

THE \$50,000 BUYER PLAYBOOK

How we look for opportunities to buy the right house for less — even when rates aren't perfect.

THE GOAL
BUY THE HOUSE. NEGOTIATE THE PRICE.
PROTECT YOUR LONG-TERM WEALTH.

2026 IS NOT 2021.

In 2026, higher mortgage rates and affordability concerns keep many buyers cautious. At the same time, inventory improved

This is giving many buyers more room to negotiate. That combination can create opportunities for buyers who are prepared to move strategically. **We don't need every house to be \$50,000 cheaper. We need to find the houses where the numbers make sense.**

HIGHER PRICE	LOWER PRICE
More principal borrowed	Less principal borrowed
More interest paid over time	Less interest paid over time
More cash tied up in the purchase	More room in the budget
May make sense only if the home is worth it	Can create instant equity cushion when supported by value

Important: Market conditions vary by location and property. This guide is an educational strategy, not a promise that a home can be purchased for a specific discount.



THE \$50K MATH

Here's the simple idea:

We aren't just saving \$50,000 today. We're also avoiding the mortgage interest that would have been charged on that extra \$50,000.

\$50,000 LESS IN PRICE	WHAT THAT CAN MEAN
Less principal financed	You borrow \$50,000 less, assuming the same down-payment structure. (3% Minimum)
Lower monthly principal & interest	Illustration: \$50,000 financed for 30 years at 6.75% is about \$324/month in principal & interest.
Less lifetime interest	That same \$50,000 loan would generate roughly \$66,700 in interest over 30 years at 6.75% if kept for the full term.

BUT WHAT IF THE RATE IS A LITTLE HIGHER?

This is where the strategy gets interesting. Buyers often focus heavily on the rate because the rate is visible in the monthly payment. But **the purchase price determines how much you owe**. A higher rate on a meaningfully lower purchase price can sometimes produce a similar — or even lower — payment than a lower rate on a much higher price.

The strategy isn't “ignore the interest rate.” It's “look at the entire transaction.” We can compare purchase price, rate, points, seller concessions, cash to close and monthly payment before deciding what offer makes sense.

THE TWO LEVERS WE CAN WORK

1	NEGOTIATE THE PRICE	Get the seller to accept less when the property and market support it.
2	MANAGE THE RATE	When appropriate and available, use seller concessions or other eligible funds to buy down the rate.

Example: If the market gives us a chance to buy a home for less than another buyer might have paid, we can potentially combine that lower purchase price with a rate buydown. The result is a lower basis **and** a more manageable payment — subject to qualification, appraisal, seller/lender approval and the specific loan program.

THE WILDCARD: SHORT SALES

A short sale is a home sale where the sale proceeds are not enough to pay off the seller's mortgage balance. The seller's mortgage lender/servicer must agree to accept the proceeds and approve the sale. It is different from a normal sale because there is an additional decision-maker: the seller's lender.

WHY CAN A SHORT SALE BE AN OPPORTUNITY?

- The seller may be financially motivated to sell because they cannot satisfy the mortgage with a normal sale.
- The lender may approve a sale at a price below the mortgage balance — which can create an opportunity to buy at a lower price.
- A short sale can sometimes offer a path to a property that would not otherwise be priced as aggressively.
- The savings are not automatically \$50,000. Depending on the property, loan balance, condition and market value, the negotiated difference could be smaller, larger or nonexistent.

CAN I SAVE MORE THAN \$50,000?

Potentially, yes — but there is no guaranteed discount. A short sale is not a coupon. The seller's lender evaluates the proposed transaction, and the property still needs to support the purchase under the applicable loan and appraisal requirements. A larger difference could exist in a particular transaction, but it depends entirely on the property and the numbers.

WHY OUR PROCESS MATTERS

Short sales can require more coordination than a standard purchase. We need the buyer, buyer's agent, seller's agent, seller and lender/servicer to be aligned on the transaction. Having a loan professional and agent who understand the financing requirements helps us write an offer that is realistic, financeable and easy for the parties to evaluate.

SHORT-SALE REALITY CHECK

YOU STILL NEED	YOU DO NOT GET
A full pre-approval	An automatic \$50K discount
An acceptable property/appraisal	A guarantee the lender will accept your offer
Time and patience	A guaranteed fast closing
A complete offer package	A guarantee the home is worth the contract price

YOU DON'T NEED 20% DOWN

The goal is not to wait until you have a giant pile of cash.

The goal is to use the loan program that fits your situation and preserve as much flexibility as possible.

CONVENTIONAL	VA
Some conventional programs allow down payments as low as 3% for eligible borrowers.	Eligible VA buyers may be able to purchase with 0% down. VA does not require a down payment, although lender and entitlement rules can affect individual transactions.
Qualification, property eligibility and program requirements apply.	You still need a certificate of eligibility and must meet credit, income and lender requirements.

THE BIG IDEA

Lower price + smart financing can beat a higher price + “better” rate.

- ✓ We can look for properties where the seller has room to negotiate.
- ✓ We can evaluate short-sale opportunities when the numbers support pursuing them.
- ✓ We can compare the payment at different purchase prices and rates.
- ✓ Where permitted by the loan program and transaction structure, eligible seller concessions may be used toward costs and/or an interest-rate buydown.
- ✓ The objective is to buy a home that works for your budget — not simply to chase the lowest advertised rate.



READY TO HUNT FOR THE \$50K OPPORTUNITY?

Start with a pre-approval here

Then we will identify your budget, build an offer strategy, and find a comfortable monthly payment before you fall in love with a house.

QUICK FAQs

Is every house \$50,000 below value?

No. Absolutely not. The \$50K number is the target in this strategy, not a promise. The opportunity depends on the property, condition, seller motivation, comparable sales, equity/loan balance and the negotiation.

Does a short sale mean the seller is giving away the house?

No. A short sale means the seller is selling for less than the amount owed on their mortgage, with the lender/servicer agreeing to the transaction. The lender has to approve the proposed sale.

Can a short sale save me more than \$50,000?

It can, but there is no guaranteed amount. The contract price has to be negotiated and approved, and the property still has to work for the financing and appraisal.

Do I still need to be pre-approved?

Yes. You should be pre-approved before making an offer. A short sale does not change the buyer's obligation to qualify for financing. [Start your pre-approval now](#), only takes about 10-15 mins to apply.

Can I buy with only 3% down?

Some conventional programs permit as little as 3% down for eligible borrowers. Program, income, credit, property and other requirements apply.

Can a VA buyer buy with 0% down?

Eligible VA borrowers may be able to purchase with no down payment. VA eligibility, lender requirements, entitlement and property requirements still apply.

Can we buy down the interest rate too?

Potentially. Depending on the loan program and transaction, seller concessions or other eligible funds may be used toward closing costs and an interest-rate buydown. We evaluate the actual numbers rather than assuming one strategy always wins.

SOURCES & IMPORTANT NOTES

- National Association of REALTORS®, 2026 reporting: higher mortgage rates contributed to buyer caution while improving inventory gave buyers more negotiating power in some markets.
- Consumer Financial Protection Bureau: a short sale is a sale for less than the amount owed on the mortgage, subject to lender/servicer agreement.
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs: eligible VA-backed purchase loans may allow no down payment, subject to eligibility, lender and loan requirements.
- Fannie Mae: certain conventional mortgage options can permit down payments as low as 3% for eligible borrowers.

Mortgage/real estate disclaimer: This guide is for general educational and marketing purposes only and is not a commitment to lend, a guarantee of savings, an appraisal, or an offer to purchase or sell real estate. Loan approval, rates, terms, costs, seller concessions, short-sale approval and down-payment requirements are subject to borrower qualifications, property eligibility, program guidelines, lender requirements and the specific transaction. Examples are illustrative and may not reflect current rates or your actual payment. Short-sale transactions can involve additional time, documentation and lender approval. Consult your licensed real estate and mortgage professionals for advice specific to your situation.