



First-Time Homebuyer Checklist

Buying your first home is a major milestone — and having the right guidance makes all the difference. This first-time homebuyer checklist outlines each step of the home buying process, from pre-approval to closing, so you know exactly what to expect. Pair this guide with a trusted, top-performing agent to ensure you're supported every step of the way.

☐ 1. Assess Your Financial Readiness

- Review income, savings, and monthly expenses
 - Check your credit score
 - Determine a comfortable monthly payment range
 - Start budgeting for down payment and closing costs
-

☐ 2. Save for Upfront Costs

- Down payment (varies by loan type)
 - Earnest money deposit
 - Closing costs (typically 2–5% of purchase price)
 - Moving expenses + initial home setup
-

☐ 3. Get Pre-Approved

- Compare lenders and loan options
- Submit required financial documents
- Receive pre-approval letter
- Understand your approved price range and loan terms

(Pre-approval strengthens your offer and shows sellers you're serious.)

☐ 4. Hire a Trusted Real Estate Agent

- Choose a local market expert
- Review recent sales and experience
- Understand how your agent will represent you
- Align on your goals and timeline

□ 5. Define Your Home Criteria

- Location and neighborhoods
- Must-haves vs. nice-to-haves
- Property type and size
- Long-term needs

□ 6. Start Touring Homes

- Schedule private showings
- Attend open houses
- Compare condition, layout, and resale potential
- Ask questions about property history

□ 7. Make an Offer

- Review comparable sales
- Determine offer price and strategy
- Decide on contingencies (inspection, appraisal, financing)
- Submit earnest money deposit

□ 8. Negotiate & Get Your Offer Accepted

- Respond to counteroffers
- Finalize price and terms
- Sign purchase agreement
- Open escrow

□ 9. Complete Inspections & Appraisal

- Schedule home inspection
 - Review inspection report
 - Negotiate repairs or credits if needed
 - Lender orders appraisal
-

☐ 10. Secure Final Loan Approval

- Submit any additional documents
 - Lock in your interest rate (if applicable)
 - Receive “Clear to Close” from lender
-

☐ 11. Final Walkthrough

- Confirm agreed repairs are completed
 - Ensure home condition matches contract
 - Verify appliances and systems are functioning
-

☐ 12. Close on Your Home

- Review and sign closing documents
- Pay remaining closing funds
- Receive keys 🎉