Your Guide to Homeownership

Mtz Property Group

Buying a home usually takes about 30 days from accepted offer to keys. Done right, it's smooth. Rushed or unprepared, it gets expensive. Here's exactly how it works.

Step 1: Get Ready

- Sign a Buyer Representation Agreement with your agent
- Get fully pre-approved with a lender
- Set your budget, move-in date, area, and HOA/flood preferences
- Split your must-haves from your nice-to-haves

Once you're approved, we get on a call and lock in your criteria. I only show homes that fit your criteria and your budget. Nothing outside of that. We don't waste your time or ours.

Protect your loan until it funds. No new credit. No big purchases. No job changes. No co-signing.

Step 2: Make an Offer

You'll need your pre-approval letter. Sellers want proof you can buy.

Once your offer is accepted, these go to the title company (the neutral third party) within 3 days:

- **Option fee:** $100 to $300
- **Earnest money:** 1% to 2% of the price, credited back to you at closing

A strong offer isn't just price. It's clean, fast, and certain.

Step 3: Option Period (Days 1 to 7)

This is your protection window to inspect and negotiate.

- **Inspection ($350 to $600):** optional, but strongly recommended. Covers foundation, roof, plumbing, electrical, HVAC, structure, windows, doors, and appliances.

- Major issues give us leverage. Cosmetic stuff is normal on resale homes.
- You can walk away during this window and get your earnest money back.

No inspection = no leverage later.

Step 4: Lender Requirements

- **Appraisal ($450 to $700):** confirms the home is worth the price. If it comes in low, we renegotiate, adjust terms, cover the gap, or walk.
- **Survey ($400 to $600):** confirms boundaries. If the seller has one that lender and title approve, you skip this cost.
- **Homeowners insurance:** required before closing. Get quotes early, because it directly affects your monthly payment. This is not the same as mortgage insurance.

The Timeline

When	What happens
Day 1	Offer accepted
Days 1 to 3	Option fee and earnest money to title
Days 1 to 7	Inspection and negotiation
Days 7 to 14	Appraisal ordered
Days 14 to 25	Underwriting and document review
3 to 5 days out	Final walkthrough, cash to close
Closing day	Sign, fund, get your keys

Most delays come from slow paperwork or credit changes. Send your lender what they ask for, fast.

Buying New Construction?

Same game plan, different route. Everything above about getting pre-approved and protecting your loan still applies. Here's what changes:

- **Bring us on your first visit.** Most builders require your agent to register you at your very first visit to the model or sales office. Walk in alone and you could lose your representation.
- **Builder contract, not a standard resale contract.** Builders write their own terms and usually don't offer a typical option period. We review everything before you sign.
- **Earnest money can be lower.** Depending on the builder, it can be as low as $200. Some require more depending on which route we go, like a move-in ready home vs. building from scratch or adding upgrades.
- **Preferred lender incentives.** Builders often offer closing cost help or rate buydowns for using their lender. We compare the numbers so you know it's actually a good deal.
- **Still get it inspected.** New doesn't mean perfect. We recommend a pre-drywall inspection (if building), a final inspection before closing, and a warranty inspection before your 1-year builder warranty runs out.
- **Timeline depends on the home.** Move-in ready homes can close in about 30 to 60 days. Building from scratch can take several months.

Closing Day

Bring a valid ID. Signing takes 30 to 60 minutes, but plan to take the day off in case of delays. Once the lender funds, the keys are yours.

Typical Out-of-Pocket Costs

Item	Typical cost
Earnest money	1% to 2% (new construction can be as low as $200)
Option fee	$100 to $300 (resale)
Inspection	$350 to $600
Appraisal	$450 to $700
Survey	$400 to $600
Closing costs	2% to 3% of loan amount (lender, title, prepaids)

Money you pay up front isn't extra. Your earnest money, option fee, and the appraisal and survey (if you paid for them) all get credited toward your closing costs at closing. Your lender will send a Loan Estimate early so you know your numbers up front.

Ready to get started? Reach out to schedule your buyer consultation.

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