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# HOME BUYING GUIDE 2017

**When shopping for a home, you might find yourself jumping in without a plan to just “look.” That’s great, but you should at least have an idea of the process so you don’t find yourself making a purchase you soon regret.**

Spring is a popular time for people to begin their home buying search and possibly purchase. If this is your first time or you’re just nervous about change, this guide can help to ease your thoughts.

Inside of this document, we have tips, a calendar timeline, and a checklist of signs to look for that might signal issues with the home.

On our blog, we have a post with even more tips and things to keep in mind when house hunting.

Good luck and remember if you find a house, American Heritage Insurance Group offers comparative rates from over 20 different agencies. Call today for your free quote!



# HOME BUYING TIMELINE

## 6 MONTHS BEFORE THE FINAL PURCHASE

### ASSESS YOUR SITUATION

Make sure your taxes are filed. Organize, record and reassess any major financial purchases made in the past year.

Request your credit report from Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion. If you see any issues fix them immediately because a bad credit score could mean you lose the opportunity to purchase your home.

## 3 MONTHS BEFORE THE FINAL PURCHASE

### START LOOKING FOR HOMES ONLINE

Begin to create a list of must haves and bonus items. Write down and agree on price ranges, school districts, type of home, location, etc.

### GET PRE-APPROVED

Begin researching and shopping for different mortgage quotes. See which lender can offer you perks that will make the process run smoothly. It's recommended that you do this before you begin to view houses and are close to a decision. It helps you to know what you can afford and what you will be paying. Typically, lenders will give you a pre-approved amount. This is what you should base your max budget on.

### FIND A GREAT REAL ESTATE AGENT

If you don't have the time or want to use someone who knows the business and can handle things for you, look into a real estate agent. Do your research and ask for recommendations and read online reviews.

### ATTEND OPEN HOUSES OR GO ON HOME TOURS

## 1 MONTH BEFORE THE FINAL PURCHASE

### MAKE AN OFFER

### SUBMIT OR RE-SUBMIT YOUR PRE-APPROVAL APPLICATION

Even if you were pre-approved, those only last 60 - 90 days. If you're past that deadline, make sure you take care of re-submitting your application.

### ENTER MUTUAL ACCEPTANCE & THE CLOSING PROCESS

Before having an inspector, take the time to review the seller disclosure forms, review the ownership history and title, and then schedule the inspector.

## 3 WEEKS BEFORE THE FINAL PURCHASE

### LINE UP AN INSPECTOR

If you aren't sure who to have inspect the house, ask your agent or family and friends for a recommendation.

### GET THE KEYS

### CLOSING DAY!

Today is the day you get the keys! Bring your driver's license or a government issue ID. You will also need to bring payment for closing costs.

# SIGNS THAT COULD MEAN TROUBLE

## FOUNDATION

- Visible Exterior Cracks
- Visible Driveway / Sidewalk Cracks
- Drainage Not Pointed Away from House
- Yard Slopes Towards House
- Cracks in Walls
- Floors Not Level
- Windows Not Square
- Wall Corners Not Square
- Gaps on Top of Doors When Closed
- Doors Jam or Won't Close

## WATER OR MOLD

- Bowed Roof
- Water Stains on Walls, Floor, or Ceiling
- Cracks around Windows
- Visible Mold
- Musty Smell
- Missing Caulking in Showers/Tubs
- No Bathroom Vents
- Wood Rot
- Peeling Paint
- Leaky Faucets, Bath or Toilets

## ROOF

- Curled, Warped or Missing Shingles
- Mismatched Roof Sections/Repairs
- Ceiling Stains
- Ceiling Replacement Seams

## ELECTRICAL

- Exposed Wires
- Wires with Electrical Tape
- Warm Outlets
- Flickering Lights
- Main Panel is Rusty or Damaged

## PLUMBING

- Water Stains Under Sinks
- Stains Around Toilets
- Poor Water Pressure
- Noises When Turning Off & On
- Drains Empty Slowly
- Foul Odor from Sink

Sources: [Trulia Home Buying](#), [Redfin Home Buying Timeline](#), [HouseMix](#).

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