



## The 16 Critical Steps Of Buying A Home

*Buying a home is one of the largest purchases a person can make during their lifetime. We just made it easier for you with this handy checklist!*

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Being a homeowner has always been an important aspect of the American dream. Buying property is an investment many people are willing to make.

After you have assessed your financial capabilities\* for owning a home and you are ready to build your own equity and stop paying rent, you can use the following checklist as a guide to buying your own home.

1. Find an area you want to live in or own property for years to come
2. Research prices in the area and determine if you can afford property there
3. Set up a phone call with a mortgage broker to see what kind of loan you can receive
4. Gather all of the necessary documentation you will need for getting approved for a

loan

5. Receive your pre-approval letter from a broker that will be good for 120 days
6. Find a real estate agent to help you find the right home you are looking for and get you the best deal possible
7. Schedule showings with your agent for properties you are interested in owning
8. Compare and contrast your showings
9. Once you find the home of your dreams, you will be ready to make an offer
10. Have your agent compare the seller's offer with market prices
11. Decide on the price, closing date and deposit amount you want offer to the seller
12. Sign the contract and present your offer
13. Negotiate with the seller on price for the home
14. Hire a home inspector and an attorney to help you close the deal (or back out and repeat steps 7-13!)
15. Make the final walk through your dream home
16. Close! Now you are officially a homeowner

\*Before any of these steps, ask yourself if you are financially capable of owning a home. Since homes are also one of the biggest non-liquid assets you will purchase, you will need to have an emergency fund to cover your living costs currently for at least three to six months and enough to make a significant down payment. Consider if you have a track record of sticking to a budget and research what options you have with credit or loans. Just because someone will loan you the money, doesn't mean you can afford it. Consult with a banker or mortgage broker, but also the people you trust within your circle.

Prospective homeowners should also keep in mind the extra costs and variable costs associated with purchasing a home. Your insurance and property taxes and can change at any time and the cost of maintenance--whether planned or unplanned--can add thousands of dollars on top of what you are regularly paying. Homeowners need to be aware of the financial risk of their investment and the potential life events that may cause you to move or want a different type of property.