

Buying with
Jess Noto

Buyer's Guide

www.jessnoto.com



Unlocking Your Dream Home:
The Ultimate Buyer's Guide

CENTURY 21.
Advantage Realty





MEET JESS NOTO, MANAGING BROKER

Accredited Buyer's Agent



*connect
with
me*

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ABOUT JESS

Jess has been a full-time Real Estate Agent for 10 years and is the current Managing Broker for Century 21 Advantage Realty in Georgetown, Ky. After a lengthy career in public health, Jess and her husband Jason switched gears and became entrepreneurs, owning a successful restaurant and catering business. But it was in 2016, that she found her true calling and love in real estate. With a passion for leading and teaching, she went on to become a real estate principal broker in 2020. She takes a very hands-on approach with both her agents and clients and loves the unique challenges that each day presents. Jess and her husband Jason have three grown children and reside on their farm in Sadieville. She is an avid UK fan, Pickleball player and a member of Cedar Grove Baptist Church in Stamping Ground.

Meet The Team



Stephen Robinson

Principal Broker



Jess Noto

*Managing Broker
Real Estate Agent*



Amy Adkins

Administrative Assistant



Susan Wilburn

*Real Estate Agent
Agent Mentor*



Tyler Wiley

Real Estate Agent



Lisa Niva

Real Estate Agent



Matthew Popp

Real Estate Agent



Stephanie
Lipstreu

Real Estate Agent



THE BUYER'S BLUEPRINT

01

Hire an Agent

Hire a knowledgeable real estate agent to assist you in finding and buying a home. Your agent will guide you through the process and help you negotiate.

02

Determine Your Budget

Assess your financial situation, including savings, income, and expenses. Get pre-approved for a mortgage to determine your budget and strengthen your offer.

03

Search for Homes

Begin your home search online and with the help of your agent. Visit properties that match your criteria to get a sense of what's available.

04

Offers & Negotiations

When you find a suitable home, work with your agent to make an offer to the seller. Your offer will include the purchase price, contingencies, and a potential closing date. Expect a negotiation process where your agent and the seller may go back and forth on price and terms. Your agent will help you reach an agreement that works for both parties.

05

Inspections

Hire a home inspector to assess the property's condition and identify any issues. Review the seller's disclosures and gather information about the neighborhood.

06

Financing

Finalize your mortgage application, providing the necessary documentation to your lender. The lender will appraise the property and underwrite the loan.

07

Closing

Sign all necessary paperwork at the closing meeting, including the mortgage documents. Pay closing costs, which may include fees for appraisals, deed prep and title insurance.

08

Moving

Congratulations! Receive the keys and officially become the owner of the property. Begin moving into your new home and make it your own.

WORKING WITH AN AGENT

01

Hiring a real estate agent is crucial when buying a home due to their expertise, guidance, and advocacy throughout the complex process. We have an in-depth understanding of the local housing market, providing invaluable insights into property values and neighborhoods. We help you refine your home search based on your preferences and budget, saving you time and effort. Moreover, we are skilled negotiators who can secure the best possible terms for your purchase and navigate potential obstacles, such as inspections and appraisals. Our knowledge and experience ensures a smoother, less stressful home buying experience, making us an essential asset in one of life's most significant financial transactions.

+Please note that as of August 2024 after a U.S. court ruling, all buyers must sign a buyer's representation agreement before viewing any properties. You may sign this for just one property or for a length of time. Once you sign an agreement with an agent, you are agreeing to work with only that agent for your home search.



One of the first and most crucial steps in the home buying process is establishing a realistic budget. Consider your current financial situation, including your income, savings, and existing debts. It is extremely important to talk with a local lender and get pre-approved for a mortgage to know the exact amount you can borrow. By setting a clear budget, you'll be able to focus on properties that align with your financial capabilities, making your search more efficient and productive.

OUTLINING YOUR MUST-HAVE & NICE- TO-HAVE FEATURES

Create a list of features and attributes that your dream home must have. Distinguish between non-negotiables (must-haves) and those you would like to have but can compromise on (nice-to-haves). This list will serve as a guide for you and your real estate agent, helping to narrow down the options and find properties that meet your criteria.

UTILIZING THE MLS

Our access to the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) is a powerful tool that streamlines your property search. MLS is a database utilized by real estate professionals to list available properties, providing us with real-time and accurate information. By leveraging this resource, we can present you with a wide selection of homes that meet your specific preferences and budget, saving you time and effort in your quest for the perfect home.



SETTING UP PROPERTY SHOWINGS & VISITS

As we curate a list of potential properties, we'll work with you to schedule property showings and visits that fit your availability. Visiting homes in person provides you with a realistic sense of the space and its surroundings, helping you envision your life in each property. During these visits, we'll be by your side, sharing our expertise and providing relevant information, empowering you to make well-informed decisions throughout the process.

One thing that is unique about me is that I flip homes and have a great knowledge of construction and repairs. When I look at potential home for you, I'm looking at resale value and how you could improve the property to maximize your equity!



DETERMINING AN APPROPRIATE OFFER PRICE

Making the right offer price is crucial in securing your dream home. We'll work together to determine an appropriate and competitive offer by analyzing recent comparable sales (comps) and considering the property's unique features, location, and current market conditions. This ensures that your offer aligns with the property's market value and increases the likelihood of a successful negotiation. Our goal is to help you put forward an offer that reflects your best interests while positioning you favorably in the eyes of the seller.

NEGOTIATING TERMS & CONDITIONS

Negotiating terms and conditions requires skill and expertise to achieve a win-win outcome. We will represent your interests throughout the negotiation process, engaging with the seller's agent to discuss critical elements like the closing date, contingencies, and personal property inclusions. Our objective is to strike a deal that satisfies your needs while also considering the seller's requirements, facilitating a smooth and mutually beneficial transaction. But make no mistake, I'm looking out for YOU!

SUBMITTING THE OFFER & HANDLING

After finalizing your offer, we will promptly submit it to the seller's agent or the seller themselves. The seller may respond with a counteroffer, proposing modifications to the price or terms. During this phase, we will serve as your advocate, providing guidance and expertise to help you navigate the negotiation process with confidence. We will keep you informed throughout, ensuring you have all the information necessary to make informed decisions as we work towards a mutually agreeable deal. By carefully determining the offer price, negotiating terms and conditions, including appropriate contingencies, and managing counteroffers skillfully, you'll be well-prepared to navigate the offer process effectively and secure your dream home. Our commitment is to support you throughout this critical stage of your home buying journey.



Making an Offer

Woohoo! You found the perfect home, now what? Now we make an offer!

1. Decide purchase price

2. What else do you want to ask for:

Things you can ask for include but are not limited to:

- Seller paid closing costs
- Home warranty
- Sellers to leave certain furniture/appliances/fixtures
- Sellers to take away fixtures/appliances

3. Send me your pre-approval letter

(we will include that in the offer)

4. Sign the sellers disclosure & lead paint disclosure (if applicable) and other legal disclosures provided by me.

5. Sellers will then either accept the offer, counter the offer, or reject the offer.

Note: All contracts are CONTINGENT upon:

1. No major issues on inspection (unless AS-IS)
2. Property appraising at or above contract price (Unless a cash purchase & buyer opts out of an appraisal)
3. Satisfactory underwriting and lender approval





Earnest Money

Earnest money is "good faith" money - it tells the seller that you are willing to put some "skin in the game". If the deal goes through you will get this money back at closing. If you pull out unexpectedly after the due diligence period, the sellers might get to keep the money.

The money is held at my brokerage in an escrow account until closing.

Earnest checks will be made out to my brokerage, Century 21 Advantage Realty. You can either mail it directly to the office OR I can meet you to pick it up, OR you can drop in dropbox at 137 E Main St, Georgetown Ky 40324. Alternatively, I can send you a digital request through an app we use called EARNNEST. There is a small fee to submit the earnest money through the app but it goes directly to our account to make it fast and simple.

Things to note:

Per the contract, earnest money must be submitted without delay. So once your contract is accepted, it must be submitted ASAP. Earnest money is often referred to as "escrow" money or "EMD" - they all mean the same thing. If you decide to walk while in your due diligence period OR for any reason specifically listed on your contract, you get your EMD back. If you break the contract otherwise, it may be forfeited to the seller as damages.



HOME INSPECTION

A licensed home inspector will thoroughly evaluate the property's condition. During this step, the inspection assesses various aspects of the home, including its structural integrity, electrical and plumbing systems, roofing, HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning), and more. They identify any existing or potential issues, such as water damage, mold, pest infestations, or safety concerns. Once the inspection is complete, the inspector provides a detailed report to the buyer, outlining their findings. This report is crucial for buyers as it helps them make informed decisions about proceeding with the purchase, negotiating repairs or concessions with the seller, or potentially walking away from the deal if major issues are uncovered. Home inspections are a safeguard to ensure that buyers are fully aware of the property's condition and potential maintenance or repair costs before finalizing the transaction.

Note: Though home inspections are strongly encouraged, they are optional and at the buyer's sole expense and choosing.



INSPECTORS:

While I cannot choose which inspector to use, I do have a few that I know and trust to do a thorough job. If you want to research them, their information is listed below.

GUARDIAN HOME INSPECTION

JAMIE DONOVAN | 502-510-1573
JAMIE@GUARDIANKY.COM

CHC HOME INSPECTIONS
CLAY HOSKINS | 859-388-0530
ADMIN@CHCINSP.COM

R2 PROPERTY INSPECTIONS
STEVE ROBERTS | 859-979-4040

AMC HOME INSPECTIONS
ROB RICE | 859-963-5467
AMCHOMEINSPECTIONS@GMAIL.COM

AVERY BUSSELL
AVERY BUSSELL | 859-771-7332
AVERYB1@AOL.COM

AFTER INSPECTION:

After the inspection, we will receive a full report. We get to decide what (if anything) you want the sellers to repair. This will be negotiated through a "Inspection Agreement Form" that I will write up.

NOTE: IF YOU ARE BUYING A PROPERTY AS-IS, THIS MAY NOT BE AN OPTION



SECURE FINANCING

During this step, buyers provide their lender with all the required financial documentation, such as bank statements, tax returns, and pay stubs, to complete their mortgage application. The lender evaluates the applicant's creditworthiness and verifies their ability to repay the loan. They may also conduct an appraisal of the property to ensure its value aligns with the loan amount. Once the lender is satisfied with the applicant's qualifications and the property's value, they will underwrite the loan and, if approved, provide the final loan terms and conditions. Securing financing is crucial because it defines the terms of your home purchase and determines the amount you can afford to spend.

BLUEGRASS MORTGAGE

MARY MORGAN | 505-400-8706

LUMINATE MORTGAGE

JESSE HARDIN | 859-361-0309

PEOPLES EXCHANGE BANK

ALEX DAVENPORT | 502 868-8860

COMMUNITY TRUST BANK

MICHAEL WILLIS, LAND AND FARM LOANS |

502-863-0433

Important Reminders for Financing a Mortgage

AVOID THESE MISTAKES BEFORE CLOSING

MAKING A BIG PURCHASE

Making a big purchase such as buying a new car, can change your debt-to-income ratio which the lender used to approve your loan.

OPENING NEW CREDIT

Before opening new lines of credit, speak to your lender to get their approval.

MISSING PAYMENTS

It's important that your credit score stays the same before closing, missing payments can lower your score.

QUITTING YOUR JOB

Do not quit your job! It's important to show you are stable and employed to your lender

CLOSING

07

Closing is the culmination of the home buying process, where the buyer and seller finalize the transaction and transfer ownership of the property. During this step, all parties involved, including the buyer, seller, real estate agents, and often a closing agent or attorney, gather to sign the legal documents. These documents include the final purchase agreement, mortgage paperwork, and various disclosures. The buyer typically pays the closing costs, which may encompass fees for appraisals, inspections, title insurance, and other services. Once all documents are signed, and funds are exchanged, the property's title is transferred to the buyer, officially making them the new homeowner! The keys to the property are handed over, and the buyer can take possession of their new home. Closing is a critical step, ensuring that all aspects of the sale are legally executed and that both parties fulfill their obligations as outlined in the contract.



CLOSING

The final step of the home buying process is the closing. This is when the purchase of your new home is finalized and you receive the deed to the property.

Before heading to closing, make sure you have done a final walkthrough of the home to ensure the seller has fixed any issues (if applicable) and transferred the utilities into your name.

WHAT TO BRING TO CLOSING

- Government issued ID
- Cashiers Check for total amount due
- Any additional documents needed for title company

WHAT TO EXPECT

You will meet with an escrow officer to review and sign all your loan documents. The three main documents are mortgage, promossory note, and a closing disclosure.

CLOSING COSTS

- Closing costs can include:
- Escrow fees
- Mortgage points/ discount fee
- Origination fees
- Title search and title insurance
- Appraisal fees
- HOA fees
- Pre paid taxes and insurance

POST CLOSING

You should receive copies of all closing documents, which you need to keep for tax purposes. You will be handed the keys to your new home!



COORDINATING MOVING LOGISTICS

08

Moving to your new home requires meticulous planning and coordination. In Kentucky, possession is expected to transfer AT THE CLOSING and not typically before or after unless arrangements are agreed upon by both parties. We're here to help you create a moving timeline and checklist to ensure a seamless transition. Whether you opt for a professional moving company or decide to handle the move independently, our team will provide guidance and support at every step. One thing I recommend to my clients that they find very useful is to rent a POD or Mobile Attic to pack things into the POD during the waiting process and then the company will move the POD to the new home after closing for you to unpack at your leisure. This is a very cost effective and less-stress way to move.

UPDATING YOUR ADDRESS & IMPORTANT INFORMATION

With your move complete, it's essential to update your address with relevant organizations and institutions. We'll provide you with a comprehensive checklist that includes notifying the post office to forward your mail, updating your driver's license and vehicle registration, and informing banks, insurance providers, and other important contacts of your new address. By promptly updating your information, you can ensure a seamless transition and avoid any disruptions to essential services.

CONNECTING WITH LOCAL SERVICES AND AMMENITIES

Embracing your new community is an exciting part of settling down. We'll provide you with valuable information about nearby grocery stores, healthcare facilities, schools, park and recreational facilities to assist you. Whether you need recommendations for local service providers or are looking to explore exciting dining options, we're here to support you in making your new neighborhood feel like home.



Appraisal: Assessment of the property's market value, for the purpose of obtaining a mortgage and performed by a licensed appraiser.

Assessed Value: Value placed upon property for property tax purposes by the Tax Collector.

Closing Costs: Expenses incidental to a sale of real estate, such as loan fees, appraisal fees, title insurance and escrow fees.

Closing Statement: The statement which lists the financial settlement between Buyer and Seller, and the costs each must pay.

Contingency: Certain criteria that have to be met in order to finalize the sale.

Conventional Mortgage: A mortgage or Deed of Trust not obtained under a government insured program such as FHA or VA.

Credit: Money given to a buyer from a seller through escrow at closing.

Escrow: A neutral third party that handles the transfer of any money during the sale of a home from initial deposit to final funding at closing.

Home Warranty: A policy that covers certain repairs (e.g. plumbing/ heating) of a newly purchased home for a period of time, typically one- year.

PMI: Private mortgage insurance is a type of mortgage insurance required if you have a conventional loan and if you make a down payment of less than 20%.

Preliminary Title Report: A report showing the condition of title before a sale or loan transaction. After completion of the transaction, a new title insurance policy will be issued.

Title Insurance: Insurance to protect the buyer and lender against losses arising from disputes over the ownership of a property.

Recording Fees: Money paid to the lender for recording a home sale with the local authorities, thereby making it part of the public records.



PROCESS

Our approach to assisting clients in buying and selling properties goes beyond the transactional aspects. We are dedicated to creating a seamless and truly exceptional experience that encompasses every facet of the real estate journey.



Client-Centric Approach

Our clients are at the heart of everything we do. We begin by taking the time to truly understand their desires, preferences, and lifestyle. By forging a deep connection, we can tailor our services to their specific needs, ensuring that every step we take aligns with their vision.

Market Expertise

Our commitment to staying ahead of market trends sets us apart. We provide clients with up-to-date market analyses, enabling them to make well-informed decisions whether they're buying or selling. Our expertise in evaluating property values, local market dynamics, and investment potential empowers clients to navigate the market with confidence.

Personalized Guidance

We believe that every property has a story, and every client has a unique narrative. Our team of experienced agents works closely with clients to uncover these stories, allowing us to match individuals with homes that resonate on a personal level. This involves meticulously curating options and providing comprehensive insights into each property's features, history, and potential.

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CENTURY 21[®]

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