

THE ULTIMATE  
**BUYER'S**

*guide*



*Lori Moses*



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**BUY YOUR HOME WITH CONFIDENCE!**

Welcome to The Home Buyer's Guide!

Gain the knowledge and confidence to buy your dream home successfully.

Explore the interesting topics covered in this guide.

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# WELCOME

*Turning Your Real Estate  
Dreams Into Reality.*



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*Lori Moses*

Broker Associate & Team Leader



# ABOUT ME

*I have lived in the Tampa Bay area for more than three decades, but hail from the great state of Louisiana, known as the land of trustworthy and hardworking people. I graduated from LSU with a degree in Accounting and spent many years serving clients as a financial consultant.*

*In addition to real estate, I'm an avid sports fan who is highly involved in athletics across the state. I served as the USF Spirit Coordinator for nearly a decade and now direct the Florida SunSations, a professional sports dance team. I have three grown children, each of whom shares my love for sports! My oldest daughter was a Dazzler at UF, danced for the Miami Dolphins, and is currently a PA living in Dallas. My son followed in his father's footsteps by playing college baseball at FSU and St. Leo, where he was an All-American, and is currently a PA in the Tampa area. My youngest daughter cheered at UF and continued her love for the Gators as a coach. She is currently married to NFL QB Jeff Driskel.*

*In addition to personal service, I bring lots of experience and knowledge to the table: I am a relocation certified, both military and civilian, proficient in foreclosures, and all the perimeters of buying a waterfront home, whether it be Apollo Beach or our beautiful Gulf Beaches. As a house flipper, I am skilled in renovations and what to look for in a renovated home.*

*Lori Moses*

**BROKER ASSOCIATE & TEAM LEADER**

# FAIR HOUSING AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

As a REALTOR, I am committed to providing equal housing opportunities to all clients, adhering strictly to Fair Housing Laws and the NAR Code of Ethics. These laws ensure that every individual has the right to purchase or rent housing without facing discrimination based on their race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, or national origin.

## *My Commitment to Equal Opportunity*

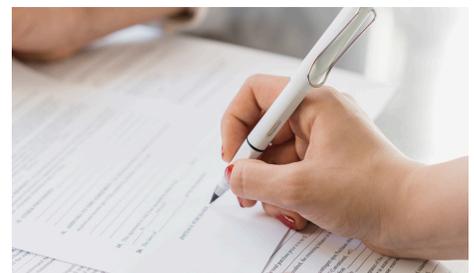
*I am committed to fostering an inclusive real estate experience where all clients, regardless of background, are given equal access to housing opportunities. This includes:*

- Offering the same level of service to every client, ensuring transparency and fairness throughout the buying or selling process.
- Recommending properties without bias and with full respect for your preferences, needs, and budget.
- Ensuring communication that is clear, respectful, and free from any form of prejudice or bias.

## *Your Rights as a Homebuyer*

*As a homebuyer, you have the right to:*

- Fair and equal treatment throughout your property search.
- Access to all available housing options, without discrimination.
- Timely communication and assistance from your real estate agent, without bias or favoritism.
- Protection from discriminatory practices in any part of the housing transaction, including applying for loans, viewing properties, and negotiating contracts.



# DEFINING YOUR NEEDS

Understanding your specific requirements will help narrow down the options and make your home-buying journey more focused and efficient.

Please rate the importance of each feature\*

## EXTERIOR FEATURES:

- |                 | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |
|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Yard            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Fenced yard     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Patio           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Balcony         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Deck            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Garage          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Driveway        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Pool            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Garden          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Outdoor kitchen | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Porch           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Shed/Storage    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Solar panels    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## ADDITIONAL FEATURES:

- |                             |                          |                          |                          |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Energy-efficient appliances | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Smart thermostat            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Security system             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Home gym                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Media/Entertainment room    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Separate dining room        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Guest room                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## PROXIMITY TO:

- |                       |                          |                          |                          |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Schools               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Public transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Shopping centers      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Parks or playgrounds  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Medical facilities    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Restaurants and cafes | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Gyms/Fitness centers  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Entertainment venues  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## INTERIOR FEATURES:

- |                          | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Open floor plan          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| High ceilings            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Hardwood floors          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Carpet                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Tile floors              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Fireplace                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Smart home technology    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Home office              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Finished basement        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Attic                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Laundry room             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Walk-in closet           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Pantry                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Natural light            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Large windows            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Central air conditioning | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Ceiling fans             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## ADDITIONAL FEATURES:

- |                           |                          |                          |                          |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Wheelchair ramps          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Step-free entry           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Wide doorways             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Single-story layout       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Stairlift or elevator     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Roll-in shower            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Grab bars in bathrooms    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Lowered sinks             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Walk-in bathtub           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Non-slip flooring         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Accessible light switches | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Accessible parking        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Bonus room                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## KITCHEN FEATURES:

- |                            | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Granite/Quartz countertops | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Stainless steel appliances | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Gas stove                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Island or breakfast bar    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Eat-in kitchen             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Double oven                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Walk-in pantry             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Custom cabinetry           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Wine fridge                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Updated/Modern design      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## BATHROOM FEATURES:

- |                         |                          |                          |                          |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Double vanity           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Separate shower and tub | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Walk-in shower          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Jetted tub              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Heated floors           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Linen closet            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Updated fixtures        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## COMMUNITY AMENITIES:

- |                            |                          |                          |                          |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 24/7 security              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Planned community events   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Kids' play area            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Pet-friendly               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Active adult/55+ community | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Walkable neighborhood      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Quiet, low-traffic streets | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Friendly neighbors         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Low crime rate             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

\* 1-Must Have

2-Nice to Have

3-Not Important

# HOME PREFERENCES

Finding the perfect home begins with understanding your specific needs and lifestyle.

By identifying these criteria upfront, we can focus our search on homes that meet your unique requirements and make the home-buying process more efficient and enjoyable. Take some time to think about your must-haves, nice-to-haves, and any deal breakers.

## PROPERTY PREFERENCES

**Desired location(s):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Bedroom:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Floors:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(City/Neighborhood)

**Preferred square footage:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Bathroom:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Garage space:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Approximate size)

### Property type you are interested in:

- Single-family home
- Condo/Townhouse
- Apartment
- Multi-family home
- Other:

### Architectural styles:

- Modern
- Traditional
- Colonial
- Mediterranean
- No preference

### Preferred home features:

- Home office
- Finished basement
- Updated kitchen
- Energy-efficient appliances
- Smart home technology

After outlining your basic needs, it's important to consider additional factors that can significantly impact your decision. Think about the lifestyle and amenities you desire in your new home, as well as any specific requirements related to your daily routines or future plans.

## LIFESTYLE PREFERENCES

### What type of lifestyle best describes your household?

- Quiet and private
- Social and outgoing
- Active/Outdoor-focused
- Homebodies

### Do you often entertain guests at home?

- Yes, frequently
- Occasionally
- Rarely

### Do you work from home?

- Yes, full-time
- Yes, part-time
- No

### What nearby amenities are important to your lifestyle?

- Parks and nature trails
- Restaurants and nightlife
- Shopping and retail centers
- Gyms and fitness centers
- Schools and daycare
- Public transportation

## SHOWINGS

### Preferred days for home showings:

- Monday
- Tuesday
- Wednesday
- Thursday
- Friday
- Saturday
- Sunday

### Preferred time for home showings:

- Morning (9 AM-12 PM)
- Afternoon (12 PM-4 PM)
- Evening (4 PM-7 PM)

# How Much Can You Afford?

## Explanation of Budgeting

*Creating a budget involves evaluating your income, expenses, and any existing debts to determine how much you can allocate to a mortgage payment each month. To ensure a realistic budget, consider the following factors:*

- **Monthly income:** This includes your salary, bonuses, and any other income sources.
- **Existing debts:** Include credit card payments, car loans, student loans, or other monthly obligations.
- **Living expenses:** Factor in utilities, groceries, entertainment, and other recurring costs.
- **Savings:** It's essential to have savings for a down payment, emergency funds, and potential maintenance costs after buying the home.
- **Debt-to-Income Ratio (DTI):** Most lenders recommend keeping your DTI below 36%. This means no more than 36% of your gross monthly income should go toward debt payments, including your mortgage.

# YOUR BUDGET



# Tips on Understanding Mortgage Options:

Before applying for a mortgage, it's crucial to understand the types of loans available and their terms.

## TYPES OF MORTGAGE OPTIONS

### Fixed-Rate Mortgage

- Interest rate stays the same throughout the loan term.
- Provides stable monthly payments, ideal for long-term planning.

### Adjustable-Rate Mortgage

- Initial lower interest rate that adjusts after a fixed period.
- Payments may increase or decrease based on the market interest rate.

### Government-Backed Loans

- **FHA Loans:** Low down payments (as little as 3.5%) and easier credit qualifications.
- **VA Loans:** Available to veterans and service members, often with no down payment required.
- **USDA Loans:** For rural homebuyers, offering low or no down payment options.

### Interest-Only Mortgage

- Only the interest is paid for a set period (e.g., 5-10 years), with larger payments due later.
- Risky for long-term affordability, typically for investors or buyers planning to sell before the higher payments kick in.

# LOAN PRE-APPROVAL

## *and Why It's Important*

**Getting pre-approved for a mortgage gives you a clear picture of how much you can borrow. It also shows sellers that you're serious about buying. To get pre-approved, you'll need to provide your lender with:**

- Recent bank statements and pay stubs
- Tax returns and W-2s (usually for the last two years)
- Proof of assets and savings
- Credit report



## *Understanding*

# DOWN PAYMENTS

**The down payment is the portion of the home's price you pay upfront. The amount you put down can significantly impact your loan terms, interest rates, and whether you'll need mortgage insurance.**

- 20% down payment: If you can afford it, a 20% down payment is ideal because it typically allows you to avoid paying private mortgage insurance.
- 5%-15% down payment: With a smaller down payment, you may need to pay PMI, but this option can help you enter the market sooner.
- Low down payment options: Certain loan programs, like FHA loans, allow you to put down as little as 3.5%, making homeownership more accessible.

# TYPES OF COMPENSATION SCENARIOS

## **Seller Offers Compensation**

The seller typically offers a percentage of the home's sale price as compensation for both the listing agent and the buyer's agent. This information must be disclosed to the buyer, ensuring full transparency about who is paying the commission and how much is being offered.

*\*Benefit to Buyer: Transparency is improved, and the buyer can see the total commission, allowing for negotiation if needed.*

## **Buyer Pays the Buyer's Agent Directly**

Buyers have the option to pay their agent directly instead of relying on the seller's commission offer. This can be agreed upon in the buyer representation agreement, which specifies the terms and amount of compensation the buyer will pay.

*\*This offers buyers more control over their agent's compensation, and the agent will no longer be incentivized to show higher-commission homes.*

## **Negotiated or Shared Commission**

In some cases, the buyer can negotiate for the seller to share or cover part of their agent's compensation. This can be included as part of the negotiation during the purchase offer process. The new NAR guidelines encourage flexibility, ensuring all compensation is agreed upon in writing, and providing transparency for both parties.

*\*Benefit to Buyer: Buyers can negotiate with sellers to reduce their out-of-pocket costs by including the agent's fees in the final sale terms.*

*These scenarios reflect the new compensation rules that promote transparency and flexibility in real estate transactions*

# BUYER AGREEMENT

The Buyer Representation Agreement is a formal contract that outlines the relationship between you and your real estate agent. This agreement ensures both parties understand their responsibilities and protects your interests throughout the home-buying process.

*\*The full contract will be attached for your review.*

## *Our Services Include:*

- **Property Search and Evaluation**

We assist in identifying properties that meet your criteria, including personalized property searches based on your needs and preferences.

- **Market Analysis**

We provide detailed market analysis, including comparable property evaluations, to help you make informed decisions.

- **Negotiation Assistance**

We negotiate on your behalf to secure the best price and terms, ensuring all contractual obligations protect your interests.

- **Transaction Support**

From coordinating inspections and appraisals to assisting with financing and title issues, we guide you through every step of the transaction process.

- **Closing Assistance**

We ensure a smooth closing, managing final details like paperwork, contracts, and coordinating with lenders and attorneys.

## *Buyer Responsibilities:*

- **Exclusive Representation**

By signing this agreement, you agree to work exclusively with our firm to purchase properties. This ensures dedicated service and resources for your home search.

- **Financial Readiness**

You are responsible for securing pre-approval from a lender or confirming your financial ability to purchase a property. We will assist you with lender recommendations as needed.

- **Timely Communication**

It's essential to maintain open and timely communication throughout the process. This ensures we can address any concerns and meet all deadlines.

- **Good-Faith Effort**

You agree to act in good faith during the home-buying process, including making reasonable offers and adhering to the terms of the agreement.

*Please review the full Buyer Representation Agreement attached. Once signed, we will begin working together to help you find your dream home.*

*Finding the Right*

# REAL ESTATE AGENT

## Why I Am the Right Real Estate Agent for You:

- *Neighborhood Expertise:* Specialize in your desired areas, providing insights for your lifestyle and investment goals.
- *Market Trends:* Stay updated on local trends for informed decision-making.
- *Dedicated Attention:* Offer personalized recommendations based on your vision for a dream home.
- *Focus on Priorities:* Prioritize your key requirements, such as school districts and specific amenities.
- *Strategic Negotiation:* Secure the best price and favorable deal terms aligned with your finances.
- *Protecting Interests:* Ensure you get the best price and favorable contract details.
- *Frequent Updates:* Keep you informed from property searches to closing.
- *Prompt Responses:* Always available for immediate answers to your questions.
- *Post-Sale Support:* Ongoing advice on renovations and market updates to maximize investment.



*Let's Work  
Together!*

- *Client Satisfaction:* Most business comes from repeat clients and referrals, indicating trust and satisfaction.
- *Award-Winning Service:* Recognized for exceptional service and results in real estate.
- *Lenders and Financial Advisors:* Access to reliable mortgage options and financial experts.
- *Home Inspectors:* Recommendations for experienced inspectors to ensure property condition.
- *Legal and Administrative Support:* Collaboration with top legal teams for accurate paperwork.
- *Future Real Estate Needs:* Ready to assist with future buying or selling with the same dedication.

# HOME BUYING ROADMAP

## *A Step-by-Step Guide*

1

### **Define Your Budget**

Evaluate your financial situation, including income, expenses, and savings, to determine how much you can afford.

2

### **List Your Must-Haves**

Identify your priorities for a home, such as location, size, and key features (e.g., number of bedrooms, yard size, or proximity to schools).

3

### **Get Pre-Approved for a Mortgage**

Secure a pre-approval from a lender to show sellers that you're financially ready, and know exactly how much you can borrow.

4

### **Choose the Right Real Estate Agent**

Partner with an experienced agent who knows your target area well and can guide you through the entire process.

5

### **Start the Home Search**

Work with your agent to find homes that meet your criteria. Use online listings, open houses, and private showings to explore your options.

6

### **Visit and Evaluate Properties**

Tour potential homes and assess each property's condition, layout, and location. Compare how well they align with your priorities.

7

### **Make an Offer**

Once you find the right home, work with your agent to submit a competitive offer that includes your price and key terms (e.g., closing date)

8

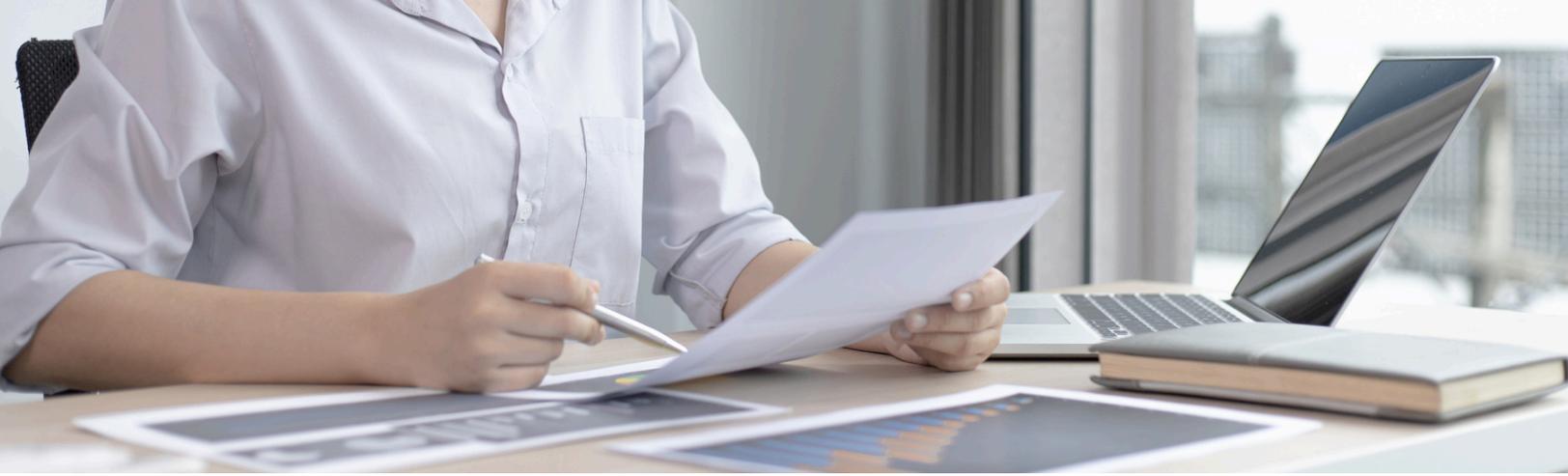
### **Conduct Inspections and Appraisal**

After your offer is accepted, schedule a home inspection and appraisal to verify the home's condition and value before finalizing the deal.

9

### **Close the Deal**

On closing day, sign all necessary documents, transfer funds, and receive the keys to your new home. Congratulations, you're now a homeowner!



# FINDING THE PERFECT HOME

---

01

I'll help you explore different options and stay organized during the search process:

## Online Listings

- I'll provide you with access to the most current listings, tailored to your preferences. You can search online, view virtual tours, and bookmark your favorites.

02

## Off-Market Opportunities

- Sometimes, the best properties aren't even listed yet. Thanks to my network, I can provide access to off-market homes that may not be publicly available.

03

## Open Houses and Showings

- I'll schedule showings for properties you're interested in and arrange private tours for homes not available during open houses.

*How I Can Help*

*My deep knowledge of the local market ensures that you'll have access to the best options, both on and off the market.*

# TOURING PROPERTIES

Visiting potential homes is an exciting step in the buying process, but it's important to stay focused on key factors that will impact your long-term satisfaction. As you tour each property, pay close attention to details such as the layout, condition, and neighborhood.



## Property Tour Checklist

*Taking notes and comparing homes will help you make a confident decision when it's time to choose the right one.*

<b>Property Details</b>	<b>Home 1</b>	<b>Home 2</b>	<b>Home 3</b>
<b>Address</b>			
<b>Price</b>			
<b>Number of Bedrooms</b>			
<b>Number of Bathrooms</b>			
<b>Square Footage</b>			
<b>Overall Condition</b>			
<b>Layout and Flow</b>			
<b>Natural Light</b>			
<b>Neighborhood</b>	[Quiet/Busy]	[Quiet/Busy]	[Quiet/Busy]
<b>Commute Distance</b>	[Short/Far]	[Short/Far]	[Short/Far]
<b>Yard/Outdoor Space</b>	[Spacious/Small]	[Spacious/Small]	[Spacious/Small]
<b>Notable Features</b>			
<b>First Impressions</b>			

# MAKING AN OFFER

## Step 1

### Set an Offer Price

- **Review Comparable Sales:** Look at recent sales of similar properties in the same area (often called “comps”) to get a sense of market value.
- **Assess Market Conditions:** In a buyer’s market, you may have room to offer below the asking price. In a seller’s market, you may need to bid above the list price to stay competitive.
- **Consider Your Budget:** Ensure that the offer fits within your budget, accounting for closing costs and potential future repairs.

## Step 2

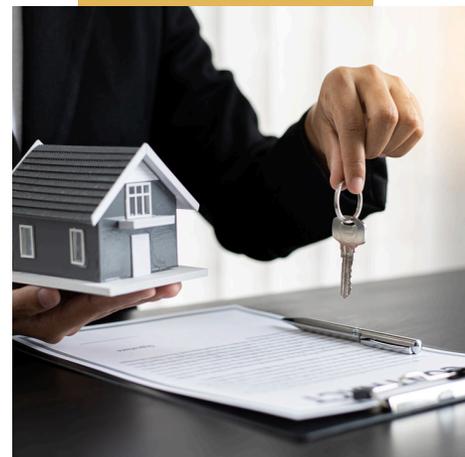
### Negotiate with Sellers

- **Start with a Reasonable Offer:** A fair initial offer shows the seller you’re serious and avoids low-ball bids that could jeopardize the deal.
- **Focus on Win-Win Solutions:** If the seller makes a counteroffer, stay flexible and look for compromises that satisfy both parties, such as adjusting the closing date or covering minor repairs.
- **Be Prepared to Walk Away:** If the seller’s demands exceed your budget or comfort zone, it’s okay to walk away. There are always other properties.

## Step 3

### Include Inspections and Financing Clauses

- **Home Inspection Contingency:** This gives you the right to inspect the property and request repairs or back out if major issues are discovered.
- **Financing Contingency:** Ensure that your offer is contingent on securing financing. If your loan falls through, this contingency allows you to back out without losing your deposit.
- **Appraisal Contingency:** In case the home is appraised below the agreed purchase price, this protects you from overpaying and gives you the option to renegotiate.





# CONTINGENCIES IN OFFERS

## *What is a Contingency?*

**A contingency** is a clause in your offer that outlines specific requirements or conditions that must be met before the sale can be completed. If these conditions are not satisfied, you have the right to cancel the contract without penalty or renegotiate the terms. Common contingencies include financing, inspections, and appraisals.

- **Financing Contingency**

Recommended When: You haven't secured a loan yet or are uncertain about final mortgage approval.

- **Home Inspection Contingency**

Recommended When: You want to confirm the property's condition and avoid costly surprises.

- **Appraisal Contingency**

Recommended When: You're concerned about overpaying for a property, especially in competitive markets.

- **Sale of Current Home Contingency**

Recommended When: You need the funds from your current home's sale to purchase the new property.

- **Title Contingency**

Recommended When: You want to ensure a clear title with no legal complications.

- **Home Sale or Possession Contingency**

Recommended When: You need to move in by a specific date due to employment, school, or personal reasons.



# HOME INSPECTIONS

## *Types of Inspections*

A **home inspection** is one of the most critical steps in the buying process, as it provides a detailed evaluation of the property's condition. It helps you identify potential issues and make an informed decision before finalizing the purchase. By hiring a certified inspector, you can protect your investment and avoid costly surprises after moving in.



## Hiring a Certified Inspector

A thorough inspection requires a certified, experienced inspector who knows what to look for and how to interpret their findings. Here's why hiring the right inspector matters:

- 1. Qualifications and Certifications:** Ensure your inspector is licensed and certified by a recognized body like the International Association of Certified Home Inspectors (InterNACHI) or the American Society of Home Inspectors (ASHI).
- 2. Experience:** Look for inspectors who have a strong track record and plenty of experience in your area, especially with the type of home you're buying.
- 3. Detailed Report:** A good inspector will provide a comprehensive report with clear, detailed descriptions of the home's condition, along with photos and recommendations for any necessary repairs or follow-up.

- **General Home Inspection**

This is the standard inspection where the inspector examines the home's structure, roof, plumbing, electrical systems, foundation, and major appliances.

- **Pest Inspection**

A pest inspection looks for signs of termites, rodents, and other pests that may cause damage to the property.

- **Mold Inspection**

This inspection identifies the presence of mold, which can pose health risks and indicate moisture issues within the home.

- **Radon and Asbestos Testing**

Some homes may require additional tests for harmful substances like radon gas or asbestos, particularly in older properties.

- **Sewer or Septic System Inspection**

If the property has a septic system or older plumbing, a specialized inspection will check for any issues related to sewage, drainage, and waste systems, preventing potential problems later on.

# HOME INSPECTOR

## *Contacts*

Inspector Name	Company	Phone	Email	License Number

# INSPECTION CHECKLIST

Item to Inspect	Condition (Good/Fair/Poor)	Comments/Notes
<i>Roof and Gutters</i>		
<i>Foundation</i>		
<i>Plumbing</i>		
<i>Electrical Systems</i>		
<i>Heating and Cooling (HVAC)</i>		
<i>Windows and Doors</i>		
<i>Appliances</i>		
<i>Insulation and Ventilation</i>		

# NEGOTIATING



**Negotiating the purchase of a home is a critical step in ensuring you get the best deal possible. By using smart strategies and staying flexible, you can secure favorable terms and pricing.**

*Here are four common negotiation strategies to keep in mind:*

1

## **Start with a Strong Initial Offer**

Tip: Base your offer on recent comparable sales (comps) and market conditions. If it's a seller's market, consider offering close to or even above the asking price if you really want the home.

2

## **Be Ready to Compromise**

Tip: Offer to be flexible on the closing date or other terms if the seller has specific needs (like a quick move-out). Sometimes non-financial factors can help secure the deal.

3

## **Use Contingencies Strategically**

Tip: If you're confident in the property, offering to waive minor contingencies (like cosmetic repairs) may make your offer stand out, especially in competitive markets.

4

## **Be Patient but Firm**

Tip: Always have a walk-away point. If the seller pushes beyond what you can afford or what's reasonable, be prepared to move on to the next property.

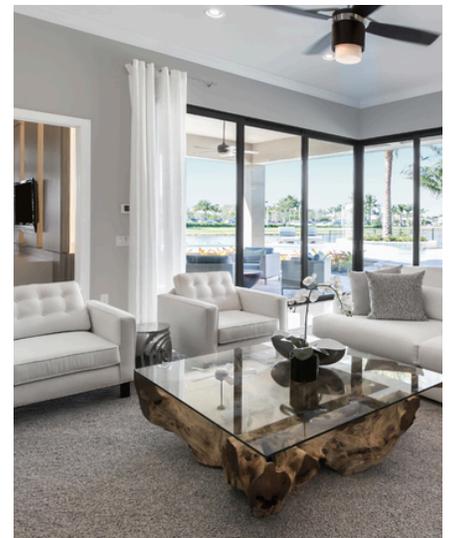
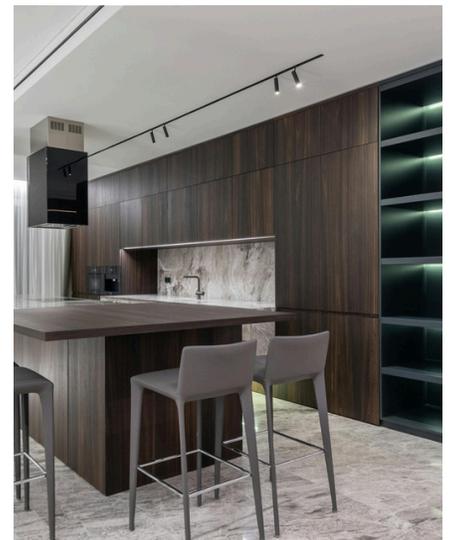
**THE KEY TO SUCCESSFUL NEGOTIATION IS NOT JUST ABOUT GETTING WHAT YOU WANT, BUT HELPING THE OTHER SIDE FEEL LIKE THEY'VE WON TOO.**

# UNDERSTANDING COUNTEROFFERS

When a seller makes a counteroffer, they're essentially rejecting your original offer and proposing new terms. Understanding how to respond effectively to counteroffers is key to keeping the negotiation on track.

## *What Is a Counteroffer?*

A **counteroffer** is the seller's response to your initial offer, suggesting changes to terms such as price, contingencies, or closing date. It's a negotiation tactic used to find common ground between buyer and seller.



### 1 Evaluate the Terms

Review the changes the seller has made in the counteroffer. Have they increased the price, adjusted the closing date, or removed contingencies? Consider whether the new terms align with your goals and budget.

### 2 Negotiate or Accept

You have several options:

- Accept the counteroffer as is.
- Reject the counteroffer.
- Make your own counteroffer, proposing changes to the seller's terms

### 3 Stick to Your Budget

Ensure the counteroffer stays within your budget. Even if you love the home, avoid overextending yourself financially.

### 4 Communicate Promptly

Respond quickly but thoughtfully. Delay in communication could give other buyers the chance to submit offers, potentially losing the deal.

**PRO TIP: A SKILLED REAL ESTATE AGENT CAN HELP YOU NAVIGATE COUNTEROFFERS BY PROVIDING EXPERT GUIDANCE ON WHEN TO PUSH BACK, WHEN TO ACCEPT, AND WHEN TO WALK AWAY. TRUST YOUR AGENT'S EXPERIENCE TO MAKE THE BEST DECISION.**



# UNDERSTANDING CLOSING COSTS

**Closing costs are the various fees and expenses that come with finalizing your home purchase. Typically, they range from 2% to 5% of the home's purchase price. Understanding these costs helps you prepare financially for the closing day.**

## *Breakdown of Typical Closing Costs*

- 1. Loan Origination Fee:** Charged by the lender for processing your loan (about 0.5%-1% of the loan amount).
- 2. Appraisal Fee:** The cost of having the home appraised to verify its value (usually \$300-\$500).
- 3. Title Insurance:** Protects you and the lender in case there's a legal issue with the title (\$500-\$1,000).
- 4. Home Inspection:** The cost of inspecting the home's condition before purchase (around \$300-\$600).
- 5. Property Taxes and Insurance:** Prorated amounts for the property taxes and homeowners insurance due at closing.
- 6. Attorney Fees:** In some states, attorney services are required for closing (\$500-\$1,500).
- 7. Recording Fees:** Paid to the county to record the transaction and legal documents (\$100-\$250).

## **Tips for Estimating Your Total Costs**

- *Get a Loan Estimate:* Your lender will provide a detailed estimate of your closing costs during the mortgage process.
- *Budget 2%-5% of the Purchase Price:* Use this range to set aside the right amount for closing.
- *Ask for Seller Contributions:* In some cases, you can negotiate for the seller to cover part of your closing costs.

# PREPARING FOR CLOSING DAY

## *What Happens on Closing Day?*



**Closing day** is the final step in the home buying process, where ownership of the property is officially transferred to you. On this day, you'll sign all necessary documents, pay closing costs, and receive the keys to your new home.

### **Overview of the Closing Process**

#### **1. Final Review of Documents**

You'll review and sign all the legal documents related to the sale, including the mortgage agreement, deed, and closing disclosure.

#### **2. Pay Closing Costs**

Your closing costs, which include fees for the lender, title company, and other services, will be paid at this time. The exact amount will be provided in your closing disclosure beforehand.

#### **3. Transfer of Ownership**

After signing the documents and completing the payment, the title company will record the sale, and the property ownership is officially transferred to you.

## *Documents to Bring and What to Expect*

- Government-issued ID:** You'll need valid identification for signing the legal documents.
- Wire Transfer Confirmation:** Ensure you have the necessary funds for closing costs and the down payment.
- Proof of Homeowners Insurance:** Your lender will require evidence that the home is insured before the deal is finalized.
- Closing Disclosure:** Review this document to ensure all fees and terms match your expectations.

*What to Expect: The process usually takes 1-2 hours. Once all paperwork is signed and funds are transferred, you'll receive the keys to your new home!*

# THE FINAL WALKTHROUGH

*The final walkthrough is your last opportunity to inspect the home before closing. This step ensures that the property is in the agreed-upon condition and that any repairs or changes the seller committed to have been completed.*



## Remove Seller's Personal Items

Confirm that all of the seller's personal belongings have been removed from the property unless otherwise agreed in the contract.



## Check Appliances and Utilities

Ensure that all major appliances are working, and verify that utilities such as electricity, water, and HVAC systems are functional.



## Confirm Repairs

Check that all repairs the seller agreed to in the contract have been completed to your satisfaction. Bring a copy of the inspection report and receipts for repairs, if applicable.



## Inspect for Damage

Walk through the entire property to make sure there's no new damage since your last visit. Pay attention to walls, floors, windows, and doors.

## *How to Address Last-Minute Issues with the Seller*

*If you discover any unresolved issues during the final walkthrough, it's important to address them immediately with your real estate agent. Some common solutions include:*

- **Requesting Escrow Funds:** You can ask the seller to put funds in escrow to cover the cost of any repairs not completed.
- **Delaying Closing:** In serious cases, you may request to delay closing until the issues are resolved.
- **Negotiating a Credit:** The seller may agree to give you a credit at closing to cover the cost of fixing any problems.

# MOVING AND SETTLING IN

*Moving into your new home is an exciting milestone, but it requires careful planning to ensure a smooth transition. Organizing your move, updating your address, and setting up utilities are essential tasks to handle before moving day. A well-prepared plan can make your move stress-free and efficient.*

## *Tips for Organizing Your Move*

- **Create a Moving Timeline**

Start by setting a moving date and creating a timeline for tasks such as packing, hiring movers, and scheduling utility connections. Begin packing non-essential items a few weeks in advance, and reserve moving services early.

- **Change Your Address**

Update your address with the post office, banks, insurance companies, and any subscription services. Don't forget to notify your employer and local government agencies (e.g., for driver's license or voter registration).

- **Set Up Utilities**

Ensure your utilities (electricity, water, gas, internet, and garbage services) are set up and ready before you move in. Contact utility providers at least a week in advance to schedule activation dates.

- **Declutter Before Packing**

Take this opportunity to declutter and donate or sell items you no longer need. It will make packing easier and reduce the load on moving day.

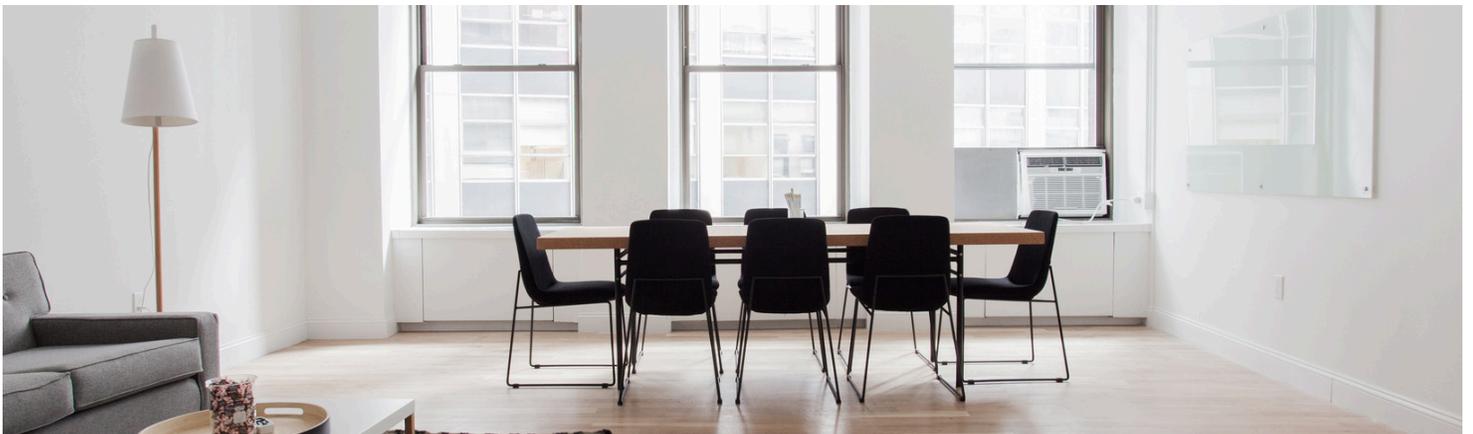
- **Label and Inventory Boxes**

Label each box with its contents and the room it belongs to. Keep an inventory list to track all your belongings and make unpacking more organized.



# MOVING PLAN

Task	Deadline [Date]	Status [Pending/Completed]
Book moving company		
Begin packing non-essentials		
Change address with post office		
Contact utility providers		
Declutter and donate items		
Pack essential items		



# UTILITY PROVIDERS

Utility	Provider	Phone	Service Start Date
Electricity			
Water			
Gas			
Internet/Cable			
Garbage/Recycling			

*Becoming a homeowner brings new responsibilities, including property taxes, regular maintenance, and securing homeowners insurance.*



# WHAT TO EXPECT AS A HOMEOWNER

## **Overview of Property Taxes, Maintenance, and Homeowners Insurance**

*Staying on top of these tasks will protect your investment and ensure your home remains in good condition for years to come. Here's what to expect as a homeowner.*

### **Property Taxes**

- Property taxes are levied by your local government based on your home's assessed value. These taxes fund community services such as schools, infrastructure, and emergency services. Make sure to budget for annual property tax payments, which may vary depending on your location.

### **Regular Maintenance**

- Owning a home requires ongoing maintenance to prevent costly repairs down the road. Routine tasks include cleaning gutters, servicing HVAC systems, inspecting the roof, and maintaining plumbing and electrical systems. Keep a schedule to stay organized and avoid neglected repairs.

### **Homeowners Insurance**

- Homeowners insurance protects your home and belongings in case of damage, theft, or natural disasters. It's essential to review your policy annually to ensure you have the right coverage based on the value of your home and its contents. You may also need to add specific coverage depending on your location (e.g., flood or sinkhole insurance).

# MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

Task	Frequency	Next Due Date	Status
HVAC System Inspection			
Roof Inspection			
Clean Gutters			
Check Smoke/CO2 Detectors			
Lawn and Garden Maintenance			
Plumbing and Electrical Checks			

# LOCAL PROPERTY TAX GUIDE

Property Tax Information	Details
Local Tax Office	
Annual Property Tax Rate	
Payment Due Date(s)	
Assessed Home Value	
How to Pay (Online, Mail, etc.)	



# HOW TO MANAGE MORTGAGE PAYMENTS

## Set Up Automatic Payments

One of the easiest ways to ensure you never miss a mortgage payment is to set up automatic payments through your bank. This guarantees your payments are made on time, preventing late fees and protecting your credit score.

## Create a Payment Schedule

Keep a record of your mortgage payment dates and track how much of each payment goes toward the principal and interest. Understanding how your loan amortizes over time can help you plan for future financial goals, such as paying off your mortgage early.

## Plan for Extra Payments

Making extra payments toward your mortgage principal can help you reduce the overall interest paid and shorten the loan term. Even small additional payments can make a significant difference over time.

## *Options for Refinancing in the Future*

*Refinancing your mortgage is a great way to reduce your monthly payments, secure a lower interest rate, or change your loan term. Here are some reasons to consider refinancing:*

- **Lower Interest Rates:** Refinancing can reduce monthly payments and overall loan costs if rates have dropped.
- **Shorten the Loan Term:** While monthly payments may rise, this option allows for faster mortgage payoff and interest savings.
- **Switch to a Fixed-Rate Mortgage:** Refinancing from an adjustable-rate mortgage to a fixed-rate offers payment stability and protection from interest rate increases.

# MORTGAGE DETAILS

Mortgage Details	Information
Loan Amount	
Interest Rate	
Loan Term (Years)	
Monthly Payment	
Start Date of Loan	
Current Balance	

## PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Payment Date	Amount Paid	Principal	Interest	Balance

## REFINANCING PLANS

Refinancing Option	Current Rates	Goal
Lower Interest Rate		
Shorten Loan Term		
Switch to Fixed-Rate Mortgage		



# HOME INSURANCE

## *Importance of Home Insurance*

*Owning a home is one of the most significant investments you'll make, and protecting it is essential. Homeowners insurance provides a financial safety net in case of damage, theft, or natural disasters.*

### **1. Protection from Damage**

Home insurance covers damages from events like fires, storms, or vandalism. This coverage helps pay for repairs or rebuilds, ensuring you aren't left with high out-of-pocket costs.

### **2. Coverage for Personal Belongings**

In addition to protecting the structure of your home, insurance covers personal property inside, such as furniture, appliances, and electronics, in case of theft or damage.



### **3. Liability Coverage**

If someone is injured on your property, liability coverage can protect you from lawsuits by covering medical expenses and legal fees.

### **4. Special Coverage**

Depending on your location, you may need additional coverage for events not included in standard policies, such as floods or earthquakes. It's important to evaluate these risks and choose the appropriate riders for your policy.

# CHOOSING THE RIGHT COVERAGE

When selecting a homeowners insurance policy, consider the following factors:

- **Replacement Cost vs. Actual Cash Value**

Choose between replacement cost coverage, which covers the cost to rebuild or repair at current market prices, or actual cash value, which accounts for depreciation. Replacement cost is typically recommended to avoid gaps in coverage.

- **Deductibles**

The deductible is the amount you'll need to pay out-of-pocket before your insurance kicks in. Opt for a deductible that balances affordability with the ability to make claims when necessary.

- **Policy Limits**

Ensure your policy covers the full value of your home and belongings. You may need to increase your policy limits if you own high-value items, such as jewelry or art.

- **Bundling Discounts**

Many insurance companies offer discounts if you bundle homeowners insurance with other policies like auto insurance, which can save you money.



## Home Insurance Provider Comparison

Insurance Provider	Coverage Type	Annual Premium	Deductible	Liability Coverage	Special Coverage	Bundling Discount
[Provider 1]	Replacement Cost	[Enter Amount]	[Enter Amount]	[Enter Amount]	[Flood, Earthquake]	[Yes/No]
[Provider 2]	Actual Cash Value	[Enter Amount]	[Enter Amount]	[Enter Amount]	[Flood, Earthquake]	[Yes/No]
[Provider 3]	Replacement Cost	[Enter Amount]	[Enter Amount]	[Enter Amount]	[Flood, Earthquake]	[Yes/No]

# KEY REAL ESTATE TERMS

## *You Should Know*

### **Escrow**

A third-party account that holds funds or documents on behalf of the buyer and seller until all conditions of the sale are met. Once the deal is finalized, the funds are released to the appropriate parties.

### **Earnest Money**

A deposit made by the buyer to show their commitment to purchasing the home. If the deal goes through, it's applied toward the down payment. If the buyer backs out without a valid reason, the seller may keep the deposit.

### **Appraisal**

A professional evaluation of the property's market value, usually required by lenders to ensure the home's value matches the loan amount being requested.

### **Closing Costs**

Fees and expenses paid at the final stage of a real estate transaction. These costs typically include loan origination fees, title insurance, attorney fees, and recording fees.

### **Contingency**

A condition included in the purchase contract that must be met for the sale to proceed. Common contingencies include financing, home inspection, and appraisal contingencies.

### **Title Insurance**

A type of insurance that protects both the buyer and lender from any claims or disputes regarding the ownership of the property.

### **Mortgage Rate**

The interest rate charged by the lender on your mortgage. This can be fixed (the same rate for the entire loan term) or adjustable (the rate can change over time).

### **Homeowners Association (HOA)**

An organization in some residential communities that enforces rules and maintains common areas. If applicable, homeowners are required to pay HOA fees, which are used for community upkeep and improvements.

Larry Pleis



Lori and her team are THE BEST! She has sold and helped buy multiple properties for our family, friends and military personnel assigned to MacDill AFB. As retired military, we have moved 16 times and our last couple with Lori's assistance have unquestionably been our smoothest. She takes care of every detail before, during and after the closing to include contractor referrals, warranty and tax recommendations. I would and do unhesitatingly refer her to everyone in the real estate market. The BEST!

Matthew McCutchen



Lori was a tremendous help to my family when we purchased our new home. She helped us sell our home very quickly at a price over what we were hoping for, and was then with us every step of the way through the buying process. To say she is a consummate professional is an understatement. Lori was extremely accessible and responsive, answering questions and returning texts/calls even while on vacation! She was able to refer us to inspectors, lenders, painters, etc. that she knew and trusted so we were never worried about being taken advantage of. It is clear that she loves what she does and that her focus is on what is best for her clients. We absolutely love our home but if we need to move again for some reason in the future, Lori will be the first person we call. Highly recommend!

Ann

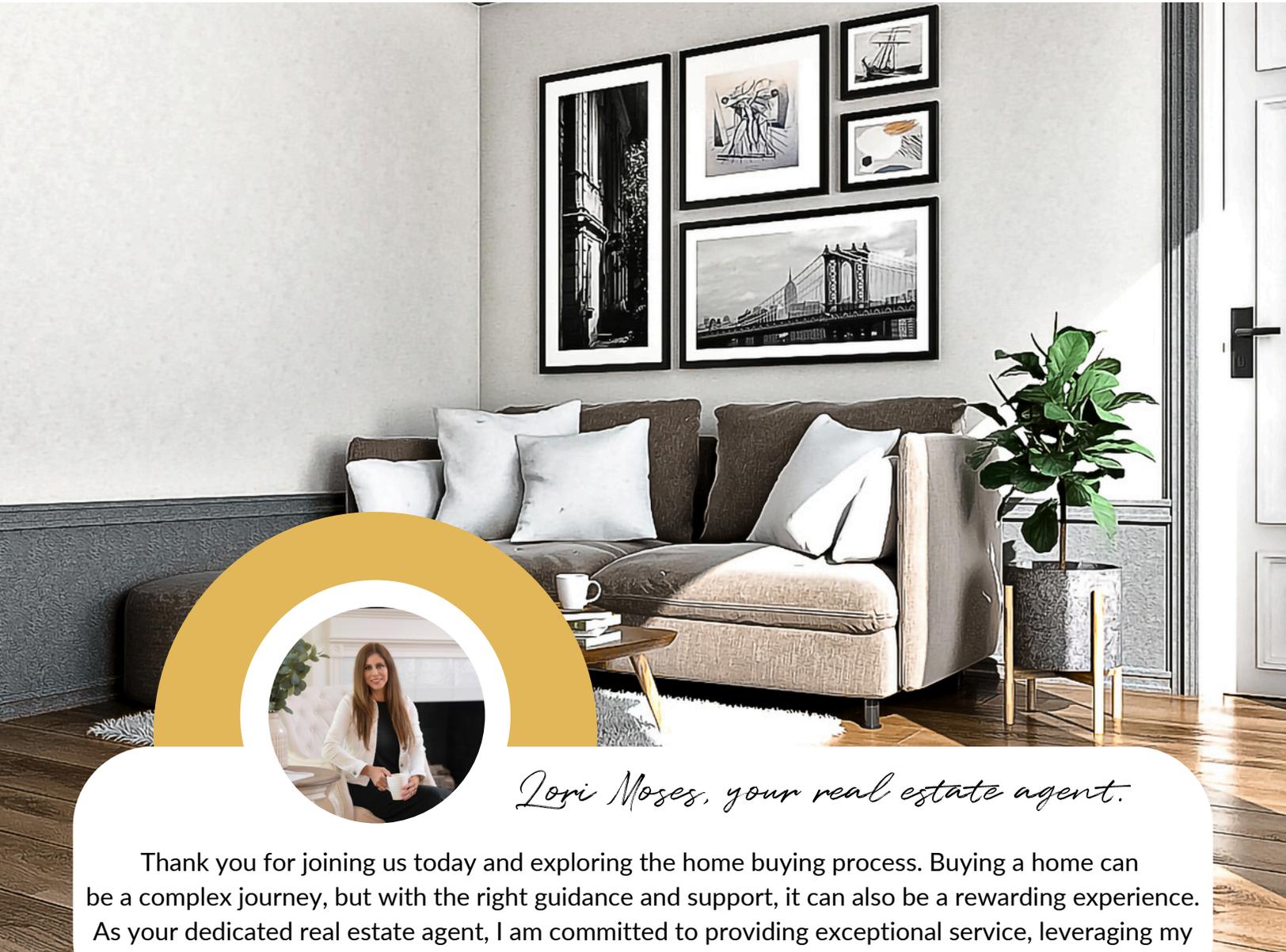


Lori was recommended to us by a friend in the summer of 2020. We were still relatively new to Tampa and weren't familiar with the neighborhoods best suited to raise our young family. Lori took time to work with us to find a neighborhood and home with all our wishes. She even went beyond to anticipate things we didn't even think of wanting or needing in a Florida home! Additionally, she made the buying process as seamless as possible. We are coming up on 3 years in our home and Lori to this day gives us referrals for contractors and other services. Her team is really one of the best experiences we've had since moving to Florida! If the time comes to look for a new home, I would only trust Lori and team!

# SOME OF OUR REVIEWS



# GUIDING YOUR JOURNEY HOME, STEP BY STEP



*Lori Moses, your real estate agent.*

Thank you for joining us today and exploring the home buying process. Buying a home can be a complex journey, but with the right guidance and support, it can also be a rewarding experience. As your dedicated real estate agent, I am committed to providing exceptional service, leveraging my expertise, and guiding you every step of the way.

*Reach out to me to discuss your real estate goals and how I can assist you in achieving them.*

## CONTACT DETAILS

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