

Your HOME BUYING Checklist



If you're thinking about buying a home, it's important to do your homework before making the big purchase. This list will get you started on the right foot and help you find the home of your dreams.

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

Can you live with most imperfections in a home if you love where you're living? Consider the house's proximity to your workplace, the charm of the neighborhood, access to parks, shopping opportunities and other things that matter to you.

THE SITE

Scale down your view to just where the house sits. What's the surrounding scenery like? Do neighbors' windows look into your bedroom? Does it have the right size yard? Is it accessible for your needs?

CURB APPEAL

The home's view from the street is the first thing you and your guests will see, so make sure it reflects who you are and what you're looking for.

THE COMMUNITY

The perfect house can be made into a nightmare by an overbearing homeowners' association. Read the bylaws carefully to assure their rules align with your lifestyle. Also, be aware of your neighbors. If you're single and moving into a community full of young families, it may be harder to find your people.

THE FLOOR PLAN

How many rooms do you realistically need? If you're living alone, you probably don't need four bedrooms, but if the whole family is moving in, you'll want to make sure there's enough bathroom space.

THE KITCHEN

Your kitchen space is the heart of your home. If you love to cook Thanksgiving meals, make sure you have enough counter space and updated appliances. If you're happy just making meals for one, opt for a smaller kitchen with appliances that aren't the latest but still get the job done.

CLOSETS AND STORAGE

If you're a shoe enthusiast, or need to store all the kids' sports equipment, pay attention to the capacity of closets and other storage space. You don't want to be stuck without a place for your favorite things in your new home.

FINISHING TOUCHES

Installed moldings, hardware and fireplaces can make the simplest homes look spectacular. If these elements matter to you, look for homes that include them or have the potential to add on.

Your home should be perfect for you and your budget. If a small kitchen is worth a pool in the backyard, you can make that decision for yourself. The most important quality to look for is a place that will make you happy.