YOUR HOME-BUYING CHECKLIST

A practical Ontario homebuyer guide | Check each step as you move from planning to getting your keys.

01 GET FINANCIALLY READY

- [ ] Work out a comfortable monthly housing budget, including property taxes, utilities, insurance and maintenance.
- [ ] Review savings for your down payment, deposit and closing costs; keep an emergency cushion.
- [ ] Check your credit, outstanding debts and employment/income documentation.
- [ ] Speak with a mortgage professional about pre-approval, mortgage options and qualifying requirements.
- [ ] Ask about applicable first-time buyer programs and land transfer tax rebates; confirm eligibility.

02 BUILD YOUR HOME SEARCH PLAN

- [ ] List your must-haves, nice-to-haves, preferred communities and maximum budget.
- [ ] Choose a real estate professional; discuss representation, services and any required agreements.
- [ ] Explore neighbourhoods, commute times, schools, amenities and future needs.
- [ ] For condos, rural homes or waterfront properties, identify extra review needs early.

03 VIEW HOMES WITH CONFIDENCE

- [ ] Compare asking price, comparable sales, condition and estimated ownership costs.
- [ ] Look for signs of maintenance needs, moisture issues and major system age.
- [ ] For rural properties, ask about well water, septic, road access and other property-specific considerations.
- [ ] Keep notes after each viewing; avoid making major financial changes during your search.

04 MAKE AN INFORMED OFFER

- [ ] Review the Agreement of Purchase and Sale, price, inclusions, closing date and deposit terms.
- [ ] Discuss appropriate conditions, such as financing, home inspection or condominium status certificate review.
- [ ] Confirm the deposit amount, deadline and where funds must be delivered.
- [ ] Understand that condition deadlines and other contract dates are negotiated, not universal.

TIP | A mortgage pre-approval is not a final mortgage commitment. Final approval may depend on the property, appraisal, documentation and lender requirements.

FROM ACCEPTED OFFER TO MOVE-IN

Keep your purchase organized and protect the timelines in your agreement.

05 COMPLETE DUE DILIGENCE

- [ ] Book any agreed home inspection and review the findings before the applicable condition deadline.
- [ ] Submit the accepted agreement and requested documents to your mortgage professional promptly.
- [ ] Review lender terms, mortgage insurance (if applicable), payments and closing cash requirements.
- [ ] Arrange any required condo document review, insurance quote, well/septic checks or other specialist advice.
- [ ] Decide on fulfillment or waiver of conditions with professional guidance and within contract deadlines.

06 PREPARE FOR CLOSING

- [ ] Choose an Ontario real estate lawyer and provide their details to your agent and lender.
- [ ] Arrange home insurance effective as required for closing.
- [ ] Confirm the source and availability of your down payment and closing funds.
- [ ] Budget for legal fees, adjustments, land transfer tax (if applicable), moving costs and utility setup.
- [ ] Review closing documents with your lawyer and follow their instructions for signing and transferring funds.

07 GET READY TO MOVE

- [ ] Book movers and schedule address changes, mail forwarding and utility transfers.
- [ ] Arrange a final walkthrough if provided for in the agreement.
- [ ] Keep ID, key documents, lender contacts and your lawyer’s details accessible.
- [ ] Confirm possession and key release with your lawyer and real estate agent before moving in.
- [ ] After closing, set up mortgage payments and keep important documents safely filed.

READY TO TAKE THE NEXT STEP?

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General educational checklist only; not legal, tax or lending advice. Contract terms, lender requirements and government programs can change. Confirm details with your real estate lawyer, mortgage professional and other qualified advisers. Brokerage and licensing disclosure details should be verified before publication.