



THE ROAD TO

Home

A HOME BUYER'S GUIDE

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ABOUT US



Nice to Meet You



Cindy Lee
REALTOR®

Working with me means you'll get a seamless and successful real estate experience. I pride myself on my integrity, personalized service, and deep market knowledge. I'll help you set and achieve your real estate goals with tailored strategies and the latest market insights. My educational seminars and strategic coaching provide you with valuable information and investment advice. I guide you through every step of the process, handle negotiations expertly, and connect you with trusted contractors and vendors. You're always our top priority, and I'm dedicated to making your real estate journey smooth and rewarding.

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LET'S CONNECT



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“

Committed to
protecting your
interests and
providing a
stress-free home
buying experience.

”

Ten Steps TO BUYING A HOME

- 01/ FIND THE RIGHT AGENT
- 02/ PREPARE FINANCES
- 03/ GET PRE-APPROVED
- 04/ START HOME SHOPPING
- 05/ MAKE AN OFFER
- 06/ ORDER AN INSPECTION
- 07/ NEGOTIATE FINAL OFFER
- 08/ APPRAISAL ORDERED
- 09/ SCHEDULE THE MOVE
- 10/ CLOSING DAY



HOME BUYING *process*

STEP 1

MEET WITH YOUR AGENT

- Discuss budget
- **Research neighborhoods**
- **Set needs and wants**

STEP 2

GET PRE-APPROVED

- Meet with a lender
- Provide financial information
- Set a budget

STEP 3

FIND YOUR HOME

- Tour homes
- **Adjust needs and wants if necessary**

STEP 4

MAKE AN OFFER

- Research comparable sales
- **Write a competitive offer**
- **Consider the seller's needs**
 - **Negotiation terms**

STEP 5

OFFER SIGNED

- All negotiations are finished
 - **Both parties have signed contract**

STEP 6

INSPECTIONS

- Professionals inspect the property
 - **Review reports**
 - **Negotiate repairs**

STEP 7

APPRAISAL

- Appraiser to ensure the home's value matches the purchase price

STEP 8

TITLE COMMITMENT

- The title company will send you a **title insurance policy** for the property after closing

STEP 9

SECURE FINANCING

- Provide additional information requested by your lender.
- The lender's underwriter reviews your loan file for final approval.

STEP 10

CLOSING

- Final walk-through
- **Sign closing documents**
- **Receive your keys**



FIND THE RIGHT AGENT

Buying a home is one of the most significant purchases in a lifetime. It is essential to have an experienced agent in your corner, always looking out for your best interest. A buyer agent's fiduciary responsibility is to represent the buyer and to ensure that they are protected.

After all, a seller has someone in their corner. A listing agent has an allegiance to the seller. Their goal is to get the seller top dollar for their home. There is incredible value in having someone working for YOUR best interests when buying a home.



GETTING YOU IN THE DOOR

We will narrow down the homes that fit your unique wants and needs and get you in the door! I look at dozens of homes every week, and I can help you identify potential problems within a home.

HANDLING CHALLENGING CONVERSATIONS

When repairs or changes in price/terms need to be made, I will be your guide and negotiate on your behalf.

STAYING ON TOP OF THE PAPERWORK

Buying a home involves many types of documentation. I have the experience and knowledge to navigate real estate contracts. Ensuring that nothing is overlooked and that you truly understand what a document means before ever signing on the dotted line.

ON YOUR SIDE

A buyer's agent will represent your best interests. With a pulse on the local market and a sound understanding of how various amenities effect the value of a home, we will make sure we submit a competitive offer on the right house for you.

NEIGHBORHOOD EXPERT

I work daily in neighborhoods with inspectors, contractors, and negotiating with sellers. I have the market knowledge you need to get you the home of your dreams at the best price! Understanding the local real estate market is essential when it comes time to make an offer on a house.

PROBLEM SOLVER

I will work hard to protect all of your interests and take on any issues that may arise throughout the entire process. I work tirelessly to make sure buying a home is a fun and stress-free process.



PREPARE FINANCES

HOW MUCH HOUSE CAN YOU AFFORD?

Mortgage lenders recommend you do not buy a home that is more than 3 times your annual household income. If you are not purchasing a home with cash, you will need a mortgage pre-approval provided by your mortgage lender. A lender will work with you to get a loan that meets your needs. Some buyers are concerned with keeping their monthly payments as low as possible, others want to make sure that their monthly payments never increase.

CHECK YOUR CREDIT

You can improve your score by:

- Paying down credit card balances
- Continuing to make payments on time
- Avoid applying for a new credit card or car loan until you have been approved
- Avoid making big purchases until you have been approved
- If possible, avoid job changes until you have been approved

SAVE CASH FOR A DOWN PAYMENT AND OTHER EXPENSES

In order to make your dream of buying a home a reality, you will need to save cash for your down payment, closing costs, home inspections, and renovation.

- A Down Payment is typically between 3.5% & 20% of the purchase price.
- Earnest Money Deposit or Initial Deposit is money you put down to show you're serious about purchasing a home. It's also known as a good faith deposit.
- Closing Costs for the buyer run between 2% and 3% of the loan amount
- A general home inspection costs around \$450 (varies on home types and size).



GET PRE-APPROVED

Being pre-approved, unlike being pre-qualified, means you've actually been approved by a lender for a specific loan amount. You will need to provide documented financial information (income, statements, assets, debt, credit reports, and etc.) to be reviewed and verified by the lender.

for a better job





GET *qualified*

TYPE OF LOAN	CREDIT SCORE	DOWN PAYMENT
VA LOAN	620	NO DOWN PAYMENT
USDA LOAN	620	NO DOWN PAYMENT
FHA LOAN	580+	3.5%
	500-579	10%
203K LOAN	640	3.5%
CONVENTIONAL 97	620	3%
CONVENTIONAL LOAN	620	5-20%

INCOME *qualifications*

QUALIFYING INCOME

W-2 Income/Salary
Income from part-time jobs
Income from a second Job
Overtime & Bonuses
Seasonal jobs
Self-employed Income
Alimony & child support (Documentation required)

NON-QUALIFYING INCOME

Income from the lottery
Gambling
Unemployment pay
Single bonuses
Non-occupying co-signer income
Unverifiable income
Income from rental properties

NEEDED *documents*

W2'S FROM THE PAST 2 YEARS
3 MONTHS WORTH OF PAY-STUBS
BANK STATEMENTS (PAST 3 MONTHS)
PREVIOUS 2 YEARS OF TAX RETURNS
LIST OF YOUR DEBTS & ASSETS
DIVORCE DECREE
ADDITIONAL INCOME DOCUMENTS

TYPES OF *mortgage* LOANS

TYPES OF LOANS

	WHO QUALIFIES	DOWN PAYMENT	UPFRONT MORTGAGE INSURANCE	MONTHLY MORTGAGE INSURANCE	MINIMUM CREDIT SCORE
VA Department of Veteran Affairs	Veterans Personnel with honorable discharge Reservists & National Guard Surviving Spouses	NONE	NONE	NONE	580
USDA Department of Agriculture	Someone who is buying a home in a USDA -designated rural area.	NONE	2% of the loan amount. Can be rolled into loan amount.	REQUIRED	640
FHA Federal Housing Administration	Anyone who meets the minimum credit and income levels.	At least 3.5% of purchase price	1.75% of loan amount	REQUIRED	580-640
203K Federal Housing Administration	Anyone who plans to purchase a fixer-upper or needs to renovate their home and meets credit & income requirements	At least 3.5% of purchase price	1.75% of loan amount	REQUIRED	580-640
CONVENTIONAL 97	Depending on the program, available first time home buyers (a buyer who hasn't owned in the last three years) can put 3% down with a Conventional 97 program.	Varies from 3%-20% of purchase price	NONE	REQUIRED	620
Conventional Loan	Anyone who meets lenders credit, income & debt level requirements	Varies from 3% -20%, but typically ranges from 5-20%	DEPENDS	DEPENDS	620-640

1-0 & 2-1 BUYDOWN

A WIN-WIN SCENARIO

Ease your way into a home with lower payments that simply step up at the end of the first and second years. With a temporary interest rate buydown, the interest rate is lower than the final rate in your contract, potentially saving thousands of dollars on payments.

Program Details

With a 1-0 Buydown, the rate drops 1% in the first year, and with a 2-1 Buydown, you'll get a 30-year fixed rate loan with an interest rate that is discounted 2% during the first year and 1% the second year, with the seller paying points to reduce the rate of the buyer. The difference you would pay for the first year or two of your mortgage would be placed in an escrow account. The escrow account can be covered by the lender, a seller, or a real estate agent in the transaction.

Advantages

- Seller may be able to sell for a higher price if they include the buydown concession.
- Seller can reduce the cost of the points from the sales price to lower their capital gains tax if required.*
- Buyer gets a lower rate and lower monthly payments without paying the upfront cost of points.
- Buyer can offer even more for the home (as long as the appraisal supports the value.)

* Always consult a tax professional.

FIRST YEAR	SECOND YEAR	THIRD YEAR+
SAVE 2%	SAVE 1%	FIXED RATE



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START *Just Living*





START HOME SHOPPING

START TOURING HOMES IN YOUR PRICE RANGE

Time to start shopping! We will take notes on all the homes we visit. It can be hard to remember all the details of each home, so take pictures or videos to help you remember each home, and review the notes you have written. Once we have found THE HOUSE for you, we will present an appropriate offer based on recent sales and current buyer activity in the area, as well as the value of the property in its current condition. Negotiations may take place after the offer is presented.

TIP

We will make sure to check every little detail of each house

- Test plumbing and electrical
- Test the HVAC system
- Open and close the windows and doors to make sure they work properly

Evaluate the neighborhood and surrounding areas

- Are the surrounding homes well maintained?
- How much traffic is on the street?
- Is it conveniently located to schools, shopping, restaurants, and parks?

MAKE AN offer



05/

MAKE AN OFFER

WHEN TO MAKE AN OFFER:

So you have found THE HOUSE! Congrats! In today's market when the demand is higher than the amount of homes available it is important to act fast!

HOW MUCH TO OFFER:

We will sit down and look at recent sales and current buyer activity in the area, as well as the value of the property in its present condition. Putting all this information together, we will determine the price that you would like to offer.

SUBMITTING AN OFFER

There are some components to an offer that makes it more appealing to the sellers.

Put Your Best Foot Forward

We will work together to discuss your options and create your very best offer. Depending on the circumstances, you may have only **ONE chance** to make a good impression.

Put Down a Healthy Earnest Deposit

A large earnest money deposit shows the seller you are serious

Cash Talks

A transaction that is not dependent on receiving loan approval can be more attractive to a seller

Shorter Inspection Periods

Try shortening the inspection period to 10 days or less

Shorter Appraisal and Loan Periods

Try shortening the appraisal period to 10 days and loan period to 14 days.

Offer to Close Quickly

Many sellers prefer to close within 30 days.



THE PROCESS

AFTER YOU SUBMIT AN OFFER

THE SELLER COULD

• ACCEPT THE OFFER

• DECLINE THE OFFER

This happens if the seller thinks your offer isn't close enough to their expectations to further negotiate.

• COUNTER-OFFER

A counter-offer is when the seller offers you different terms. If this happens, you can:

• ACCEPT THE SELLER'S COUNTER-OFFER

• DECLINE THE SELLER'S COUNTER-OFFER

• COUNTER THE SELLER'S COUNTER-OFFER

You can negotiate back and forth as many times as needed until you reach an agreement or someone chooses to walk away.

OFFER IS ACCEPTED - CONGRATS!

You will sign the purchase agreement and you are now officially under contract! This period of time is called the contingency period. Now inspections, appraisals, loan, or anything else built into your purchase agreement will take place.





ESCROW

Journal

06/ ORDER AN INSPECTION

During the inspection period, we will schedule an inspection with a reputable home inspector to do a thorough investigation of the home. Once this is complete, the inspector will provide us with a list of their findings. You can take the issues as-is or request the seller to address some or all of the findings. We will be mindful and reasonable on smaller items while being very cautious and vigilant of potentially significant issues.



07/ NEGOTIATE FINAL OFFER

Issues typically arise after the home inspection, and those issues tend to result in another round of negotiations for credits or fixes.

1. Ask for credit for the work that needs to be done.

Likely, the last thing the seller wants to do is repair work.

2. Think “big picture” and don’t sweat the small stuff.

A tile that needs some caulking or a leaky faucet can easily be fixed. Repairs are still up for negotiation and perhaps a small credit would help with closing costs.

3. Keep your poker face.

The listing agent will be present during inspections and revealing your comfort level with the home could come back to haunt you in further discussions or negotiations.



08/ APPRAISAL ORDERED

Your lender will arrange for a third party appraiser to provide an independent estimate of the value of the house you are buying. The appraisal lets all parties involved know that the price is fair. The loan file then moves on to the mortgage underwriter.

If approved you will receive your final commitment letter that includes the final loan terms & percentage rates.

Property Title Search

This ensures that the seller truly owns the property and that all existing liens, loans or judgments are disclosed.

Homeowner's Insurance

You'll need insurance for the new home before closing. This will protect against things like fire, storms, and flooding

09 scheduling YOUR MOVE



AFTER SIGNING

- Get quotes for home insurance
- Declutter! Sort through every drawer, closet, cupboard, and shelf, removing items you no longer need or like.
- Donate or sell items that are in good condition.
- Get copies of medical records and store them with your other important documents.
- Create an inventory of anything valuable that you plan to move.
- Get estimates from moving companies.

4 WEEKS TO MOVE

- Give 30 days notice if you are currently renting.
- Schedule movers/moving truck.
- Buy/find packing materials.
- START PACKING

3 WEEKS TO MOVE

- Look into home warranty.

2 WEEKS TO MOVE

- Schedule time for closing.
- Contact utility companies (water, electric, cable)
- Change address: mailing, subscriptions, etc.
- Minimize grocery shopping.
- Keep on packing

1 WEEK TO MOVE

- Obtain wire instructions for closing.
- Schedule and attend a final walkthrough.
- Finish packing
- Clean
- Confirm delivery date with the moving company.



A close-up photograph of a person wearing an orange sweater, holding a white stylus and writing on a tablet. The person's hand is in the foreground, and the tablet is on a white surface. The background is blurred. The text "CLOSING day" is overlaid on the right side of the image.

CLOSING *day*



10

Closing Day



CLOSING WEEK

Closing is when you sign ownership and insurance paperwork and you receive your new home's keys! Typically, closing takes three to five weeks. During this time, purchase funds are held in escrow, where your money is held safe until the transaction is complete.



CLOSING DISCLOSURE

Lenders are required to provide you with a closing disclosure (CD). This will show you what your final loan terms and closing costs will be. You will have three days to review the statement. This is done to ensure that there are no surprises at the closing table. If there is a significant discrepancy between the loan estimate and the closing disclosure, we must notify your lender immediately.



FINAL WALKTHROUGH

We will do a final walk through the home 5 days before closing to check the property's condition. This final inspection takes about an hour. We will make sure any repair work that the seller agreed to do has been done.

- Make sure all appliances are working properly.
- Run the water in all the faucets and check for any possible leaks.
- Open and close garage doors with an opener.
- Flush toilets
- Run the garbage disposal and exhaust fans.



CLOSING COSTS

Closing costs can vary depending on your home's purchase price and where you are located. You can generally expect your closing costs to be around 2% to 3% of the home's sales price. These closing costs can sometimes be shared with the seller.



BRING TO CLOSING (LOAN DOC SIGNING)

Government-issued photo ID For the notary (a mobile Notary can come to you at a convenient time and place to get your loan docs signed as well as the deed that will be recorded).



WIRING FINAL FUNDS

You will wire funds to cover the remainder of the down payment and your closing costs (always confirm wiring instructions over the phone with the escrow officer).



RECEIVE YOUR KEYS

Congratulations! It was a lot of hard work but you are now officially homeowners!! Time to throw a party and get to know your new neighbors!



WHAT TO EXPECT

REACHABLE
HIGH INTEGRITY
HONESTY & TRANSPARENCY
ACTING IN YOUR BEST INTEREST

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