

Your Roanoke Valley Home Buying Guide

A clear plan from first conversation to keys in hand.

Roanoke, Salem, Vinton, Bedford, Botetourt and Smith Mountain Lake

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A home search is more than a list of listings.

The right plan helps you protect your money, use your time well and make decisions with fewer surprises. My job is to listen, help you compare homes in context, point out what is worth investigating, and keep every deadline moving from offer to closing.



What you can expect

01

Listening first

We start with your routine, budget and priorities.

02

Local context

Roanoke, Salem, Bedford and the lake each live differently.

03

Clear tradeoffs

I explain the options; you make the decision.

04

Written agreement up front

We review a buyer representation agreement before touring homes together.

The goal: not just getting under contract, but closing on a home that still makes sense after the excitement wears off.

STEP 1

Know your comfortable number.



Preapproval is a ceiling, not a target. What a lender approves and what feels comfortable can be very different.

01

Monthly payment

principal and interest plus property taxes, homeowners insurance, mortgage insurance if it applies, HOA or condo fees.

02

Cash to close

down payment, lender and settlement costs, inspections, appraisal, prepaid items, moving costs, and a reserve after closing.

03

Ownership costs

utilities, maintenance, repairs and future projects continue after the keys are yours.

04

Your buffer

do not build a plan that requires everything to go perfectly.

Ask your lender for a Loan Estimate. Compare the projected payment, closing costs and cash to close, not just the advertised rate.

STEP 2

Choose financing before the house chooses you.



01 Compare more than one lender

programs, fees, communication and closing reliability vary; ask for written estimates.

02 Look into assistance

Virginia Housing offers a Down Payment Assistance Grant for eligible first-time buyers, generally 2 to 2.5 percent of the purchase price, that does not have to be repaid; it must be paired with a Virginia Housing loan, and income limits, price limits and homebuyer education apply.

03 Avoid surprises

before closing, talk with your lender before opening credit, changing jobs, moving money or making a large purchase.

Questions to ask a lender

- What is my estimated total monthly payment?
- What is my estimated cash to close?
- Is my rate locked, and until when?
- Which fees can change?
- Which assistance programs might I qualify for?
- What could delay underwriting or closing?

Loan programs, income limits and assistance amounts change. Confirm current terms with a Virginia Housing-approved lender.

STEP

3

Build a search that reflects real life.



The useful question is not
'What is my dream home?'
It is 'Which choices matter most,
and where am I willing to compromise?'

Must-haves	Preferences	Deal-breakers

Check the location, not just the house

- Drive your commute at your real travel time
- Visit at different times of day
- For lake and rural homes ask about road access, internet availability, public water vs well, sewer vs septic, and association rules
- Confirm taxes and school assignments directly with the locality



A custom MLS search alert keeps you informed without burying you in homes that never fit.

STEP 4

Tour the home. Inspect the decision.



Finishes create the first impression. Condition, location and long-term fit decide whether a home deserves an offer.

1 Outside



- drainage, grading, roof, siding, windows, trees, driveway

2 Systems



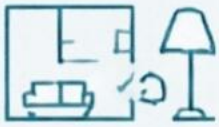
- heating and cooling age, electrical panel, plumbing clues, water heater

3 Structure and moisture



- foundation movement, crawl space, attic, odors, stains

4 Function



- room sizes, storage, flow, natural light, parking

5 Property context



- lot position, road noise, future development, HOA rules, resale factors

6 Questions



- permits, repairs, insurance considerations, what a specialist should evaluate



A showing is not an inspection. The goal of a tour is to decide whether a home is worth the time, money and risk of an offer and a professional inspection.

STEP 5

Write the whole offer, not just the price.



01 Price

recent comparable sales, current competition and condition.

02 Earnest money

a deposit that is generally credited to you at closing.

03 Contingencies

inspection, financing and appraisal, with deadlines.

04 Timing

closing date and possession.

05 Seller contributions

requests that affect the seller's net.

06 Your limit

the point where winning the house would no longer feel like a good decision.

> The highest price is not automatically the strongest offer. Clean terms, reliable financing and workable timing matter too. The seller may accept, reject or counter, and we will work through the options together.

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VIRGINIA FOCUS

What to know before you sign..



Disclosure

Virginia sellers provide a Residential Property Disclosure Statement or a disclaimer, and Virginia is widely described as a buyer beware state, so your inspections matter more here than in many states.

Inspections

under a typical Virginia contract, your inspection, financing and appraisal contingencies set your deadlines and options; repairs are negotiated, not automatic.

Your choice of settlement agent

in Virginia the buyer chooses the settlement agent, which may be an attorney, title company or other licensed settlement agent; only an attorney can give legal advice.

Older homes

homes built before 1978 come with a federal lead-based paint disclosure.

> **Your signed contract controls. This guide is educational, not legal or financial advice.**

STEP 6

From contract to closing.

1. **Immediately**
   deliver earnest money, confirm lender and settlement agent, schedule inspections.

2. **Early**
   complete general and specialty inspections (radon, pests, well water, septic as needed) and get homeowners insurance quotes.

3. **Before your contingency deadlines**
   decide what to request, negotiate, and whether to proceed.

4. **Financing and appraisal**
   respond quickly to lender requests; an appraisal is different from an inspection.

5. **Before closing**
   review your Closing Disclosure, arrange utilities, verify funds, do the final walkthrough.

6. **Closing and recording**
   sign with the settlement agent; ownership follows the contract and recording.



YOUR VIRGINIA CLOSING COSTS

plus wire fraud



Typical buyer costs

- lender fees
- appraisal and inspections
- title insurance and settlement fees
- Virginia recordation tax
- prepaid items (insurance and escrows)

Virginia recordation tax:
25 cents per $100 on the deed and 25 cents per $100 on your loan's deed of trust, plus any local tax. Example: on a $250,000 purchase with 3.5 percent down, about $625 on the deed and about $603 on the loan. The seller customary pays the grantor's tax, but who pays what is negotiable in the contract.

Protect your closing funds

Before wiring money, call your settlement company using a phone number you verified independently. If you get a message changing payment instructions, stop and verify by phone. Never rely on contact details in an unexpected email.

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STAY GROUNDED

When to pause, renegotiate or walk away.

Pause and investigate

- the problem is not yet understood (get the right specialist)
- the cost is unclear (get estimates)
- the loan changes (ask the lender to explain)

Consider walking away

the risk exceeds your limit

the facts no longer fit your plan

the deadline is arriving without answers

Walking away is not failure when it protects you from a deal that no longer makes sense.

KEEP THIS PAGE



Buyer checklist

BEFORE SEARCHING

- [ ] define a comfortable payment and reserve
- [ ] compare lenders and get a documented preapproval
- [ ] list must-haves, preferences and deal-breakers

BEFORE OFFERING

- [ ] review comparable sales and competition
- [ ] understand contingencies, deadlines and earnest money
- [ ] choose price, terms and your limit together

UNDER CONTRACT

- [ ] deliver deposits and schedule inspections
- [ ] keep financing and appraisal moving
- [ ] track every deadline

BEFORE CLOSING

- [ ] review final loan terms and cash to close
- [ ] confirm insurance and utilities
- [ ] final walkthrough
- [ ] verify wire instructions by phone

KIND WORDS

Meet Leslie

★★★★★

"Leslie was on top of everything to do with our recent home purchase."

— Jana Vail

★★★★★

"Leslie kept us informed at every step, which made the whole experience stress-free."

— John Bratton

★★★★★

"Leslie was extremely helpful through the buying process, with a great knowledge of each property visited."

— James Ingle



Meet Leslie

I've called the Roanoke Valley home for more than 30 years. I listen first, bring local knowledge, and help you weigh the tradeoffs so you can choose with confidence.

ABR, AHWD, PMN