



Buyer Guide

Your comprehensive guide to buying
a home in Middle Tennessee





The Pilkerton Difference

For nearly 50 years, Pilkerton Realtors® has been consistently recognized as one of the top residential real estate firms in Middle Tennessee. Together with our partner firm Parks Real Estate, we are the largest locally-operated brokerage in Tennessee, with over 1,500 agents across our 15 office locations. Our local expertise is supported by the highest level of resources, tools, and technology, allowing us to achieve record annual sales year-over-year.

#1

LARGEST REAL
ESTATE FIRM

Nashville Business Journal

#1

MARKET SHARE

in Middle Tennessee

1,500+

AGENTS

1,200+

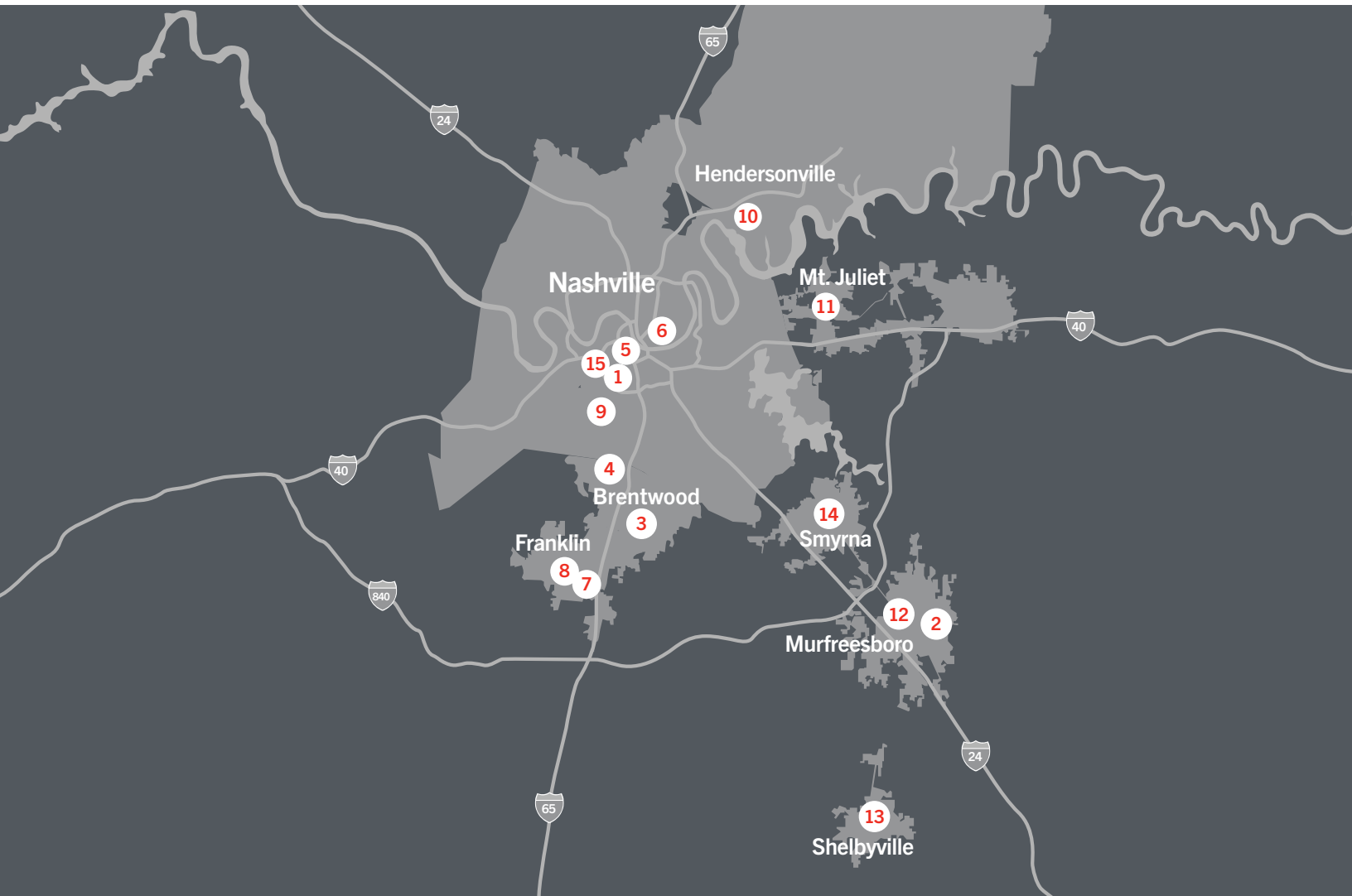
PROPERTIES PURCHASED
IN-HOUSE ANNUALLY

11,800+

CLIENTS SERVED ANNUALLY

Middle Tennessee Presence

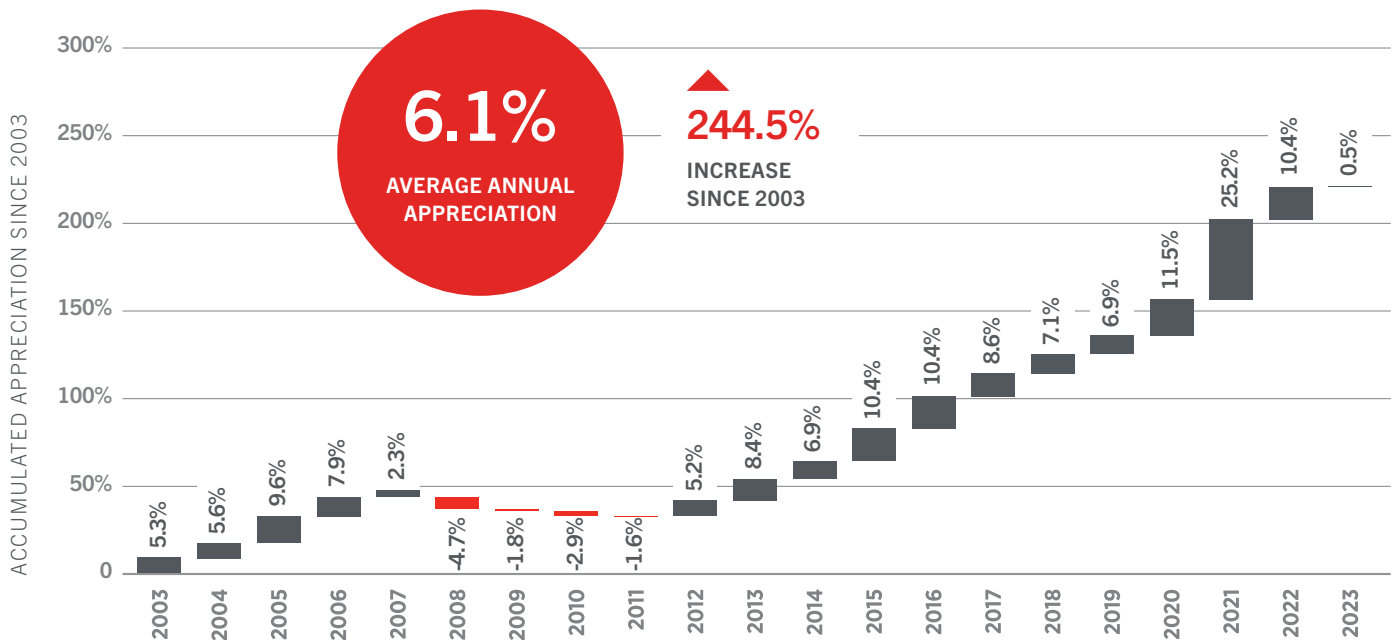
Our offices span five Middle Tennessee counties, serving a client base as diverse as our region. Our extensive insight into market trends and knowledge about our local communities allow us to provide valuable guidance to our clients.



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|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Ashwood/Hillsboro Village | 6. East Nashville | 11. Mt. Juliet |
| 2. Auction & Land | 7. Franklin Main St. | 12. Murfreesboro |
| 3. Brentwood | 8. Franklin 3rd Ave./Williamson | 13. Shelbyville |
| 4. Pilkerton Brentwood | 9. Pilkerton Parks Green Hills | 14. Smyrna |
| 5. Broadwest | 10. Lakeside/Sumner | 15. West Nashville |

The Benefits of Buying

Home Price Appreciation in Middle Tennessee



Tax Benefits

Real estate taxes and interest are tax deductible.

Build Equity

Unlike renting, your monthly payment will go toward building your own equity. Since most homes will increase in value over time, buyers are able to steadily build their equity and create future wealth.

Protection From Inflation

Once you purchase a home, the largest recurring housing expense—your monthly mortgage—is not affected by inflation (unlike rent costs). Your only housing expenses that will rise over time with inflation are property taxes, homeowners insurance, and maintenance costs.

The Home Buying Timeline

1

Preparation

- Consultation & Alignment
- Budget Factors
- Financing & Pre-Approval

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Contract

- Escrow & Title
- Financing & Appraisal
- Disclosures Review
- Property Inspections
- Negotiations or Credits

2

Home Search

- Search Setup
- Property Pre-Screening
- Property Tours
- Property Review & Comparison

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Closing

- Preparations
- Final Walk-Through
- Signing & Funding
- Celebrate!

3

Offer

- Offer Submission
- Negotiation of Terms



1 Preparation

Together, we will discuss your needs, preferences, lifestyle, goals, and price range. Discoveries made during this phase will impact our timeline and determine our search parameters.



Consultation & Alignment

1. Discuss services, the buying process, and expectations.
2. Align on preferred home location, timeline, and key features.
3. Discuss pre-approval and financing.
4. Sign exclusive buyer broker services agreement.

Budget Factors

5. **Down Payment:** 3.5–5.0% required. Additional loan programs are available for larger down payments.
6. **Mortgage Qualification:** Loans are determined by Credit Reports, Assets, Income, and Property Value.
7. **Rates:** Review current mortgage rates and discuss fluctuations and rate-locking options.
8. **Debt-to-Income Ratio:** Between 33–38%
9. **PITI:** Between 25–28% of your gross monthly income: Principal on Loan, Interest on Loan, Property Taxes, and Homeowners Insurance.

Financing & Pre-Approval

10. Review mortgage sources and services and identify different mortgage products.
11. Get connected with mortgage lender to obtain pre-approval.

ESTIMATED EXPENSES

- **Earnest Money:** Typically 1% of purchase price
- **Inspection Fees:** Between \$500–\$1,000
- **Appraisal Fee:** Approximately \$500
- **Additional Closing Costs:** Around 3% of purchase price, including title insurance, lender fees, and homeowners insurance

WHAT YOU NEED TO GET PRE-APPROVED

- Social Security number
- Two most recent pay stubs
- Last year's tax return
- Two most recent bank statements
- Last year's W2

ROLE OF YOUR AGENT

- Recommend a local mortgage lender who can dramatically improve the outcome of your home buying experience.
- Advise on current market conditions and trends that could affect your buying power and set expectations based on your budget.
- Represent you and your interests and work as your trusted advisor from start to finish.



2 Home Search

Finding a home that is 100% perfect is often more expensive than any budget allows. Our goal is to get as close to that as possible, and we often find buyers are very happy with a home that meets about 85% of their wants and needs. Keep this in mind when viewing homes and determining which factors are most important to you.



Search Setup

1. Develop search criteria based on the key features of your desired home:
 - Location - School systems, work commute, neighborhood amenities, etc.
 - Size & Property Type
 - Property Condition
 - Features & Amenities
 - Price
2. Determine which home features can be compromised on and which are non-negotiable.
3. Search for potential homes online (Pilkerton.com, MLS, Zillow, etc.).

Property Pre-Screening

4. Off-market and coming soon listings are screened through Pilkerton's exclusive, vast agent network.
5. Private broker open houses are attended and new listings are viewed in advance.
6. The listing agent is contacted to inquire about property details and seller needs.
7. Investigate the home, neighborhood, and other key features.

Property Tours

8. Private showings are scheduled with the listing agent.
9. Attend showings and open houses.
10. Considerations and potential red flags are noted while viewing.

Property Review & Comparison

11. Narrow down options based on:
 - Interest Level
 - Comparative Market Analyses
 - Seller Needs
 - Offer Terms

ROLE OF YOUR AGENT

- Set up home searches on MLS (auto-notifications for listings that fit your criteria).
- Search for exclusive coming soon listings and research new developments and off-market opportunities.
- Schedule and accompany you on all showings.
- Follow up on your inquiries or questions for homes of interest.
- Contact the listing agent to inquire about property details and seller needs.
- Review all feedback from showings and adjust search parameters as needed.
- Monitor the market for fluctuations.
- Provide Comparative Market Analysis (CMA) on homes you are seriously considering to help you formulate a competitive offer.



3 Offer

Once you find a home that you would like to offer to buy, we will discuss possible strategies that will give you the best advantage at making the winning bid.



Offer Submission

1. The offer is crafted based on the property and your needs, including:
 - Price
 - Timeline
 - Earnest Money
 - Contingencies - Financial, Appraisal, Inspection, Home Sale
2. A written offer is submitted in the form of a Tennessee Association of Realtors® (TAR) Purchase and Sale Agreement.

Negotiation of Terms

3. Your offer is presented to the listing agent and is either accepted, rejected, or the seller submits a counteroffer.
4. The contract's terms are negotiated, if needed.

ROLE OF YOUR AGENT

- Provide timely communication between you and the listing agent.
- Advise on how to write the most attractive offer given the market and property conditions that still fits your requirements.
- Prepare offer package including cover letter, pre-approval letter, agency documents, and any other key paperwork.
- Submit all documentation for seller and listing agent consideration.
- Receive and review counteroffers or addendums, if needed.
- Confirm contract acceptance and review documents.



4 Contract

Once we are under contract with a seller, I will provide a timeline and communicate the path to closing across all parties. I will help you navigate the contract conditions and any final negotiations to get you to closing.

Escrow & Title

1. The Purchase and Sale Agreement is accepted and signed by all parties, becoming a legally binding agreement.
2. A timeline based on the contract date is set into motion.
3. Deposit Earnest Money.
4. A title report for the property is initiated and any terms of note are reviewed.

Financing & Appraisal

5. The financing process is initiated with the lender.
6. An appraisal is ordered and scheduled.
7. The condition of the property is analyzed by the appraiser and compared to recent sales prices for similar properties in the area.
8. The appraisal report is reviewed, discrepancies are discussed, and a low appraisal is negotiated with listing agent, seller, and lender, if necessary.
9. Review and sign appraisal and finance contingency removal documents.
10. Financing and appraisal sign-off are confirmed with the lender.

Disclosures Review

11. All disclosures and reports are reviewed in detail with you.
12. Additional written disclosures or inspections are requested, if needed.
13. Sign all documents.
14. Copies are provided to the respective parties in the transaction.

Property Inspections

15. Inspection appointments are scheduled and communicated to all attending parties.
16. Access to the home is coordinated with the listing agent and inspections are conducted.
17. The inspectors' notations or concerns are reviewed and any action items or additional inspections are discussed.
18. A copy of each inspection report is provided to you.

Negotiations or Credits

19. Final findings from the report are discussed as well as potential next steps, including negotiations for repairs or credits, if needed.
20. Addendums and contingency removals are drafted, reviewed, and signed.
21. All reports are signed.

ROLE OF YOUR AGENT

- Recommend title company, local lender (if needed), and local service providers for inspections, home improvement, repairs and maintenance, and moving.
- Prepare appraisal comparables and provide insights and notable property features to the appraiser.
- Schedule and join inspections.
- Address concerns, questions, or clarifications with the listing agent.
- Write repair proposals, if needed.
- Ensure all inspections and repair requests are completed within the contract's due diligence period.
- Ensure all required documents are signed and all terms of the contract are met on time to be ready for closing.

A photograph of a wooden deck with red cushioned outdoor furniture. In the background, there is a wooden pergola and lush green trees under a clear blue sky. The deck is made of dark wood planks.

5 Closing

After all due diligence in the transaction has been completed and underwriting of the loan is underway, we will prepare for a few final steps. We will confirm the property condition and review the final documents before you move into your new home!

Preparations

1. Provide any additional documents requested by the lender or title company.
2. Secure homeowners insurance for your new home.
3. Arrange for utilities to be turned on the day of possession.
4. Arrange funding for buyer closing costs, taking precautions to avoid wire-fraud.

Final Walk-Through

5. A final walk-through appointment is scheduled.
6. Address any issues or concerns with the property post-inspection and prior to closing.

Signing & Funding

7. Sign final loan documents and closing disclosure from lender.
8. Send required closing funds via wire transfer.
9. Title insurance is purchased to protect against losses from title issues that would affect ownership of the property.
10. Sign closing documents.
11. The deed is transferred from seller to buyer.
12. Celebrate!



ROLE OF YOUR AGENT

- Ensure all paperwork is signed and ready for on-time closing.
- Accompany you on final walk-through of the property.
- Create a plan with the listing agent to address any questions or concerns that arise during the final walk-through.
- Attend closing to answer any final questions.
- Continued support: provide moving checklists and keep in touch with property value updates.



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