



**PARKER
MORTGAGE & FINANCE**
Purposeful Finance. Personal Guidance

A practical guide for Australian households

The Real Costs of Buying and Owning a Home

Look beyond the deposit and repayments. Plan for the money you need before, during and after your purchase.



A home budget has three parts

The purchase price is only one part of the decision. A useful plan separates the money you need upfront, the costs you will pay regularly, and the reserve you want to keep after settlement.

1. Your contribution to the purchase

Your savings or other confirmed funds cover the gap between the purchase price and the approved loan. A contract deposit paid earlier is normally part of this contribution, not an additional purchase cost.

2. Buying and moving costs

Government charges, professional fees, inspections, loan costs and moving expenses need their own allowance. Some are payable before settlement; others are paid at settlement.

3. Your ongoing household budget

Add the mortgage repayment to rates, utilities, insurance, maintenance and any strata costs. Keep room for everyday living and unexpected expenses.

Borrowing capacity and comfort are different. The amount a lender may approve is not automatically the amount you will feel comfortable repaying.

How this fits your other guides

Use the First Home Buyer's Guide for the buying journey and government assistance. Use Everyday Budgeting for your household spending plan. This companion focuses on property costs and the funds you need at each stage.



The upfront costs to check

Cost	What to allow for
Transfer duty (stamp duty)	State or territory tax. Amounts and concessions depend on the property and buyer. Confirm current eligibility and timing.
Title and mortgage registration	Government charges to record the ownership transfer and mortgage. These are separate from duty.
Conveyancer or solicitor	Contract review, searches, settlement work and disbursements. Ask what the quote includes.
Property inspections	Building and pest checks; strata records or specialist reports where relevant. These can be payable even if you do not buy.
Loan costs	Application, valuation, settlement or package fees where charged. Confirm any waivers in writing.
Lenders mortgage insurance (LMI)	May apply at higher loan-to-value ratios. It protects the lender, not you. It is not automatically required for every low-deposit loan.
Settlement adjustments	Your share of rates or other charges already paid by the seller, calculated under the contract.
Moving and setup	Removalists, utility connections, locks, essential furnishings and possible rent overlap.

Ask your settlement professional when insurance risk passes to you and when cover should start. Do not assume the seller's insurance protects you.



Plan for the costs of ownership

Bills that keep coming

Council rates, water charges, electricity, gas, internet and insurance may arrive at different intervals. Use actual notices or property-specific estimates, not another household's bills.

Maintenance and replacements

Allow for servicing, repairs and eventual replacement of appliances or building components. Property age, condition and location affect the amount; there is no single allowance that suits every home.

Strata properties

Ask about ordinary levies, reserve funds, planned works and special levies. Check the records and what building insurance covers. Contents and other cover may still be needed.

Your reserve

Keep planned annual bills separate from money for unexpected events. A savings balance used for the deposit is no longer available as your emergency reserve.

Land tax and other circumstances

Land tax can apply depending on the jurisdiction, property use and ownership circumstances. Do not assume it is payable on every owner-occupied home; confirm with the relevant revenue office.

Convert annual bills to your payday cycle. A fictional \$2,600 annual total needs \$100 per fortnight over 26 paydays. When starting close to a due date, divide the amount still needed by the actual paydays remaining.



Separate the deposit from the extras

Fictional planning example only. The figures below are chosen to demonstrate the arithmetic, not to estimate duty, fees or the cost of a particular purchase.

Purchase funding	Illustrative amount
Purchase price	\$600,000
Assumed approved loan	\$480,000
Buyer contribution to price	\$120,000
Assumed buying and moving costs	\$25,000
Reserve retained after settlement	\$10,000
Total funds needed outside the loan	\$155,000

\$120,000 + \$25,000 + \$10,000 = \$155,000. If a \$30,000 contract deposit has already been paid from these savings, it is part of the \$120,000 contribution. The remaining funds needed are \$125,000, subject to final costs and adjustments.

Then test the ongoing budget

Compare repayments at your proposed rate and a higher rate, using the same loan amount and term. Add ownership bills and living expenses. Also test reduced income, parental leave or other changes you can reasonably anticipate.

Replace every assumed figure with a quote, current government calculation or lender-confirmed amount before committing. Only count grants or concessions after checking eligibility and payment timing.



Build your purchase cost plan

Print and complete this page using quotes and current calculations. Mark items that do not apply. The contract deposit is part of your contribution to the price; do not count it twice.

Funds needed	Your estimate
A. Purchase price	\$ _____
B. Loan available for the purchase price	\$ _____
C. Buyer contribution: A - B	\$ _____
D. Duty and registration charges	\$ _____
E. Legal, searches and inspections	\$ _____
F. Loan fees / LMI paid from your own funds	\$ _____
G. Settlement adjustments and moving	\$ _____
H. Reserve to keep after settlement	\$ _____
I. Total outside the loan: C + D + E + F + G + H	\$ _____
J. Amounts already paid from these funds	\$ _____
K. Remaining funds needed: I - J	\$ _____

If fees or LMI are added to the loan, confirm the amount actually available for the price and exclude those financed costs from F. Keep a separate payment calendar for expenses due before settlement.

Ownership costs to add to your household budget

Mortgage: \$ _____ Rates/water: \$ _____ Insurance: \$ _____

Strata: \$ _____ Maintenance: \$ _____ Utilities: \$ _____

Period used for every amount: _____



Before you commit

- ☐ I have separated my contribution, buying costs and ongoing costs.
- ☐ I know when the contract deposit and settlement funds are due.
- ☐ I have checked duty and concessions with the relevant revenue office.
- ☐ I have quotes for professional fees, inspections and moving.
- ☐ I understand insurance timing, strata costs and planned works.
- ☐ I have tested repayments and allowed for a reserve after settlement.

Read this next

First Home Buyer's Guide: the purchase journey and government help. Everyday Budgeting: allocate income and fund bills. Moving Home: Your Change of Address Checklist: organise notifications after a move.

Discuss your next step

Parker Mortgage & Finance can help you understand the loan side of your purchase. Your conveyancer or solicitor handles contract and settlement questions; your accountant can help with tax questions.

www.parkermortgageandfinance.com.au

Keep learning

[Moneysmart - Buying a house](#)

[NAB - Upfront buying costs](#)

[NSW Government - Buying and ongoing costs](#)

[WA Government - Transfer duty](#)

Sources checked 2 October 2026. Lender requirements, fees and government rules can change.

General education only. This guide does not consider your individual objectives, financial situation or needs and is not personal financial, tax or legal advice. Examples are illustrative. Seek appropriate advice for your circumstances.