



Homebuyer's Toolkit

TEN STEPS TO CHOOSING AND PURCHASING YOUR HOME



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ASSESS YOUR CREDIT AND FINANCES

Determine Your Credit Status

Because any lender you apply to for a mortgage will verify your credit history, it's wise to check your own credit rating in the beginning of your home search, even if you're sure you have an excellent credit record. There may be blemishes in your credit history that you don't know about. Identifying and resolving any credit problems to improve your credit rating will provide benefits, such as preferred rates from lenders and home insurers. Acquiring a copy of your credit report is simple.

The Fair Credit Reporting Act allows consumers to obtain one free credit report from each of the three major reporting bureaus every 12 months. To obtain a report visit: www.annualcreditreport.com—the only authorized source for consumers to access their annual credit report online for free. Or, call 877-322-8228.

The three major credit bureaus:

Equifax

www.equifax.com
Information Service Center
P.O. Box 740241
Atlanta, GA 30374-0241
800-685-1111

Experian

(formerly TRW)
National Consumer
Assistance Center
www.experian.com
P.O. Box 949
Allen, TX 75013-0949
888-EXPERIAN
(888-397-3742)

Trans Union Corporation

www.transunion.com
Customer Disclosure
Center
P.O. Box 390
Springfield, PA 19064-0390
800-888-4213

Pre-qualification vs. Pre-approval

Typically you will first pre-qualify for a mortgage, then get pre-approved before you have found the specific home you wish to purchase. What is the difference?

Pre-qualification: An informal determination by a lender or mortgage broker stating the amount of the mortgage you can afford.

Pre-approval: A guarantee in writing by a lender to grant you a loan up to a specified amount.

There are two advantages of being pre-approved for a loan as early as possible in your home-buying process:

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ASSESS YOUR WANTS AND NEEDS

This exercise will help your buyer's representative identify specific homes to show you. If you have other needs and/or desires, be sure to list these and discuss them with your buyer's representative.

Home Feature Prioritizing Tool

Ideal Price _____

of Bedrooms—Minimum _____

of Bathrooms—Minimum _____

Garage—# of Cars _____

Lot Size _____

Age of House _____

Square Feet of House _____

Style of House _____

Number of Floors _____

Type of Neighborhood _____

Determining What You Need Versus Want

Rate the features below on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being those things you absolutely don't want and 10 being those things you must have.

Eat-In Kitchen	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Separate Dining Room	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Fireplace	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Family Room	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Finished Basement	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Homeowner Association	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Amenities (<i>security gate, community pool, tennis courts</i>)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Pool/Spa	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Patio/Porch	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Yard	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
View	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

On the next page is a blank form for you to fill in other features that you may want in your home and rate their importance.