CENTRAL VIRGINIA FIRST-TIME BUYER STARTER KIT

The 7-Step Buying Roadmap with the Marjorie Adam Team

Your Step-by-Step Guide to Homeownership in Charlottesville & Albemarle County

Buying your first home is exciting and it can feel like a lot. This guide is designed to make the process clear, local-market informed, and easy to follow, with a roadmap you can reference from your first conversation through closing day.

Use this as your high-level plan. Each step builds confidence and reduces surprises when you buy in the Charlottesville & Albemarle County market.

- **Step 1 Your Buyer Strategy Call Or In Person Meeting:** Align on your timeline, must-haves, price comfort zone, and what “winning” looks like for you in today’s market. We clarify buyer agency and sign the buyer agency agreement.
- **Step 2 Lender Pre-Approval:** Learn loan options and confirm your down payment, closing costs and monthly payment range so you can shop with clarity.
- **Step 3 Home Search Plan:** Build a home search based on location, lifestyle, commute, and resale considerations, then set up alerts that match when new listings come on the market.
- **Step 4 Touring Homes:** Tour homes and neighborhoods.
- **Step 5 Offer Strategy:** Price, terms, and timelines matter. We’ll craft an offer that fits your goals and the property’s market value.
- **Step 6 Under Contract, Inspections and Loan Commitment:** Negotiate repairs or credits when appropriate and keep you informed of the process to keep things moving smoothly to protect your interests.
- **Step 7 Closing & Keys:** Final walkthrough, attend your closing, and celebrate when you get the keys.

Local-market tip: In Charlottesville & Albemarle County, preparation and timing matter. The strongest first-time buyers aren’t just “ready to shop”. They’re ready to make a confident decision quickly when the right home appears.

Local Financial Snapshot & Cost Estimates

Use this as a starting point for budgeting. Actual costs vary by loan type.

Item	Typical range (Central VA)	What to expect
Home price reality in our area	$300k–$650k (common first-time buyer targets)	Price varies by location, neighborhood, and renovation level.
Down payment	0%–5% (some programs) or 10%–20% (traditional)	Talk through options early; the “right” number depends on your monthly comfort.
Closing costs	~2%–3% of purchase price	Includes lender fees, title work, prepaid items, and escrows (varies by loan).
Earnest money deposit	$2,000–$10,000+ (often 1%–3%)	Shows good faith; typically credited toward closing if you move forward.
Home inspection	$600–$850	Larger homes cost more; optional add-ons like radon tests can apply.
Appraisal	$500–$800	Ordered by the lender; required for most financed purchases.
Moving + first-month setup	$500–$3,000+	Truck/movers, utility deposits, locks, small fixes, and immediate must-dos.
Monthly ownership costs	Payment + taxes + insurance + HOA (if any)	Lender will help you estimate total monthly cost so there are no surprises.

Planning tip: If you’re unsure where to start, aim for: **down payment + closing costs + a small cushion** for inspection repairs and first-month expenses.

First-Time Buyer Neighborhoods & Price Realities

The greater Charlottesville area has great options at different price points. Your best fit will come down to price point, commute, lifestyle, and renovation tolerance or needs.

Area	Typical first-time buyer "feel"	Price reality	Good to know
Charlottesville (City)	Walkability, restaurants, campus-adjacent energy	Often higher per square foot; smaller homes/condos compete fast	Condition and parking can matter as much as bedrooms.
Albemarle (near city)	More space, neighborhoods, still close-in	Wide spread depending on school zones and acreage	HOAs and newer-build premiums can show up in monthly costs.
Crozet	Planned communities + mountain views + small-town vibe	Newer construction pushes pricing; resale moves quickly	Strong demand—be ready with a clear "must-have" list.
Hollymead townhouses Forest Lakes	Convenience, neighborhood amenities, easy commuter routes	Often competitive; turnkey homes command top dollar	Factor in HOA fees and amenity value for your lifestyle.
Pantops Rio Route 29 corridor	Access to shopping, medical, commuting	Condos/townhomes are a strong entry point, but condos have higher monthly fees	Pay attention to HOA rules (rentals, pets, parking) and monthly condo fees.

Reality check: In the most competitive pockets, the best "deal" for you is the home that fits your budget *and* your inspection/repair comfort level, not necessarily the lowest list price.

- **Pick your top 2–3 priorities** (ex: shorter commute, turnkey condition, yard space, walkable amenities).
- **Match priorities to realistic inventory** for your budget and timing.
- **Be ready to trade one thing for another** (ex: size vs. location, updates vs. price).

The Marjorie Adam Team Advantage

You'll feel supported from first conversation to closing with a plan that's clear, local, and tailored to how you want to live.

- **Hyper-local guidance:** pricing nuances, neighborhood feel, and what to watch for on specific streets and communities.
- **Smart strategy:** offer terms, timelines, inspection planning, and negotiation that protects your priorities and money.
- **Strong communication:** fast responses, clear next steps, and no mystery about where you are in the process.
- **Trusted connections:** reputable local lenders, inspectors, and contractors when you need them (and no pressure to use anyone).
- **Calm, confident advocacy:** we keep momentum without rushing you into the wrong home.

What this means for you: fewer surprises, clearer decisions, and a smoother path to keys-in-hand.

Ready to take the next step?

Whether you're browsing, pre-approved, or somewhere in between, we'll help you map a realistic plan for your timeline and budget.

Start here: marjorieadamteam.com/buyers

Call: (434) 326-1881

Email: marjorie@marjorieadamteam.com