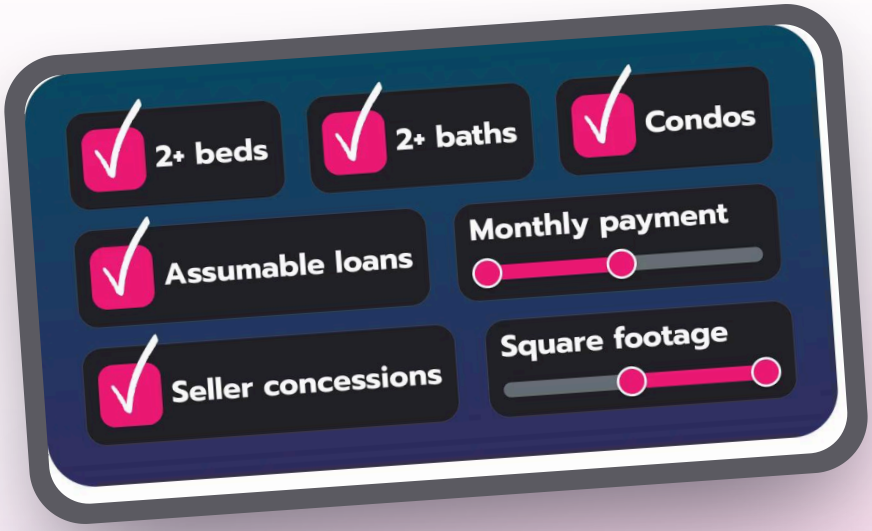
homebot

LOAN OFFICER PLAYBOOK

7 plays for closing in a high rate environment

What buyers are saying, which play fits, what to say, and when to loop in the agent.

7	buyer objections, each with a play
7.5%	Fannie Mae's rate forecast for 2027
3	calls to make this week



START HERE

Why a better rate quote won't restart a stalled deal

Your buyer loves the house. Then they see the monthly payment and the deal goes quiet. The average 30-year fixed held at 7.40% in mid-October, and Fannie Mae expects rates to average 7.5% through 2027. Waiting costs your buyer rent and momentum. The loan officers winning right now lead with strategy and talk about rate last.

1

Listen for the objection

Every play starts with something your buyer says.

2

Run the play

Build the payment around their budget, not the rate sheet.

3

Loop in the agent

Size the seller ask together so the deal holds at closing.

Match what you hear to the play

Find what your buyer is saying, then turn to the page.

"We'll wait until rates come down."	→ **01 Start with the budget, then the rate**	p. 3
"The payment is just too high."	→ **02 Use a rate buydown**	p. 3
"We'll only be here a few years."	→ **03 Match the right buyer to an ARM**	p. 4
"I'm self-employed. Returns don't show it."	→ **04 Learn non-QM loans**	p. 4
"I wish I could get the seller's old rate."	→ **05 Find assumables that pencil out**	p. 5
"We can't buy until we sell."	→ **06 Help them buy before they sell**	p. 5
"How much should we ask the seller for?"	→ **07 Ask for concessions that fit the play**	p. 6

01

YOU'LL HEAR

"We'll wait until rates come down."

The play: start with the budget, then back into the rate

WHO IT'S FOR

Buyers who love the home but stall at the monthly payment.

WHAT TO SAY

"Let's set the payment you want, and I'll build the loan around it."

LOOP IN THE AGENT

Before the offer goes in. Give them the exact credit to ask for.

SIZE THE SELLER CREDIT TO THE PAYMENT

WHAT THE AGENT PLANNED TO ASK FOR

~~$10,000~~

A round number, not sized to the budget

→

WHAT YOUR MATH SAYS

$16,000

Buys the rate that hits the buyer's payment

Set the payment first. Then work back to the rate, price and seller credit that hit it.

02

YOU'LL HEAR

"The payment is just too high."

The play: use a rate buydown

WHO IT'S FOR

Buyers with seller, builder or lender money on the table.

WHAT TO SAY

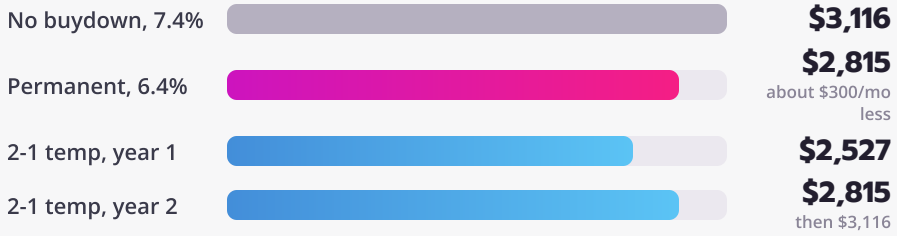
"Let me show you three ways to bring that payment down."

LOOP IN THE AGENT

Before the offer. Share the side-by-side so they can pitch it to the seller.

RUN ALL THREE FOR THE SAME DEAL

MONTHLY P&I, $450,000 LOAN, 30-YEAR



2-1 subsidy: about $10,700. By comparison, $10,000 off the loan amount saves only about $69/mo.

PURCHASING POWER
SAME $3,000 PAYMENT

$433K at 7.4%

$528K

loan amount at 5.5%. A bigger home or one more bedroom for the same monthly cost.

03 YOU'LL HEAR "We'll only be here a few years."

The option: an adjustable-rate mortgage (ARM)

WHO IT'S FOR
A raise on the way, a short hold, or a planned paydown and recast.

WHAT TO SAY
"There's a loan with a lower starting payment for your timeline."

LOOP IN THE AGENT
Early, so the buyer shops at a price that works if the rate adjusts.

WALK THROUGH EVERY ARM QUOTE

7/6
7 years fixed
Then adjusts every six months, tied to an index like SOFR

→

3 caps
Initial, subsequent, lifetime
Show all three on every quote

→

Plan
Sell, refi or pay down
Before the fixed years run out

QUALIFYING A 5-year ARM qualifies at the higher of fully indexed or note rate plus 2%. Over 5 years qualifies at the note rate, so a 7/6 often hits the best balance.

NOT A FIT Fixed incomes, tight budgets, families staying long term, or anyone stretching to afford the adjusted payment.

04 YOU'LL HEAR "My tax returns don't show my income."

The option: non-QM loans

WHO IT'S FOR
Self-employed buyers, business owners and investors.

WHAT TO SAY
"Some loans look at your deposits or rent, not just tax returns."

LOOP IN THE AGENT
When it's "not yet." Share the plan so you both stay in touch until they're ready.

WORK DOWN THE LADDER, BEST TERMS FIRST

1
Conventional
Review the documents first. Usually the best rate and terms.

2
Bank statement
12 or 24 months of deposits. Know what counts and how to treat transfers.

3
DSCR
Rent vs. the payment. Best pricing when rents cover it.

4
No-ratio
Only when the file calls for it.

1 in 9 mortgage locks in August were non-QM (11.3%). It's not a niche option anymore.

05 YOU'LL HEAR "I wish I could get the seller's old rate."

The play: find assumable mortgages where the math works

WHO IT'S FOR
Buyers eyeing homes with FHA, VA or USDA loans.

WHAT TO SAY
"The seller's low rate may transfer to you. Let's run the blend."

LOOP IN THE AGENT
Before the offer. Write 30 to 90 days into the contract for the servicer.

RUN THE GAP FINANCING FIRST

Big balance: the deal works

Assumed at 2.875%	**$400,000**
Gap financed at 9%	**$140,000**

Blended payment **$2,997/mo**

About $740/mo less than a new loan at 7.4%

Small balance: the deal breaks

Assumed at 2.875%	**$150,000**
Gap financed at 9%	**$390,000**

Blended payment **$3,840/mo**

About $100/mo more than a new loan at 7.4%

Give agents a blended rate calculator: balance, rate, down payment, gap amount and gap rate. Share it even when you can't originate the gap loan.

06 YOU'LL HEAR "We can't buy until we sell."

The play: help move-up buyers buy first

WHO IT'S FOR
Past clients with low rates and big equity.

WHAT TO SAY
"Your equity can help you buy first and list on your timeline."

LOOP IN THE AGENT
Before the listing goes live. A HELOC has to open first.

LOWEST COST — HIGHEST COST

1
HELOC
Opened before listing. Pre-approve them too.

2
Bridge loan
4 to 12 months. Pair with a contract to exclude the old payment.

3
Bundled program
Equity access, sometimes cash. Costs more, less stress.

TAPPABLE EQUITY
$11.7T
held by homeowners, a record high

THEN: RECAST AFTER THE SALE
Same rate and term, lower balance. Especially valuable when the buyer locked a seller-paid permanent buydown.

~~$3,116~~
$2,077/mo
$150K toward a $450K loan

07 THE AGENT ASKS "How much should we ask the seller for?"

The play: ask for concessions that fit the play

IF THE PLAY IS	ASK THE SELLER FOR
BUYDOWN	A credit sized to the rate the budget needs
ARM	Closing cost coverage, to protect cash reserves
NON-QM	The most the program allows, to buy the rate down
ASSUMABLE	Time for the servicer, with gap lenders lined up
STALLED LISTING	A buydown flyer for the listing agent

AUGUST HOME SALES

44.7%

included seller concessions

KNOW THE CAP Conventional loans cap interested party contributions at 3%, 6% or 9% by down payment, and 2% for investment properties.

YOUR 48-HOUR PLAN

Start three conversations this week

The buyer who went quiet at the monthly payment is still a deal you can close.

1. **Call five buyers who paused this year**
   Ask what they're waiting for, then match the play. ☐
2. **Call one listing agent with a stalled listing**
   Offer a buydown flyer, even if the buyer uses another lender. ☐
3. **Search your market for assumable listings**
   Share the best ones with your database. ☐

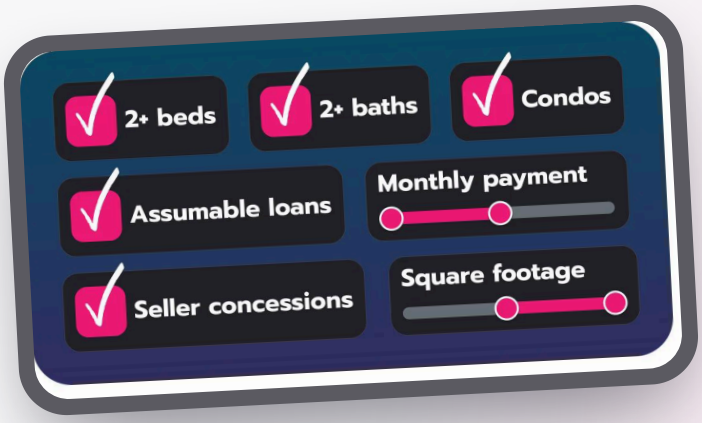
HOMEBOT FOR LOAN OFFICERS

Identify the clients who need these plays before they call your competition

Get ahead of the payment conversation. Homebot shows you who's already looking into each one.

- **Private home search**
  Filters for assumables and seller concessions, and you see when buyers use them. Their data is never sold to other lenders.
  PAIRS WITH PLAYS 05 AND 07
- **Engagement alerts**
  Know when buyers and past clients research their next move.
  PAIRS WITH PLAY 06
- **HomebotAI**
  Tells you who to call, gives you talking points and drafts the email.
- **Loan loss report**
  Track your retention rate, clients lost, and who you lost them to.

Book a demo →



SOURCES

Where the numbers come from

MARKET DATA

Fannie Mae raises 2027 mortgage rate forecast (Florida Realtors)
www.floridarealtors.org

Non-QM captures more than 11% of mortgage lock volume (National Mortgage Professional)
nationalmortgageprofessional.com

Homeowner equity hits record high (Inman)
www.inman.com

Nearly half of homebuyers get concessions from sellers (Redfin)
www.placera.se

GUIDELINES AND DEFINITIONS

Fannie Mae qualifying payment requirements, B3-6-04 (Homebuyer.com)
homebuyer.com

Fannie Mae Selling Guide: Interested party contributions
selling-guide.fanniemae.com

CFPB: Upfront fees to lower mortgage interest rates (discount points)
www.consumerfinance.gov

CFPB: How ARM rate caps work
consumerfinance.gov

VA loan assumption (Veterans United)
veteransunited.com

NOTES

Payment figures are principal and interest on 30-year loans, calculated from the loan amounts and rates shown. The assumable example assumes a $600,000 home with 10% down and about 25 years left on the seller's loan.