



AUSTIN WALKER



**MAKING HOME HAPPEN**  
A HOME BUYER'S GUIDE TO THE ATLANTA REAL ESTATE MARKET



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# WELCOME *to*

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**Blackstreet**  
REAL ESTATE GROUP

We understand that buying a home is one of the most significant financial decisions you'll make. That's why we are committed to guiding you through every step of the process with care and expertise. Our team combines deep market knowledge with a strategic approach to help you find the perfect home that fits your needs, lifestyle, and budget. From narrowing down neighborhoods to negotiating the best terms, we're here to make your home-buying journey smooth and successful.

What sets us apart is our focus on building a true partnership with our clients. We don't just help you find a house; we work closely with you to ensure every step of the process is clear and tailored to your goals. With a proven track record in Atlanta's competitive market and a hands-on approach that leaves no detail overlooked, we're confident that our dedication and passion for real estate will make your home-buying experience one to celebrate.

A woman with long, dark, wavy hair is sitting on a yellow tufted leather sofa. She is wearing a black turtleneck sweater and black pants. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a solid blue wall. A green plant is visible in the top left corner.

# ABOUT ME

Hello, I'm Austin Walker, your Atlanta real estate enthusiast! Originally from Dallas, TX (hence the TX Peach), I've been an Atlanta resident since 2008.

As a real estate investor, I'm passionate about home ownership and building wealth through smart property investments. My goal as your agent is simple: to educate and empower you, not to hard sell. Whether you're a first-time buyer, downsizing, or a savvy investor, let's work together to achieve your real estate goals.

Beyond real estate, I enjoy exploring Atlanta with my husband and two children. If you're looking to buy, sell, or invest in Atlanta, or just want to chat about the local real estate scene, feel free to call or text anytime. I'm here to help make your real estate journey a success!

*Austin Walker*

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# YOUR NEEDS



TELL ME ABOUT YOU



TELL ME ABOUT YOUR WISHLIST



TELL ME ABOUT YOUR PROXIMITY  
REQUIREMENTS



TELL ME ABOUT YOUR  
TIMELINE

# THINGS TO TALK THROUGH TOGETHER

## BUYING TIMELINE

## BUDGET & FINANCING

- *NEED A LENDER?*
- *PREFERRED MONTHLY PAYMENT*
- *DOWNPAYMENT AND EXPENSES*

## PROPERTY PREFERENCES

- *TYPE OF PROPERTY*
- *NEEDS VS WANTS*

## LOCATION PREFERENCES

- *PREFERRED NEIGHBORHOODS, AREAS, SCHOOL SYSTEMS*
- *PROXIMITY TO SCHOOLS, WORKPLACES AND AMENITIES*

## LIFESTYLE CONSIDERATIONS

## HOMEOWNERSHIP EXPERIENCE

## FUTURE PLANS

## OFFER & NEGOTIATION PREFERENCES

## COMMUNICATION PREFERENCES

# WHAT A REALTOR ACTUALLY DOES & WHY YOU NEED THEM

Sure, it's easy to scroll through the internet for your dream home, but when it's time to seal the deal, having a real estate agent by your side can make all the difference. A buyer's agent is there to help you discover the perfect home and set you on the path to becoming a homeowner.

## A REALTOR PROVIDES:

EXPERT GUIDANCE

UNBIASED INFORMATION

NEGOTIATION SKILLS

EXPANDED SEARCH POWER

MARKET TRENDS AND NEIGHBORHOOD KNOWLEDGE

FAIR AND ETHICAL TREATMENT

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

# WHAT NOT TO DO BEFORE BUYING

**DON'T FINANCE A CAR OR ANOTHER EXPENSIVE ITEM BEFORE BUYING.**

**DON'T QUIT YOUR JOB OR CHANGE CAREERS BEFOREHAND**

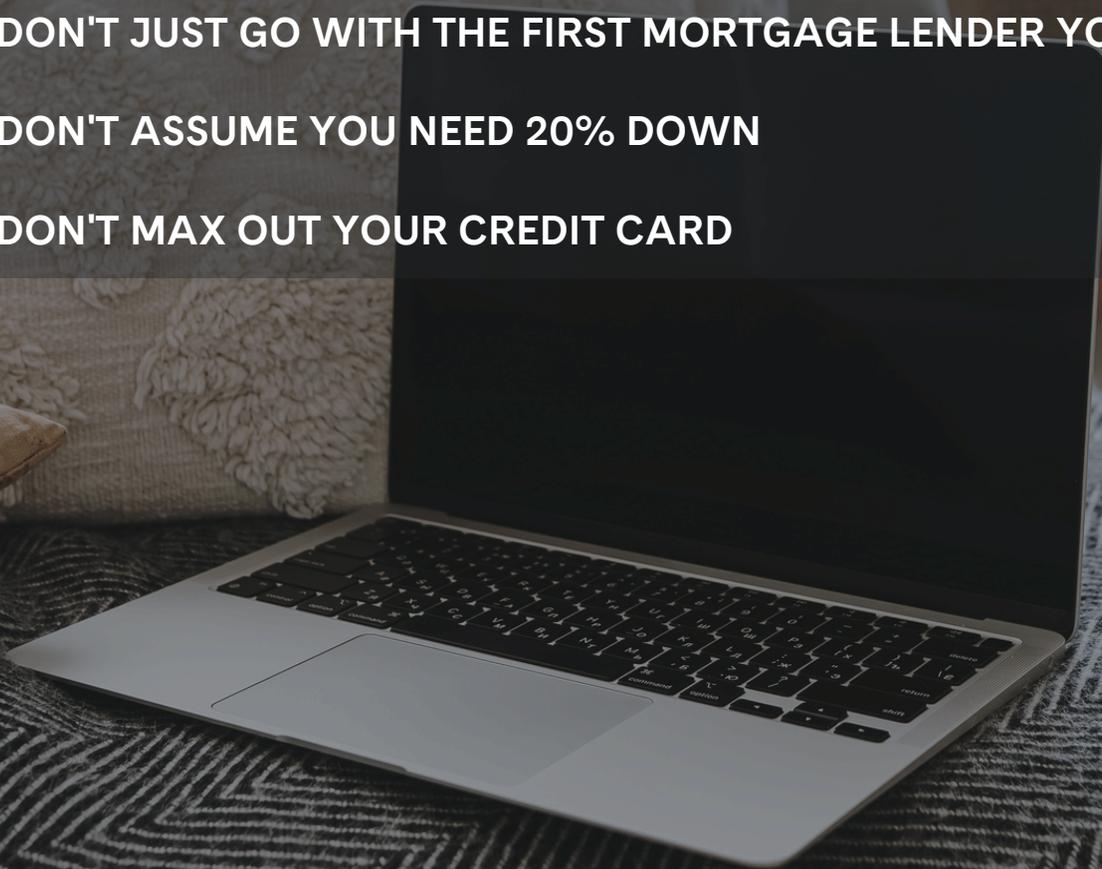
**DON'T SHOP FOR HOMES ONLINE BEFORE GETTING PREAPPROVED**

**DON'T MAKE ANY BIG FINANCIAL CHANGES BEFORE CLOSING**

**DON'T JUST GO WITH THE FIRST MORTGAGE LENDER YOU TALK TO**

**DON'T ASSUME YOU NEED 20% DOWN**

**DON'T MAX OUT YOUR CREDIT CARD**



# BUYERS TIMELINE



# BREAK DOWN OF COSTS

ASIDE FROM YOUR DOWNPAYMENT, HERE ARE SOME ADDITIONAL COSTS TO CONSIDER:

Earnest Money: 1-2% of the purchase price and credited to you at closing

Inspection Fees: Average of \$450 to \$800

Appraisal Fee: Average \$700

Closing Costs are wired the day or so before closing and include costs like lender fees, attorney fees, escrow, EBBA fee, and your down payment. You should budget 2-3% of the purchase price in addition to your down payment

*Please note: these are estimates and averages - your actual costs may vary*

# PRE-APPROVAL

Going home shopping without a pre-approval is like going to the grocery store without your wallet. You can look, but you have no buying power. Remember, pre-qualification is just an estimate of what you may be approved for. Being pre-approved, unlike being pre-qualified, means you've actually been approved by a lender for a specific loan amount. Take this step early to enhance your overall experience and position yourself as a strong and prepared buyer in the competitive real estate market.

## THE POWER OF PREAPPROVAL

IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL ISSUES

CLARITY IN YOUR BUDGET

INCREASED NEGOTIATING POWER

PEACE OF MIND

## YOU'LL NEED:

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

# QUALIFICATIONS

<i>TYPE OF LOAN</i>	<i>TYPICAL CREDIT SCORE</i>	<i>DOWN PAYMENT</i>
<i>VA LOAN</i>	<i>620</i>	<i>N/A</i>
<i>USDA LOAN</i>	<i>620</i>	<i>N/A</i>
<i>FHA LOAN</i>	<i>580+ 500-579</i>	<i>3.5% 10%</i>
<i>203K LOAN</i>	<i>640</i>	<i>3.5%</i>
<i>CONVENTIONAL</i>	<i>640</i>	<i>5-20%</i>

## 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

# SHOWING ETIQUETTE

## Do's

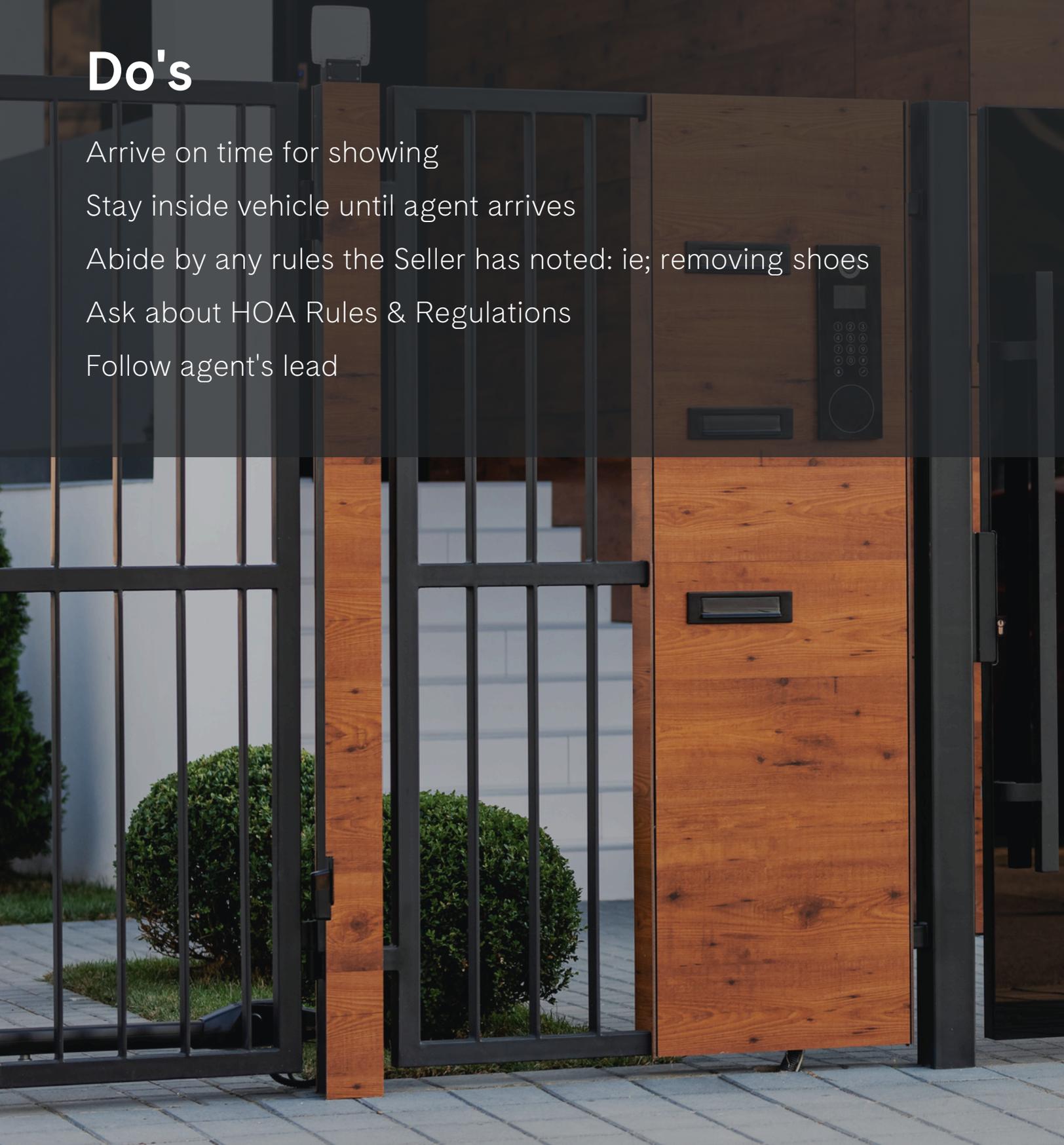
Arrive on time for showing

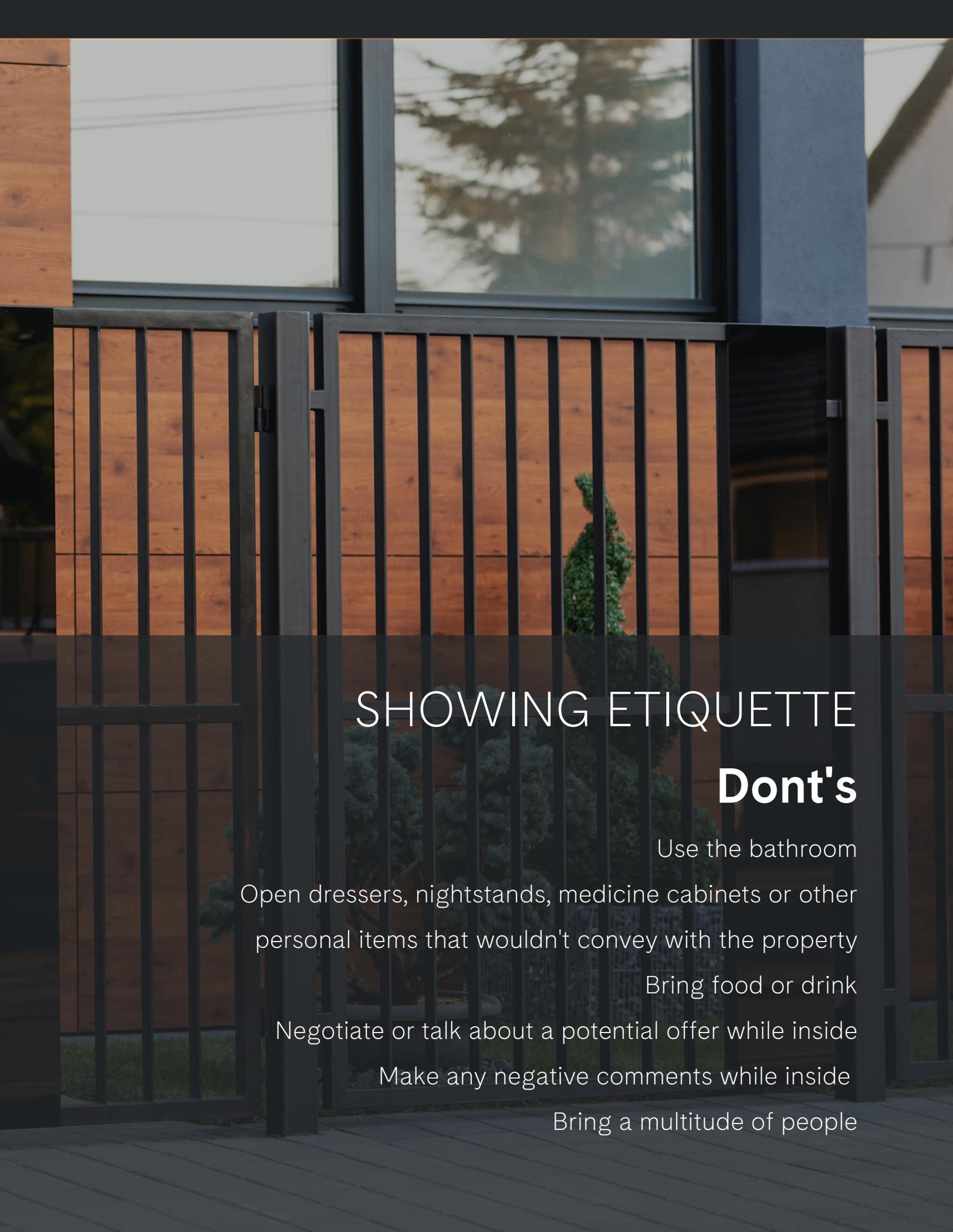
Stay inside vehicle until agent arrives

Abide by any rules the Seller has noted: ie; removing shoes

Ask about HOA Rules & Regulations

Follow agent's lead





# SHOWING ETIQUETTE

## **Dont's**

Use the bathroom

Open dressers, nightstands, medicine cabinets or other personal items that wouldn't convey with the property

Bring food or drink

Negotiate or talk about a potential offer while inside

Make any negative comments while inside

Bring a multitude of people

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# THE MARKET

In navigating the dynamic real estate landscape, it's essential to grasp key indicators that illuminate the market's dynamics. Delving into specific metrics provides valuable insights for prospective homebuyers:

*Days on Market (DOM)*

*Sales to List Price Ratio*

*Inventory Levels*

*Absorption Rate*

*Pending*

*Local Economic Indicators*

*General Area*

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# WHAT MAKES A "GOOD OFFER", GOOD?

**EARNEST  
MONEY**

**CLOSING  
TIMELINE**

**DUE DILIGENCE  
TIMELINE**

**POTENTIAL  
REPAIRS**

**CONTINGENCIES**

**APPRAISAL GAP**

**SELLER COSTS**

**ITEMS TO BE  
CONVEYED**

**DOWNPAYMENT**

# THE PROCESS:

ONCE YOU'VE SUBMITTED AN OFFER:



AFTER SIGNING THE PURCHASE AGREEMENT, YOU ARE OFFICIALLY COMMITTED TO THE CONTRACT! THIS PHASE IS REFERRED TO AS THE CONTINGENCY PERIOD, DURING WHICH THE PROPERTY IS LABELED AS "ACTIVE UNDER CONTRACT." INSPECTIONS, APPRAISALS, AND ANY OTHER STIPULATIONS OUTLINED IN YOUR PURCHASE AGREEMENT WILL NOW BE CONDUCTED.

# NOW WHAT?

1

## EARNEST MONEY

THINK OF THE EARNEST MONEY DEPOSIT AS A SHOW OF GOOD FAITH. IT ASSURES THE SELLER THAT YOU, AS THE BUYER, ARE COMMITTED TO THE TRANSACTION. THE AMOUNT OF THE EARNEST MONEY DEPOSIT IS NEGOTIABLE AND IS OUTLINED IN THE PURCHASE AGREEMENT.

A RELIABLE HOME INSPECTOR WILL CONDUCT A COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION OF THE PROPERTY. AFTERWARD, WE WILL RECEIVE A DETAILED REPORT OF THEIR DISCOVERIES.

2

## INSPECTIONS

3

## REPAIRS

YOU HAVE THE OPTION TO ACCEPT THE IDENTIFIED ISSUES AS THEY ARE OR TO ASK THE SELLER TO RECTIFY SOME OR ALL OF THEM DEPENDING ON YOUR CONTRACT.

YOUR LENDER WILL COORDINATE WITH A THIRD-PARTY APPRAISER TO OBTAIN AN IMPARTIAL ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPERTY'S VALUE. THIS SERVES AS CONFIRMATION TO LENDER THAT THE AGREED-UPON PRICE IS REASONABLE.

4

## APPRAISAL



**5**

## **UNDERWRITING**

THE UNDERWRITING PROCESS ENTAILS A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF YOUR FINANCIAL DETAILS BY THE MORTGAGE LENDER TO VERIFY THE ACCURACY AND COMPLETENESS OF THE INFORMATION YOU SUBMITTED.

THE TITLE COMPANY CONDUCTS A SEARCH TO ENSURE THE SELLER HAS A CLEAR RIGHT TO SELL THE PROPERTY, IDENTIFYING ISSUES LIKE LIENS OR LEGAL CLAIMS. ONCE THE TITLE IS CLEAR, THE COMPANY ISSUES INSURANCE PROTECTING THE BUYER AND LENDER FROM UNFORESEEN TITLE DEFECTS.

**6**

## **TITLE**

THIS INVOLVES TRANSFERRING SERVICES LIKE WATER, GAS, AND ELECTRICITY FROM THE SELLER TO THE BUYER. IN THIS STAGE, THE BUYER CONTACTS LOCAL UTILITY PROVIDERS TO SET UP NEW ACCOUNTS FOR A SMOOTH TRANSITION WHEN TAKING OWNERSHIP OF THE PROPERTY.

**7**

## **UTILITIES**

THIS IS A PRE-CLOSING INSPECTION CONDUCTED BY THE HOMEBUYER TO ENSURE THE PROPERTY'S CONDITION MATCHES THE AGREED-UPON TERMS AND ANY NEGOTIATED REPAIRS HAVE BEEN ADDRESSED. IT PROVIDES A LAST OPPORTUNITY TO IDENTIFY AND RESOLVE ANY ISSUES BEFORE CLOSING.

**8**

## **FINAL WALK-THROUGH**

# CLEAR TO CLOSE

CLOSING IS THE STAGE WHERE YOU SIGN OWNERSHIP AND INSURANCE DOCUMENTS AND RECEIVE THE KEYS TO YOUR NEW HOME.

LENDERS MUST FURNISH A CLOSING DISCLOSURE WITHIN THREE DAYS OF THE CLOSING, DETAILING YOUR ULTIMATE LOAN TERMS AND CLOSING COSTS. IT'S CRUCIAL TO THOROUGHLY REVIEW THIS STATEMENT TO PREVENT ANY UNEXPECTED SURPRISES AT THE CLOSING TABLE. SHOULD A NOTABLE DIFFERENCE ARISE BETWEEN THE INITIAL LOAN ESTIMATE AND THE CLOSING DISCLOSURE, PROMPT NOTIFICATION TO YOUR LENDER AND TITLE COMPANY IS NECESSARY.

WHO WILL BE THERE:

- YOUR AGENT
- THE SELLER
- THE SELLER'S AGENT
- ANY REAL ESTATE ATTORNEYS INVOLVED IN THE TRANSACTION

**REQUIRED FOR CLOSING:**

- GOVERNMENT-ISSUED PHOTO ID
- REMAINING FUNDS

BE READY TO SIGN A MULTITUDE OF DOCUMENTS, INCLUDING THE MORTGAGE, TITLE DEED, AND OTHER LEGAL PAPERS. ONCE ALL DOCUMENTS ARE SIGNED AND FUNDS ARE EXCHANGED, YOU'LL OFFICIALLY RECEIVE THE KEYS TO YOUR NEW HOME, MARKING THE COMPLETION OF THE HOMEBUYING PROCESS.

# 30-DAY MOVING CHECKLIST

## DAY 1-5: PREPARING FOR THE MOVE

1. **INVENTORY YOUR BELONGINGS: TAKE STOCK OF WHAT YOU OWN TO DECLUTTER AND PLAN FOR THE MOVE.**
2. **RESEARCH MOVING COMPANIES: OBTAIN QUOTES, CHECK REVIEWS, AND BOOK A REPUTABLE MOVING COMPANY. I HAVE AVAILABLE OPTIONS!**
3. **START PACKING: BEGIN WITH NON-ESSENTIAL ITEMS; LABEL BOXES BY ROOM.**

## DAY 6-15: PACKING AND PLANNING

1. **COLLECT PACKING SUPPLIES: PURCHASE OR GATHER BOXES, TAPE, BUBBLE WRAP, AND OTHER PACKING MATERIALS.**
2. **LABEL ESSENTIAL BOXES: MARK BOXES CONTAINING ESSENTIALS LIKE TOILETRIES, CLOTHES, AND IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS.**
3. **PLAN FOR PETS: ARRANGE PET CARE OR SECURE A COMFORTABLE SPACE DURING THE MOVE.**

## DAY 16-25: FINALIZING DETAILS

1. **PACK AN ESSENTIALS BOX: INCLUDE TOILETRIES, CLOTHES, SNACKS, AND OTHER NECESSITIES FOR THE FIRST NIGHT.**
2. **FINISH PACKING: PACK REMAINING ITEMS, KEEPING A CHECKLIST TO ENSURE NOTHING IS LEFT BEHIND.**
3. **PACK AN "OPEN FIRST" BOX: INCLUDE ESSENTIALS LIKE BEDDING, TOWELS, AND KITCHEN BASICS FOR IMMEDIATE USE.**

## DAY 26-30: MOVING DAY AND SETTLING IN

1. **MOVING DAY ESSENTIALS: KEEP IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS, MEDICATIONS, AND VALUABLES WITH YOU.**
2. **SUPERVISE THE MOVE: BE PRESENT DURING THE LOADING AND UNLOADING OF YOUR BELONGINGS.**
3. **CELEBRATE AND RELAX: TAKE A MOMENT TO CELEBRATE YOUR NEW HOME AND SETTLE IN GRADUALLY.**

## AFTER:

1. **UPDATE IDS AND LICENSES: UPDATE YOUR DRIVER'S LICENSE, VEHICLE REGISTRATION, AND OTHER IDS.**
2. **REGISTER TO VOTE: UPDATE YOUR VOTER REGISTRATION WITH YOUR NEW ADDRESS.**

# REAL ESTATE LINGO & TERMINOLOGY

## **APPRAISER**

*A professional hired by a lender to determine the value of real estate for loan assessment.*

## **CLOSING COSTS**

*Various fees paid at closing to lenders, title companies, attorneys, insurance, taxing authorities, HOA's, and agents.*

## **CLEAR TO CLOSE**

*Lender approval for the buyer to officially purchase the house, signaling the impending closing.*

## **DAYS ON MARKET (DOM)**

*A metric indicating how long a home has been listed, influencing market dynamics.*

## **DEBT TO INCOME RATIO**

*A calculation helping lenders assess affordability based on total debt and monthly expenses relative to gross monthly income.*

## **DUE DILIGENCE**

*Negotiated contract period allowing buyers to thoroughly examine a property and potentially renegotiate based on findings.*

## **EQUITY**

*The homeowner's investment in the property, calculated as the market value minus the remaining mortgage.*

## **PRE-APPROVAL**

*A letter from the lender specifying a buyer's qualified terms, loan type, and amount.*

## **MLS**

*Multiple Listing Service is a database Realtors become a member of to access and add information about properties. It's where other housing platforms (Zillow, Realtor.com, etc) pull information from.*

## **PROOF OF FUNDS**

*Providing proof that you have the amount of money you say you do. Mostly used in cash transactions.*

## **SELLER DISCLOSURE**

*A document that the seller fills out disclosing all information about the property including anything that could affect a buyer's decision to potentially purchase.*

## **TITLE SEARCH**

*Search that examines public records for the history of the home that includes sales, purchases, taxes and any potential liens. Usually conducted by the title company.*



*we're looking forward  
to helping you*

**MAKE 'HOME' HAPPEN**

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