

VILAS
P  INT
Real Estate
RE/MAX Preferred

BUYER'S GUIDE



THE VILAS POINT TEAM

FROM START TO SOLD. ALL THE DETAILS YOU NEED TO SUCCESSFULLY BUY YOUR NEW HOME.



Hi, I'm Stacy and I believe in home.

Home is more than just a physical space. It's where you've created countless memories, shared moments with loved ones, and where you feel most comfortable.

When it comes time to buy a new home and begin a new chapter, the process can oftentimes feel overwhelming. Buying a home can be an emotional journey, and it's understandable to feel apprehensive.

Rest assured that together, we can help you navigate the process with ease. We'll outline the process and create a plan together, so you don't have to do any of the heavy lifting.

From setting a budget, to finding the right neighborhood, negotiating the best terms for you & creating a smooth close, this booklet will be your guide.

Stacy Baumgartner

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ABOUT ME


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ABOUT ME

Stacy Baumgartner is a dedicated Real Estate Agent at Vilas Point Real Estate RE/MAX Preferred. With her extensive knowledge of the local real estate market, Stacy has helped countless clients find their dream home. Her passion for real estate began when she purchased her first home on Madison's Eastside at just 20 years old. Since then, she has owned, built and renovated multiple homes, developing a deep appreciation for the renovation and design process and the transformation of a house into a home.


Today, Stacy works closely with her business partner, Landon Mrowiec, as a trusted team at Vilas Point Real Estate. Together, they provide clients with a seamless experience, blending their strengths to handle every detail with care. Their collaborative approach ensures that buyers and sellers alike feel supported, informed, and confident throughout the process.


Whether you're buying or selling in Dane County, Stacy and Landon are the perfect team to guide you every step of the way.

ABOUT ME


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ABOUT ME

Landon Mrowiec is a dedicated Realtor with Vilas Point Real Estate, RE/MAX Preferred, who brings energy, experience, and a true passion for helping people achieve their real estate goals. Growing up surrounded by the industry, Landon was immersed in the world of flipping, building, buying, and selling from a young age. This early exposure gave him a hands-on understanding of how real estate works from the ground up and shaped his commitment to making the process smooth and successful for his clients.

As part of the Vilas Point team, Landon benefits from the knowledge and expertise of seasoned agents while offering his own fresh perspective and drive. He believes real estate is not just about transactions—it's about building lasting relationships, understanding clients' needs, and creating solutions that fit their lifestyle and future goals. Whether working with first-time homebuyers, seasoned investors, or families looking to sell, Landon prioritizes open communication, personalized guidance, and results-driven strategies.

If you're ready to buy or sell a home, Landon's combination of passion, experience, and strong team support makes him a trusted partner in turning your real estate goals into reality.

WHY HIRE A TEAM?

When it comes to buying or selling a property, having a real estate team on your side is a game-changer. Not only will they always be available to take calls and show properties, but they'll also bring a wealth of experience and expertise to the table.

When it comes time to take your largest asset to market, it's vital to have a variety of perspectives to build your specific marketing plan. As a team we build a plan just for your home and each listing is vetted through the team, which ensures we don't have any holes in our marketing.

Our job is to get you the best deal and often times that is through leveraging our combined skillsets...and NETWORKS.

While we personalize our marketing approach, we systemize our approach to paperwork, ensuring you always know what's coming next.

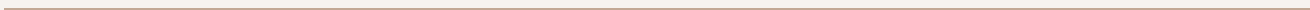
SAY HELLO TO MY TEAM...



STACY



LANDON



SUCCESSFUL BUYING PROCESS



I KNOW THAT BUYING A NEW HOME CAN BE STRESSFUL...

But it doesn't have to be. Instead it can be the glorious start to a new chapter. The anticipation of creating new memories in a home that better serves your needs. We're here to help you determine your budget, find the perfect neighborhood & hear "OFFER ACCEPTED!"

Moving to a new home is EXCITING and we can't wait to help you every step of the way.



HOW DOES A REAL ESTATE TRANSACTION WORK?

BUYER

**BUYER'S
REALTOR**

**SELLER'S
REALTOR**

SELLER

LOAN EVALUATION

BEFORE MAKING AN OFFER, TALK WITH A FEW LENDERS TO DETERMINE YOUR BUDGET

**FIND YOUR
DREAM
HOME!**

OFFER PRESENTED

BUYER'S REALTOR PRESENTS OFFER TO SELLER'S REALTOR, WHO CONVEYS IT TO SELLER

PURCHASE NEGOTIATION

SALES PRICE, TERMS AND CONTINGENCIES ARE NEGOTIATED & AGREED UPON.

INSPECTION PERIOD

BUYER BEGINS INSPECTION PERIOD & SUBMITS REPAIR REQUESTS.

GOOD FAITH DEPOSIT

BUYER SUBMITS EARNEST DEPOSIT TO TITLE COMPANY WHICH IS HELD IN EARNEST

SELLER'S DISCLOSURES

SELLERS PROVIDE DISCLOSURES THAT MAY MATERIALLY EFFECT THE VALUE

**SALES
AGREEMENT
EXECUTED**

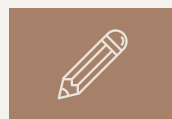
**LOAN
APPLICATION
PROCESSED &
APPRAISAL
ORDERED**

TITLE SEARCH
CONCURRENT WITH LOAN PROCESS, CLOSING AGENT CONFIRMS SELLER HAS CLEAR RIGHT TO SELL PROPERTY & ESTABLISHES FACTS, SUCH AS WHETHER THERE ARE ANY RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS ON THE USE OF THE PROPERTY

CLOSING DOCS ISSUED
LENDER PROVIDES LOAD ESTIMATE & CLOSING DISCLOSURES DETAILING ALL TERMS & COSTS

CONTINGENCIES SATISFIED
ONCE FINANCING IS COMPLETE, INSPECTION REPAIRS MADE, APPRAISAL COMPLETE, CONTINGENCIES ARE DROPPED OFF.

FINAL WALK THROUGH
1-2 DAYS PRIOR TO CLOSING, BUYER CONFIRMS THAT THE HOME IS IN THE SAME CONDITION AS WHEN PURCHASED & ALL AGREED UPON REPAIRS HAVE BEEN MADE



**TRANSACTION
CLOSED**



the TIMELINE

SHOWINGS

- Walk any homes that meet all of the qualifications you've set until you find the right one & submit an offer

BUDGET

- Determine what you want your monthly payment to be
- Determine how much you want to put down

OFFER ACCEPTED!

- Deposit earnest money
- 10-day inspection period
- Appraisal

MEET WITH A LENDER

- Interview lenders
- Crunch the numbers to determine how much home you can afford

CLOSING DAY

- Sign all lender documents
- Sign all title documents
- Sent to record deed

SET UP YOUR HOME SEARCH

- Determine what your 'must have' items are
- Define the location you want to live in
- Set up your home search

MOVING DAY

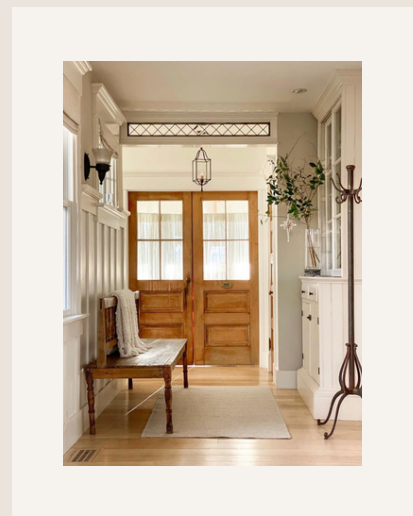
- Schedule your movers
- Turn on all utilities in your name
- Welcome Home!

SET YOUR BUDGET

I know...the dreaded B word, but if you're crystal clear on what your budget is, this process will be SO MUCH EASIER. You'll want to meet with a lender to determine final numbers, but take some time to determine what monthly payment feels comfortable for you and your family at this time. As a rule of thumb it is recommended that your mortgage not exceed more than 1/3 of your take home pay. Before you lock yourself into that, I will tell you that there are exceptions depending on your season of life. A few things to consider:

Are you at the front end of your earning potential? If so, you might want to push on your budget a bit. This would be for young professionals like attorneys that just graduated law school. Their entry level pay has a lot of room to increase over the coming years, so it might make sense to over extend just a bit, knowing you can grow into the monthly payment.

Are you at the end of your earning potential? If so, you might not want to push on your monthly budget. This would be for anyone on the back end of their career OR with a fairly fixed income.



AGENT COMPENSATION

Inside real estate transactions there are typically two agents involved. One agent represents the seller, the other agent represents the buyer. Each agent works to create circumstances that are agreeable to their clients.

Typically (what we have seen over the years), seller's offer 3% of the purchase price to their agent and 3% to the buyer's agent. New NAR regulations prohibit us from offering a buyer co-broke inside the MLS, but that is how Real Estate has typically worked and it is still recommended that seller's offer a co-broke to a buyer's agent, here's why:



- **It makes their listing more appealing.** Buyers face a lot of upfront costs when purchasing a home, seller's covering this cost allows buyers to afford more.
- **It creates a smoother transaction.** A represented buyer is a buyer that is educated with an agent working to make sure we get everyone to the closing table.

Sellers are not required to offer a buyer's agent co-broke, this means buyers need to be prepared to pay their agent out of pocket if need be. As a buyer's agent, it is my job to seek best circumstances for your purchase, which is why we'll try to negotiate a seller paid commission structure.



WHY HIRE AN AGENT FOR YOUR HOME PURCHASE?

UNREPRESENTED CONSUMERS ACCOUNT
FOR 70% OF ALL REAL ESTATE LAWSUITS.

Are you required to have a real estate agent to purchase a home? No. But you're also not required to have a professional cut your hair, so why do you pay someone to do that? Because you don't want to walk around with your hair a mess, right?

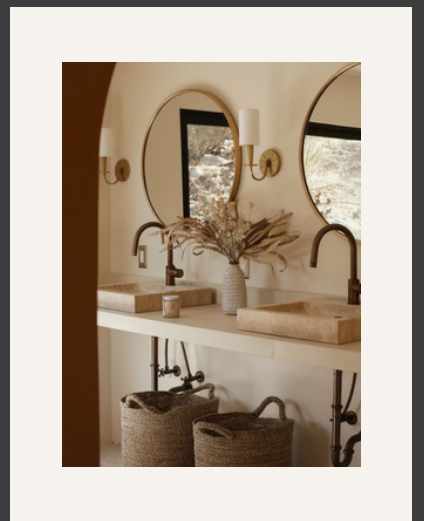
Buying a home is often one of the biggest financial investments you'll make in your lifetime. A lot can go wrong and unfortunately, it can go REALLY wrong if you don't know what you're doing.

WISH LIST

Buying a new home is so much fun and this is the part where you day dream about all the possibilities. I like to remove all constraints of budget and location and write down ALL the things I'd love to have inside my home. Not gonna lie, my list is fairly long, but it makes me happy to think about all the possibilities. After I've filled my mind with all the possibilities, I start sorting them and ranking them in order of importance, narrowing it down to 3-5 must haves. It's important to do this BEFORE you start looking at houses so you don't get distracted by something that might seem like what you want, but really isn't. We'll refer to this list when we're out looking at homes. If there is a MUST HAVE on your list, we will try hard to find only those properties for you but sometimes with the current inventory that can be a challenge. We will continue to work hard to find your new home!

DOWN PAYMENT

Determine what your down payment is. While some put 20% down on their home, you can often qualify with as little as 0-3% down. It's important to be clear on this number as it will impact your monthly payment. You'll also need to have your Earnest Money on hand as well. Typically buyers put 1% of the purchase price down as earnest money. I'll break down your earnest money in just a bit, but know that you're earnest money will be added to your down payment on closing day.



New Home WISH LIST

BATHROOMS

KITCHEN

BACKYARD

FAMILY ROOM

FRONT ENTRY

BEDROOMS

MISCELLANEOUS



MEET WITH YOUR LENDER

Now that you have a clear idea on what you want and the numbers you'd like to hit, it's time to talk to a lender. Every buyer must have a pre-approval before seeing any homes. Depending on your price point (usually luxury listings), Listing Agents will require proof of funds prior to showings. This ensures sellers aren't prepping their home for showings for buyers that aren't in a position to buy. Your pre-approval will be submitted with any offer so the sellers know you can secure a loan for their property. Once you have your pre-approval, revisit your 'must have' list to be sure those items can realistically be secured at your price point.

BUILD YOUR TIMELINE

Are you renting? Do you need to sell your current home? Closings typically take 30 days, so line up your dates to be sure they work for you. If you need to sell your current home in order to buy your new home, it's important to have it cleaned, staged and photographed PRIOR to looking at homes. This allows for me to best negotiate a Buyer Contingency, meaning that your new home purchase is contingent on your current home selling. As an agent, I need to be able to show the sellers we're ready to go to market 'overnight' so we don't delay the closing process.

If you're renting, know that your first mortgage payment isn't usually due for 45-60 days AFTER close of escrow, which helps you not double up on rent and mortgage payments.



SET UP YOUR HOME SEARCH

Now it's time to start shopping for your new home! We'll automate this by setting up a custom home search for you with all of the criteria you listed above. This means anytime a new home hits the market that meets your criteria, you'll get an email notification. If you like what you see, reach out and I'll set an appointment to walk the home.

A few ground rules to make this process as enjoyable as possible:

Do not walk homes that are not in your budget. I can promise you this never ends well and oftentimes makes you disappointed in what you CAN afford.

Remember when walking homes, someone else is often living there. This means we want to be respectful of their space, especially if little kids are in tow.

And finally, there are almost always cameras, so save any talk of pricing for after the showing.



YOU'RE UNDER CONTRACT...

Now what?

Once we have an accepted contract, we send it to the Title Company who will facilitate the closing documents. The Title Company works with all parties involved (buyer, seller, both agents and lender) to compile all the documents necessary to close.

01

EARNEST
DEPOSIT

02

INSPECTION

03

APPRAISAL

THE DETAILS...

01

EARNEST MONEY: Your earnest deposit is typically 1% of the purchase price. Once all contingencies are met, your earnest money will be non-refundable and will be applied towards your down payment.

02

INSPECTION PERIOD: This is your time to do all of your due diligence on the property. It is **HIGHLY** recommended that you hire a professional inspector to do a full inspection of the home.

03

APPRAISAL: Once the inspection is complete the next contingency to remove is the appraisal contingency. Most loans require an appraisal prior to funding.

INSPECTION PERIOD



This is your time to do all of your due diligence on the property. It is HIGHLY recommended that you hire a professional inspector to do a full inspection of the home. You can google some options or I'm happy to share a few companies I've worked with in the past, but who you use as your inspector is your decision. The inspector will climb into the attic, check the furnace & a/c, run all the faucets, check all the electrical and look for anything that is out of order. They'll then provide you with a full report that is often dozens of pages long — you want them to be thorough! They'll point out everything that is in working order and everything that is not. Once the inspection is done, you'll have an opportunity to ask the seller to repair or replace anything that isn't working properly. Let it be noted, you cannot ask for things that are working properly to be repaired or replaced. If buyer and seller cannot come to an agreement during this due-diligence period, buyer has the opportunity to cancel the contract and receive a full refund of their earnest money.



APPRAISAL

Once the inspection is complete the next contingency to remove is the appraisal contingency. Most loans require an appraisal and if the home doesn't appraise for the purchase price buyers and sellers have a few options. The buyer can exercise their right to cancel the contract and receive a full refund of their earnest money, or buyer and seller can renegotiate on the price or buyer can bring the difference between the appraisal amount and loan amount in cash to the closing table to bridge the gap.

Once the appraisal contingency has been met, the buyer's earnest money is typically what we call, 'hard.' This means that should you decide to cancel the contract, you will not receive a refund of your earnest money deposit.





OTHER CONTINGENCIES

If you're selling your current home in order to buy your new home, you'll have this contingency as well that needs to be fulfilled before your earnest money goes hard. We'll go over all of these dates so you know exactly what is expected of you and the sell of your home.

FINANCING

During this time, it's imperative that you stay in close contact with your lender. They'll need specific paperwork and information only you can provide them. It is also of the utmost importance that you refrain from any other major purchases that could impact your financing. This would be buying a new car or boat or swiping your credit card for furniture for the new house. These purchases can negatively impact your debt to income ratio and implode your deal before it's done. Hang tight until we close on your dream home and then you have full reign to get that home furnished or buy that new car.





FINAL WALK THROUGH

This occurs 1-3 days prior to close and is your chance to walk the home one last time to ensure that all of the repair requests have been completed and that the house is in the same condition as when you bought it. It's normal to see boxes stacked in the garage because sellers are moving too! If everything looks good, you'll sign paperwork accepting the home's condition and we'll be on our way to a smooth close.



CLOSING DAY

The Title Company will receive the loan documents 3-5 days before closing, and you'll need to make an appointment to sign at the Title Company (I usually help coordinate that for you). Both the buyers and sellers typically sign everything on closing day, though sometimes the seller may sign a bit earlier. After that, all that's left is for the title to be recorded at the County Recorder's Office. You'll receive a copy in the mail a few days after closing.

And here it is—The big day! I've walked through this process countless times, and I promise we'll make it through just fine. You'll be signing a lot of paperwork today—most of it a little dry, but all of it important. Once you sign everything, the deal is officially closed!

What you
CAN EXPECT

I know this is about more than selling high and buying low and I can promise you that while there will be some bumps in the process, I'll be doing my best to help you avoid any delays or roadblocks. You can expect weekly phone calls with my trademark *tell it like it is* honesty & creative problem solving to get you where you want to go.

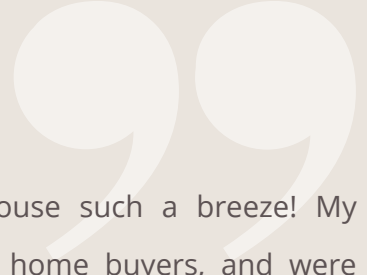
Stacy

what others
ARE SAYING



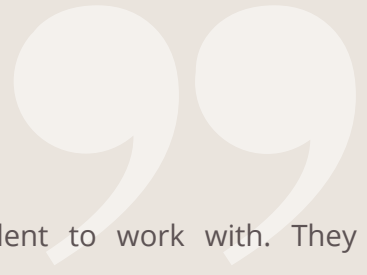
BRIANNA L.

Wow! Stacy made buying a house such a breeze! My husband and I were first time home buyers, and were nervous to purchase in such a crazy market. Stacy was professional and very attentive! She never made us feel uncomfortable and helped us every step of the way! We would 100% recomend Stacy for purchasing a home!



PAULA G.

Landon and Stacy were excellent to work with. They helped us find "The One". They went above and beyond many times. They always had the information we needed. I highly recommend them for selling and buying!



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READY
TO
BUY?

Set your appointment here:

