A: You'll want to budget for closing costs (typically 2–4% of the purchase price), inspection fees, appraisal, and moving expenses. With our recommended partners, inspection is around \$400 (paid before closing, upfront) and attorney fees is \$695 (paid at closing). View closing costs page for the most common closing costs.

Q: How do I know if I can afford a home?

A: Look at more than just the price. Consider the monthly mortgage, property taxes, insurance, HOA fees (if any), and utilities. A lender can help calculate your full monthly payment.

Q: How many homes is typical to look at before deciding on one?

A: Many buyers on average make a decision after seeing 7-10 homes. The market moves fast, so when the right place comes up it's best to act quickly.

Q: How long does the home buying process take?

A: On average, it takes about 30 to 45 days from offer acceptance to closing. But this can vary depending on your financing, inspections, and negotiations.

Q: Do I need a real estate agent to buy a home?

A: While it's not required, having an agent gives you an advocate who guides you through showings, negotiations, contracts, and closing. In most cases, the seller pays the agent's commission, so buyers benefit from professional representation at no extra cost.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



DURING the Home Buying Process (Under Contract)

Q: What happens after my offer is accepted?

A: You'll move into the attorney review and inspection period. Your attorney will review the contract and inspection results, negotiate terms, and ensure your interests are protected.

Q: When does appraisal come?

A: Once you're under contract and past inspection, your lender orders the appraisal, usually within the first 1–2 weeks.

Q: Can I back out after going under contract?

A: Yes, but it depends on the timing. During attorney review and inspection, you can usually cancel without penalty. After that, you may risk losing your earnest money unless a contingency applies.

Q: As a buyer, what should I be doing during this period?

A: Once you're under contract, your main job is to stay responsive and organized. Provide your lender with any documents they request, and avoid making big financial changes (like opening new credit cards or large purchases). Keep in close contact with your agent and attorney, follow their guidance, and be ready to review updates from inspections, appraisal, and title. This is also a good time to start preparing for your move and setting up homeowners insurance.

Q: When will my first Mortgage payment be due?

A: Mortgage payments are paid in arrears, so your first payment is due the first day of the second month after closing. For example, close in September, first payment due November 1.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



AFTER buying a home

Q: When will I get my keys?

A: You'll receive the keys at closing once all funds are transferred and documents are signed.

Q: How are yearly property taxes determined?

A: Local assessors calculate them using your property's assessed value and the tax rate set by your city, county, and school district.

Q: Should I change locks after closing?

A: Yes. It's a good idea to rekey or replace locks right away since you can't know who still has a copy of the old keys.

Q: What's the first thing I should do as a new homeowner?

A: Set up your utilities, update your address, check smoke/carbon monoxide detectors, and review your home warranty or insurance coverage.

Q: How often should I expect to pay property taxes?

A: Most areas bill taxes twice a year, but it depends on your local schedule. If you escrow, your lender collects monthly and pays them for you.

Q: Will my mortgage payment ever change?

A: If you have a fixed-rate loan, your principal and interest stay the same, but your payment can change if property taxes or homeowners insurance go up or down (especially if you escrow).

Q: How can I protect the value of my new home?

A: Keep up with regular maintenance like servicing HVAC systems, cleaning gutters, and checking for leaks. Small upkeep tasks done consistently help preserve value and prevent bigger, costly repairs later.





Congratulations!

Congratulations on your new home! As you settle into your new space, I hope it brings you comfort, joy, and countless happy memories for years to come. This is such a special milestone, and I'm truly honored to have been part of your journey. Wishing you comfort, happiness, and years of great memories in your new space. And remember, if you ever need anything, have questions, or just want a trusted resource, I'm always here for you! Welcome home and cheers to all the wonderful moments ahead!





YOUR BROKER FOR LIFE

