



LISA WINSLOW

HOME BUYER GUIDE

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THINK BOUTIQ REAL ESTATE

THANK YOU



We are honored that you have chosen us to help guide you through the exciting process of buying your new home. At our agency, we are committed to providing the highest level of service to all of our clients, and we are dedicated to exceeding your expectations every step of the way.

At our agency, we believe that each client is unique, and we will adjust our services to meet your individual needs and preferences. Our top priority is your complete satisfaction, and we will work tirelessly to make sure that you find the perfect home to meet your needs and exceed your expectations. We are excited to embark on this journey with you and can't wait to help you find your dream home!



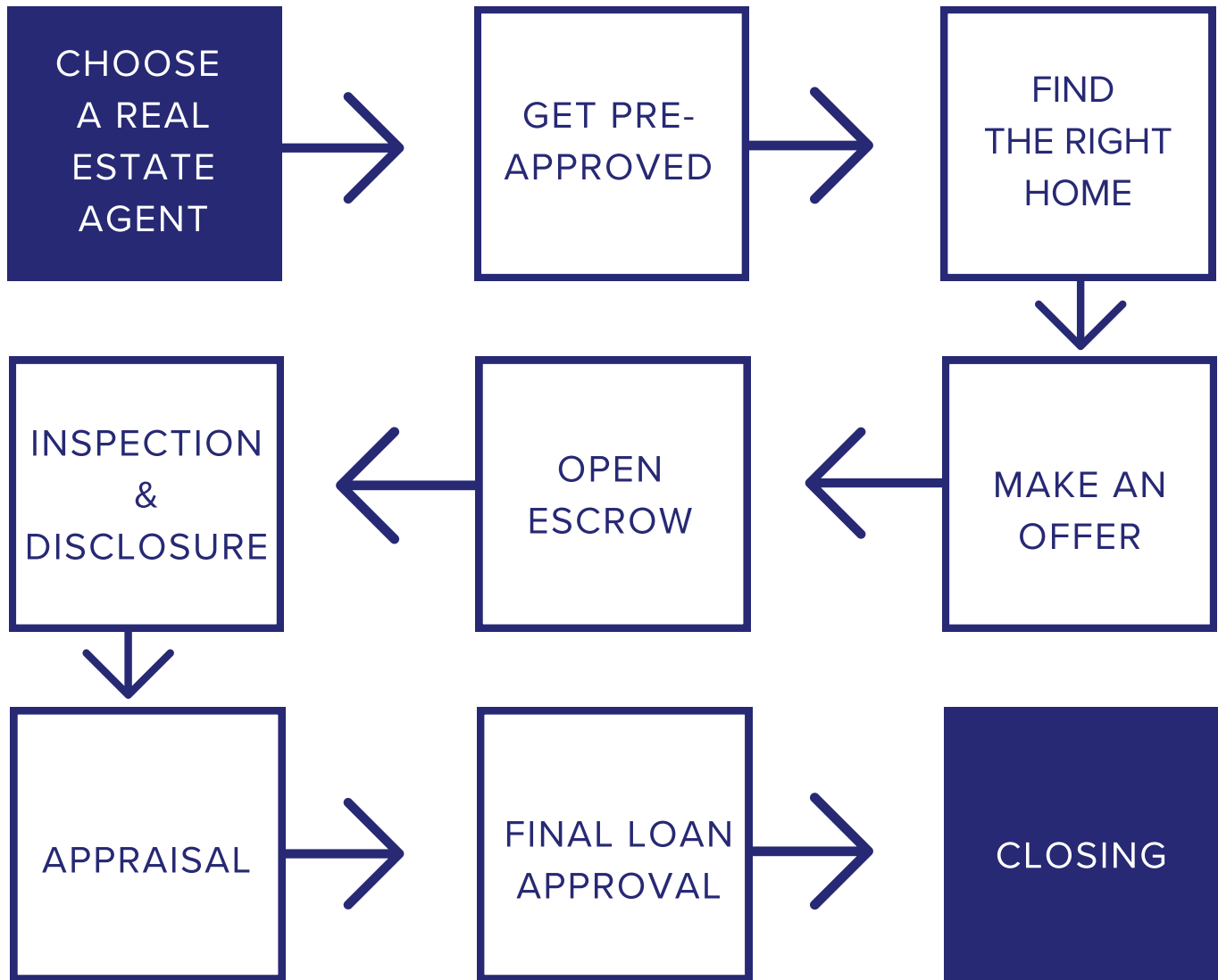
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*Good service speaks for itself.
I look forward to earning your referrals too!*

THE HOME BUYING PROCESS



Navigating a real estate transaction can be overwhelming, especially if you're unfamiliar with the process. That's why I've created this easy-to-follow chart to help you understand the various steps involved in your real estate transaction. Whether you're buying or selling a home, I am here to guide you through every step of the way and ensure that the process is as smooth as possible.

You can count on me to keep you informed and address any concerns or questions you may have. With my expertise and support, you can feel confident in your real estate journey.

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GATHER FINANCIALS AND DETERMINE YOUR BUDGET

Before you start looking at homes for sale, it's time to get your financial house in order. If you don't know your credit score, now's a good time to check it. If you think it doesn't look right, request your free credit report from all 3 credit bureaus (Equifax, Experian and Transunion) and fix any errors you spot!

FINANCIALS AND MORTGAGE PAYMENT

- Compile necessary documents, including pay stubs, bank statements, and past tax returns.
- Determine how much of a monthly payment you are comfortable with. Don't forget you will have taxes and insurance on top of your base mortgage payment!
- Figure out how much you think you might want to put down for a down-payment.



Calculating your budget for a new home purchase can be complex, and that's why I recommend working with a qualified Mortgage Lender. They can help you determine how much home you can afford and factor in all the associated costs, including the down payment, closing costs, fees for an attorney, appraisal, inspection, and any remodeling or furniture expenses.

One common misconception is that you always need to put down 20 percent, but there are many loans available with little to no down payment required. A knowledgeable home loan expert can guide you through your options and help you understand all the associated costs and fees, ensuring that you make an informed decision.

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PRE-QUALIFICATION VS. PRE-APPROVAL

Pre-qualification is an informal, non-committal determination by the lender or mortgage broker of how much you might qualify for.

Pre-approval is a formal, written determination, subject to collecting all needed documentation, on a loan amount up to a specified amount from the lender or mortgage broker.

With a pre-approval letter, you have more negotiating power and leverage over a buyer who is not pre-approved. Some sellers may require proof of funds, and a pre-approval letter may suffice. Having a pre-approval also allows you to have a price range to work in and can eliminate guesswork and wasted time.

RESEARCH

- Find out if you qualify for a special loan, such as a VA, FHA, or HUD home buying program.
- Request quotes from multiple lenders and compare loan programs.
- Get preapproved for a mortgage and receive your letter



FIND THE RIGHT HOUSE

In addition to the basic requirements like the number of bedrooms and bathrooms, here are some other things you might want to consider when making your list:

Making a list of your must-haves and nice-to-haves can help you narrow down your search and find a home that meets your needs and preferences.

FIND THE RIGHT HOUSE

- Get a head start by compiling your home wish list.
- Spend time in each area, imagining yourself living there.
- Find properties in your price range in your preferred neighborhoods.
- Visit open houses and have one of our team members schedule private showings.
- Making a list of your must-haves and nice-to-haves can help you narrow down your search and find a home that meets your needs and preferences.

Square footage: Think about how much space you need for your family and any guests you might have.

Location: Consider the proximity to schools, parks, shopping centers, public transportation, and your workplace.

Home style: Do you prefer a traditional home, a contemporary home, a ranch-style home, or a townhome?

Condition of the home: Do you want a move-in ready home, or are you willing to do some repairs or renovations?

Special features: Do you need a garage, a pool, a fireplace, or a large deck for entertaining?

Energy efficiency: Consider the age and condition of the home's appliances, windows, and heating and cooling systems.

Homeowners association (HOA) fees: If you're looking at a property in an HOA community, consider the monthly fees and what they cover.

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MAKE AN OFFER

Congratulations on finding the home you want! Now it's time to make an offer. Pricing strategies can vary among sellers, with some pricing their homes a bit high, expecting some negotiations, while others may price low to encourage multiple offers. We can provide you with a report of comparable homes in the area and what they have sold for, helping you to make an informed decision when making an offer.

Once you've submitted your offer, the seller may respond with a counter-offer. We will work with you to determine your negotiation strategy, and we'll be in contact with the seller's agent to facilitate the negotiation process.

After agreeing on a price, you'll make an earnest money deposit, which is money held in escrow to demonstrate your good faith and commitment to the purchase. This deposit can be applied towards your down payment or closing costs at the time of purchase.



MAKING AN OFFER

- Receive your comparable market analysis.
- Decide what price you're comfortable with.
- Submit offer

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CLOSE ON YOUR HOME

CLOSING ON YOUR HOME

- Home inspection completed.
- Closing date set.
- Transfer utilities and get homeowners insurance
- Closing money saved

To avoid any surprises, make sure to discuss all costs associated with closing with your mortgage banker. These may include but are not limited to: down payment, title fees, appraisal fees, attorney fees, inspection fees, and any points you may have purchased to buy down your interest rate.

Being informed about the costs upfront can help you plan and avoid any last-minute financial stress.

Before closing on the home, it's crucial to have a thorough home inspection to ensure the property is structurally sound and in good condition. Although it comes with a cost, it's well worth it for peace of mind and avoiding potential costly repairs down the line.

Setting a closing date that works for both you and the seller can be challenging, but with proper communication and planning, it can be accomplished.

Keep in mind that you may need to wait until your rental agreement expires, while the seller may need to wait until they close on their new home.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Should I buy or continue to rent?

Low-interest rates can sometimes mean that it can actually be cheaper to pay a mortgage than to rent. But there are some important questions to consider before buying. How long do you plan to stay in one place? If you need to relocate from time to time for work then renting may be preferable. Buying and selling are costly, so be sure you are happy to be settled for some time. Are you ready to take on the responsibilities of maintaining a property? A property is likely your most expensive monetary investment, and it needs to be maintained and protected. Consider all angles and costs before you commit to buying.

Should I sell my current home before I buy?

Have an open discussion with your agent about the current property market. The biggest benefit of selling your current home first is that you will be in a stronger position, and an attractive prospect to any seller as your offer will not be contingent on your own property selling. You do run the risk of not finding a new property and having nowhere to live. It may be possible to negotiate a "rent-back" period, where you stay in your old house and effectively pay the new owner's mortgage for an agreed period. A long settlement or temporary accommodation may be possible. Alternatively, buying first gives you the security of knowing where you are going. But your offer will be contingent on selling your own property, and if you can't meet the required deadline you risk the disappointment of losing the sale altogether. This is riskier for the seller, which puts you in a weaker position if there are multiple offers.

Do I really need an agent when buying a home?

Looking at homes is easy. Negotiating and wading through legal documents can be tricky. It's always advisable to use the services of a buyer's agent. The home seller will have an agent working for their best interests, so it pays for you to have someone in your corner. Agents have negotiation experience, plus access to market knowledge and industry networks. They also understand all the ins and outs of legal transactions, which can save you valuable time and money (and remove a gigantic headache).

Who pays the agent fees when buying a home?

Considering whether or not to use an agent often revolves around the question of commission costs. Agent commissions are negotiable and will be outlined in a Buyer Broker Agreement, a document you and your agent will agree upon early in the process, ensuring a clear understanding between you and your agent as you embark on your home-buying journey.

How many homes should I look at?

There is no hard and fast rule about this. If you do thorough research and search online carefully, you might find your home immediately. But you may look at 1 or more than 25 homes before finding the right one.

How old is that?

Don't make assumptions. Ask about the age of the furnace, water heater, or air conditioning unit. Check on appliances that are included in the sale. Owners often know the age and condition of the roof, but it may pay to have it checked for sagging or damage.

Is this area prone to natural disasters?

If you're moving to a new area it's worth checking if there are any risks of natural disasters. A Natural Hazard Report will be provided as a disclosure. Online resources such as the US Natural Hazards Index can help ensure you have appropriate insurance cover for your situation.

What's the response time frame to an offer?

The 'life of the offer' can vary from hours to a few days; this will be part of your offer and can be decided when you submit the offer to the seller.

Do I really need to do a final walk-through?

You have the option to view the house within 72 before closing. While this is not required, it is highly recommended. The purpose is to confirm that the property is still in the condition you expect, that repair contingencies have been completed, and everything that is agreed to is still in the property (i.e. appliances). You are about to spend a great deal of money, so take the opportunity to be completely satisfied. Also during your walk-through check that the furnace is working, all the toilets are flushing, and that there is hot water.

Is the closing date our moving-in date?

The closing date is the day the property sale records with the county. Depending on the county it may occur on the same day as funding, or it may close the day after. The move-in date will be decided in the contract, whether it's on closing or a few days after. Make sure you are certain about the date before booking moving services etc.

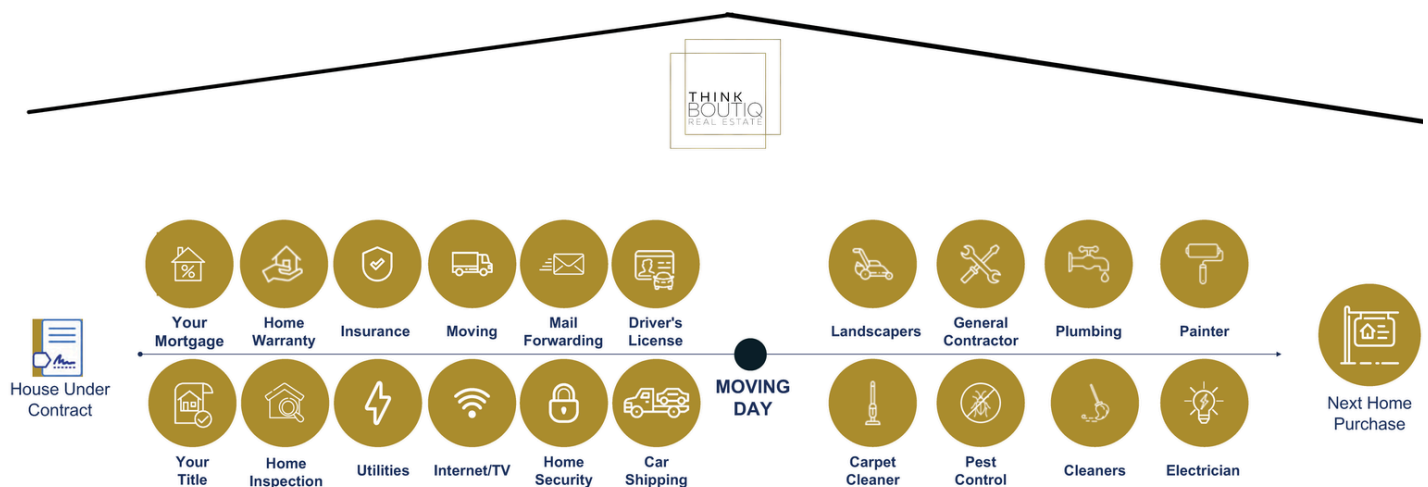


Complimentary Concierge Service

Your personal concierge service for life

As a client working with a Think Boutiq Real Estate agent, you will be enrolled in our concierge service. A concierge will reach out to you directly during the escrow process to assist you with arranging quotes for moving companies, and with finding a great deal on your internet and cable packages.

Your concierge can also assist with essential moving tasks such as change of address with the post office, setting up new utility service and cancelling your previous service, or even finding a reputable painter, plumber, electrician, and more!





BUYER AND SELLER LEGAL PROTECTION PLANS

For most buyers and sellers, real estate transactions represent the biggest financial and emotional investments of their lives. Because real estate agents and brokers are not allowed to provide legal advice, buyers and sellers often feel worried and confused about the sales process, tax ramifications, and other questions that attorneys can answer.

The Buyer and Seller Legal Protection Plan fills the void by offering affordable access to experienced attorneys who can answer legal questions throughout the transaction. With the plan, buyers and sellers receive:

- Up to 30 minutes of telephone consultation per nondispute, transactional legal matter with a licensed real estate attorney. There is no limit on the number of matters eligible for consults, as long as questions pertain to different legal concerns and are related to the property listed on the protection plan documents.
- Up to ten pages of documents reviewed by the attorney.
- Up to 25% rate reduction off the normal and customary fees for any additional services that the buyer or seller requests from the participating attorney.
- The Buyer & Seller Legal Protection Plan is an affordable program with a modest fee paid at the close of escrow. There are no prepaid fees. If the sale fails to close escrow for any reason, there is no charge for any services provided.

Lifetime Dispute Resolution Services After the Close of Escrow

Disputes can arise after escrow closes, leaving injured parties to feel that their only recourse is to hire an attorney and file a lawsuit. At RERM, we help buyers and sellers avoid the expensive and time-consuming hassle of pursuing legal action by providing lifetime mediation services after escrow closes. Services covered under the plan include:

- Self-help guidelines for communicating your claim to the adverse party, including sample demand letters.
- Informal mediation services to bring about early resolution of most disputes—with a success rate above 96%.
- Help with facilitating mediations to comply with the mediation clause found in most real estate purchase agreements.
- Information about the small claims court system when other remedies have not resolved the dispute.

Dispute resolution services are limited to matters involving buyers, sellers, and other third parties involved in the property transaction covered by the protection plan agreement. We provide the services through our staff of professional mediators who are not attorneys.

Buying or selling a home can be scary, even with the support of an experienced real estate professional. The Buyer & Seller Legal Protection Plan helps increase buyer and seller confidence, leading to smoother transactions for everyone involved.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT: [RERM.COM](https://www.rerm.com)



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