

AN INFORMED HOME BUYER'S GUIDE

7 Steps to Home Buying Success Today

Jane Crowley & Tim Wargel

Packing Like a Pro

This may seem hard to believe, but many people thoroughly enjoy their moving day and the time leading up to it. The secret? Being organized. Make sure you have the right tools—packing tape, permanent markers, sticky notes, and having lots of boxes on hand will make your move much easier. Start early and work steadily. Make progress every day with your packing instead of leaving it all until the last minute.

- Develop a master "packing/to do" list so you won't forget something critical.
- Purge! Get rid of things you no longer want or need. Have a garage sale, donate to a charity, or recycle.
- Before throwing something out, remember to ask yourself how frequently you use that item and how you would feel if you no longer had it.
- Pack like items together. Put toys with toys and kitchen utensils with kitchen utensils.
- Decide what, if anything, you plan to move yourself. Precious items, such as family photos, breakable valuables, or must-haves during the move, should probably stay with you.
- Use the right box for the item. Items packed loosely are more likely to be damaged.
- Put heavy items in small boxes so they are easier to lift. Keep the weight under 50 lbs, if possible.
- Do not over pack boxes — boxes that are packed comfortably will be less likely to break.
- Wrap each fragile item separately and pad the bottom and sides of boxes.
- Label every box on all sides. You never know how they will be stacked and you do not want to have to move other boxes aside to find out what is inside.
- Use colour-coded labels to indicate which room each item should go in. Colour-code a floor plan for your new house to help your movers.
- Keep your moving documents together, including phone numbers, the driver's name, and van number.
- Backup your computer files before moving your computer.
- Inspect each box and all furniture for damage as soon as it arrives. Remember, most movers won't take plants.

Change of Address Checklist

Utilities, Bills & Other Vendors

- [ ] Electricity
- [ ] Hydro
- [ ] Natural Gas
- [ ] Cell Phone
- [ ] Landline
- [ ] Cable
- [ ] Internet
- [ ] Water Delivery/Treatment

Legal & Identity Documents

- [ ] Driver's Licence
- [ ] Passport
- [ ] Health Card
- [ ] Insurance
- [ ] Tax Documents
- [ ] Income Tax (Canada Pension Plan, Old Age Security, etc.)

Professional Services

- [ ] Pool
- [ ] Lawn
- [ ] House Cleaning
- [ ] Physician
- [ ] Veterinarian
- [ ] Attorney
- [ ] Dentist
- [ ] Optometrist
- [ ] Other Specialists

Financial

- [ ] Bank
- [ ] Credit Card
- [ ] Insurance (car, home, life & health)
- [ ] Pension Plan
- [ ] Car Loans
- [ ] Other Loans
- [ ] Reward Programs

Miscellaneous

- [ ] Magazines
- [ ] Newspapers
- [ ] Professional Associations
- [ ] Alumni Associations
- [ ] Clubs
- [ ] Charities

Common Costs For Buyers

No one likes unexpected bad news—especially the financial kind! This worksheet can help you prepare for the cost of closing, moving, and getting settled into your new home.

Common Closing Costs

- Balance of down payment after initial deposit with offer
- Mortgage loan administration and/or appraisal fees
- Points or loan discount fees paid to receive a lower interest rate
- Credit report fees
- Mortgage insurance premiums
- Land transfer tax and title registration fees
- Title insurance policy premiums
- Survey expenses
- Legal fees and related costs (couriers, photocopies, etc.)
- Pro-rated amounts for your share of any prepaid costs, such as utility bills and property taxes

Moving Costs

- Packing supplies
- Movers
- Vehicle rentals
- Ancillary expenses

Settling-In Costs

- Changing locks
- Cleaning
- Painting, minor renovations, and repairs
- Furniture for additional rooms
- Lawn care and landscaping

Quick Home Monthly Outlay Calculator

$ _____ Mortgage Payment
(Principal & Interest)

$ _____ Property Taxes

$ _____ Condo/HOA Fees
(If Applicable)

$ _____ Utilities

$ _____ Internet/Cable/Phone

$ _____ Other

$ _____ Total Monthly Outlay

Finding My Dream Home
Question Worksheet

Here are a few key questions to help narrow down what you're looking for in a home:

- What type of home are you looking for? Detached or semi-detached?
- What style of home is best for you? Two-storey, bungalow, split-level, duplex, townhouse?
- What about the age of the home? Does the home need to be brand new?
- How many bedrooms and bathrooms do you need?
- What are you looking for in a kitchen? How about a family room? Do you want a separate dining room? What is your preferred layout?
- What are your high-priority features? Appliances, ensuite, fireplace?
- What other rooms do you need? Main floor laundry room, home office, hobby room?
- What about storage space? Basements? Lockers?
- Do you need a garage or extra parking spaces?
- Is energy efficiency important? Newer windows or a high-efficiency furnace?
- How long is your daily commute? How easy is it to get to the places you need to go?
- How close do you need to be to transit, shopping, schools, places of worship, and hospitals?
- Are there any important location factors? Backing onto parks? How about road traffic? Do you need to be on a quiet street?
- What size of yard are you looking for? Is the backyard important, or is a side yard enough? What about the front yard?
- What other landscaping features are important?
- A fenced yard, play areas, a pool, gardens, a patio?
- Is it important that the house faces a certain direction?
- Who are you sharing this home with and what are their needs? For example, pets might need a fenced yard, or extended family may want a separate entrance.
- How long do you plan to live here? This decision can impact the type of home, the location, and how much you will spend.
- How much do you want to invest beyond the purchase price of the home—both in terms of money and effort—if you can't find all the features that you want?



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Step 7

Preparing For Closing Day

Typically, you will have anywhere from 30 to 90 days before closing day. The closing date can be the same as your move-in date; however, this is not always possible. We will check with the seller's lawyer to find out when your keys will be available. It is normal that the exchange of money and title be complete before keys are released which could be late in the day.

Here are a few details to take care of before your closing date:

Legal Stuff & Paperwork

As your agent, I will make sure your lawyer gets all the necessary paperwork for your purchase. However, you may need to provide your lawyer with some additional information: insurance, down payment information, adjustment payments, and other signed documents as requested.

Down Payment & Closing Costs

Be sure to make the necessary arrangements to have these funds available a week prior to closing or when the lawyer requests the funds.

Moving Arrangements & Change of Address

Whether you are using professional movers, renting a truck, or getting a bunch of friends together, plan and organize it early. I can help here too! Just ask.

Property Insurance

Be sure to arrange for home insurance before closing and request proof of insurance for your financial institution in advance. Provide your insurance agent with the listing information and details such as age of the house, pool or no pool, type and condition of the roof, condition of the furnace, electrical and type of exterior.

Utilities

Your lawyer will often make this request as well, however, I recommend you contact the local utilities to coordinate the change of billing on closing. Including phone, internet, cable, gas, electricity, water, and any rental agreements. Don't forget to cancel the services at your old address.

Schools

Don't forget to inform your children's old and new schools about the move and arrange any necessary record transfers.

Step 6

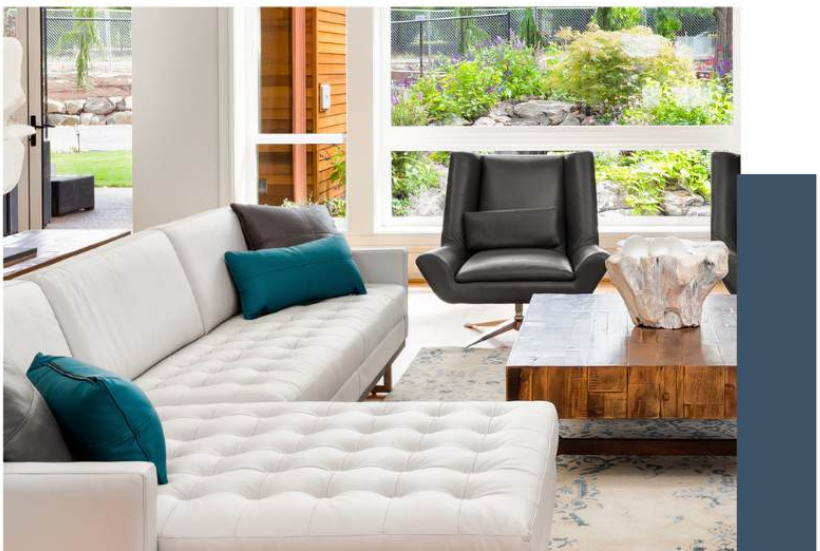
Removing Conditions & Firming up The Offer

Once an offer has been accepted, it's time to satisfy any conditions or contingencies within the time frame designated.

Condition Removal

This may involve performing a home inspection, a bank appraisal, getting the rest of your personal information and the property information to your mortgage specialist or bank and arranging for any other information that might be necessary, like surveys, water tests and condominium documents (if applicable).

Rest assured, I am here to help make the necessary arrangements to ensure that the entire process runs smoothly before the deadlines.



Home Inspection Tips

- Choose a qualified professional. A member of an association can ensure you are getting an experienced, knowledgeable professional.
- Check for visible issues with plumbing, electrical systems, roof, insulation, walls, ceilings, floors and windows, and the condition of the foundation. They can also check that the home includes chattels like furnaces and air conditioners and that they are in working order.
- Attend the inspection and ask the inspector to give you a closer look at key parts of your home.
- It takes about three hours to go through all the systems, and if there are any problems, you will see them. They will also give you maintenance tips and easy fix-ups, if necessary.
- Ensure that in the end, you receive a detailed report that summarizes the condition and age of the home.

Step 2: Preparing The Offer
I will prepare the offer documentation as per our discussions and ensure your interests are protected.

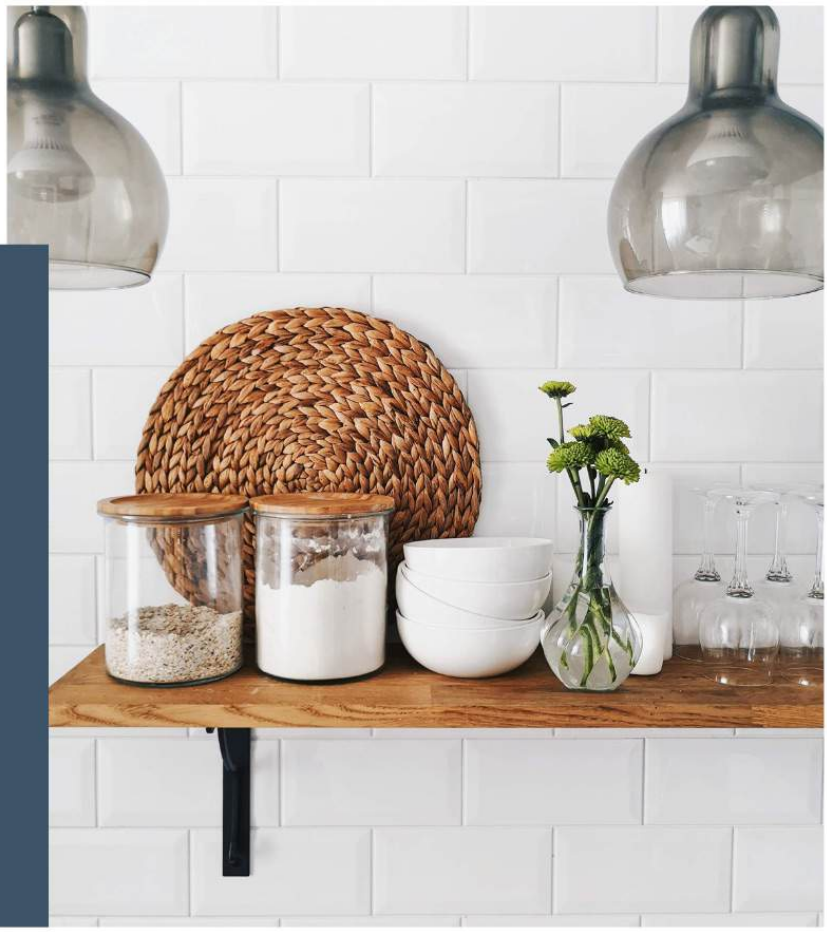
Step 3: Reviewing The Offer
Once the offer is prepared, we will review it together, virtually or in-person. I will explain all facets and terms of the offer, so you understand exactly what you are agreeing to. When you're ready, I'll walk you through the digital e-signature step for a seamless offer process.

Step 4: Presenting The Offer
I will present the offer to the seller's agent and negotiate fearlessly on your behalf.

Once the offer is presented, one of three things will occur:

a) The Seller accepts your offer without changes - congrats!
b) The Seller rejects your offer. This isn't common, but it can happen, I will certainly find out why.
c) The Seller countersigns changing the terms of the offer and presents the offer back to you.

Negotiations continue until we reach agreeable terms or if it's clear that reasonable terms can't be reached and it's time to walk away



Step 5

Making an Informed Offer & Negotiating On Your Behalf

Here's where things get exciting. You've found a house you love, congrats! Next step is making an informed offer and let the negotiations begin!

Here's what happens next:

Step 1:
Deciding on a Price, Terms & Conditions
First, I will conduct a current Comprehensive Market Analysis (CMA), complete with comparable active and expired listings, recent sold homes, and other historical data to determine the market value of the home.

This is invaluable data when it comes to negotiating a fair price. You will also need to decide on a closing date and if there will be any conditions of the offer such as home inspection, appraisal, water tests, etc. Not to worry though, I will guide you through every step.



Step 4

Let The Search Begin For Your Dream Home



The internet can be very helpful for you to get a sense of what's available but keep in mind, it's not a complete picture of the market or all potential properties available. While working on your behalf, we would do an in-depth needs analysis to find all the properties suitable for you (both offline and online), set up a time to view the homes and guide you through the selection process.

It's important to note, not all properties for sale can be found online. Here's what we will help you find.

1 | Homes in Hot Markets That Have Not Made It Online Yet

These are desirable homes in great areas, at great prices that often get sold before a property listing is loaded online.

2 | Expired Listings or Private Sales Not Found On MLS®

We don't stop at "listings," we tap into our network of real estate professionals locally and nationally to find all potential homes for sale that meet your criteria.

3 | Key Insight & An Insider's Edge

The internet is a content packed place of data and information, however, knowing how to interpret information is critical. As a Market Expert, I will bring an insider's perspective, provide key insights and expertise so you can be confident in knowing you have a complete picture of each property you are considering.

Our 10 Step Home Buyer Success Program

1 | Expert Real Estate Advice and guidance to ensure your goals and objectives are met.

2 | Clarity & Focus with an in-depth Buyer Needs Analysis, in person or virtually.

3 | Instant Access to all property listings within your search parameters including:

- New listings and newly-priced reduced listings
- New construction homes
- Expired listings that may be selling again
- Off-market listings that are not listed

4 | Advance pre-inspection of key properties to ensure your time is not wasted.

5 | Showing System for all in-person viewings include arrangement of all viewings in advance, detailed information on each property including the property history, local and special features.



6 | Comprehensive Market Evaluations prior to submitting any offer to ensure you understand the value.

7 | Expert Negotiation Skills come into play at the offer stage to ensure you achieve the best possible price and terms and understand all facets of the offer.

8 | Management of Details and Deadlines
Whether it's coordinating an inspection, arranging an appraisal, removing conditions or ensuring your lawyer has all the details. Rest assured, I will take care of all the details, big and small, so all you need to do is start packing!

9 | Recommended Home Service Providers
Including movers, contractors, lawyers, mortgage advisors, inspectors, insurance agents and more.

10 | Ongoing Advice & Market Data available any time before, during and long after your purchase.

I look forward to becoming your Trusted Real Estate Advisor and your one-stop shop for all things real estate. Have a question? I'm always just a text or call away.

4 | To Negotiate The Best Possible Price & Terms for You
Negotiating requires expertise and skill, period. As your real estate professional, I will guide you through the entire negotiating process that includes masterful communication and expert skills.

My job is to help educate you on the information you need to make an informed offer that would entail what specifics to include, what things you may want to consider giving up in the process and most importantly, when it is time to walk away (if reasonable terms cannot be reached).

5 | To Manage The Countless Details
Ensuring the i's are dotted and t's are crossed and that no balls are dropped from start to finish is key to an exceptional buying experience.

From the moment of engagement, you can rest easy knowing that I will guide you effortlessly through any obstacles along your buying journey and ensure all details are handled.



Step 3

Choosing The Best Agent For You

Most buyers today work with a real estate professional for many reasons. A great real estate professional will provide key market insights, sound advice and save you endless hours of time, energy and money — all while helping reduce the stress of a large purchase so you can truly enjoy the experience of buying your dream home.

Top 5 Reasons Why Most Home Buyers Choose to Work with a Real Estate Professional

1 | To Save You Time, Energy and Money

In most cases, commission is paid by the sellers when a successful purchase occurs. Having an agent work on your behalf does not require any out-of-pocket expenses, and will save you time and money throughout the process.

2 | To Ensure You're Getting the Best Price

If you're like most buyers, you want to know, with certainty, that you are paying a fair price. Quite often, sellers overprice their homes to "see what happens." A great real estate professional will educate you on the price of current competitive properties as well as similar homes that have been recently sold to help you make an informed decision on how much to offer for your dream home.

3 | To Represent & Protect Your Interest as a Buyer

In any transaction, it's important to understand that the seller's agent is bound by contract to work in the best interests of their sellers. As a buyer, you also need representation, someone to work exclusively in your best interests.

Engaging the services of a real estate professional to assist you in the home buying process means you now have someone to work solely in your best interests to provide you with:

- Confidential advice that addresses your needs first and foremost.
- Loyal and diligent "full disclosure" service, free from any conflicts of interest.
- Expert advice on market value, locations, useful clauses such as home inspections and financing to protect you fully.
- Expert negotiation of the offer(s) to purchase to achieve the best possible price and terms.
- Discovery and disclosure of all information about the property including liens, warranties, disclosures, seller's purchase price, market and planning activity in the area.

Step 2

Get Pre-Approved For a Mortgage

When it comes to buying a home, getting pre-approved for a mortgage is a very important step. Not only does it help you understand exactly how much you can afford to spend on a home, it often allows you to lock in an interest rate for a period of time which could potentially save you thousands of dollars for years to come.

Here are 4 simple steps to getting pre-approved for a mortgage:

1) Talk to a Mortgage Specialist
Whether it's your bank's Mortgage Specialist or an Independent Mortgage Broker — talk to someone with expertise who can help you compare rates and terms as there are hundreds of options to choose from.

2) Complete an Application to Find Out How Much You Qualify For
There are many factors that go into determining your eligibility for a mortgage. Two of the primary numbers are calculating your GDS (Gross Debt Service) and TDS (Total Debt Service) ratios. These factors determine how much you can comfortably afford to spend based on income and other financial obligations.

3) Gather Your Financial Information to Finalize Pre-Approval
Your bank or mortgage professional will require documentation to support your application such as income and down payment verification to finalize the pre-approval process.

4) Get a Copy of Your Pre-Approval Confirming Your Rate Lock In Period
Interest rates fluctuate and it's key to not only locking in your maximum amount but also your interest rate.

A pre-approved buyer also means that a seller will have more confidence in your ability to close.

For more information or recommendations on finding a Mortgage Specialist, please reach out - we have several we work with.

Step 1

Narrowing Your Focus



Determining exactly what you want in a home is no easy task, so it's best to start the process right away. The internet is a wonderful tool for you to get an idea of what you like, but there are some primary decisions you should make right up front.

Let's start by narrowing your focus with these 3 simple questions.

Question 1
Where Do You Want To Buy or Live?
This should typically be one of your first decisions. What area, community, neighbourhood or specific streets do you want to consider? Is it important to be near schools, shopping centres, recreation facilities, places of worship, hospitals, or other amenities? Will you require public transportation?

Question 2
What Type of Home Do You Want?
Or what style of home would work best for you? It could be a detached home, semi-detached, bungalow, split level, two-storey, duplex, or a townhouse — the options are endless. You may also want to consider your ideal lot size and the age of the home.

Question 3
What Are Your Must Haves and Deal Breakers?
Take some time to really think about what you want out of your new home and your must-haves. A basement? A garage? A pool or a fireplace? How many bathrooms? Bedrooms? Home office? Do you have family members with special needs? And, what do you absolutely not want in a home (i.e. no pool, no carpet, no stairs)?

Take a look at **Finding My Dream Home Question Worksheet** in the Resource Section at the back of this Guide for a more detailed list of home options.

Becoming An Informed Home Buyer

Whether this is your first home, your fifth or perhaps an investment, there is one thing that remains the same no matter what - buying a home is a complex process that requires information and insight in addition to a great deal of time, energy and financial resources.

That said, what an exciting venture to embark on! This guide is designed with you in mind to help bring clarity and peace of mind to your home buying journey.

I find the best approach to buying a home is to be informed. This guide will help answer some basic questions, outline what to expect on the road ahead and boost your confidence that you can find the right home for you.

I'm here to help every step of the way so if you're ready, let's get started!

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