

BUYER'S *Guide*



Sabrina Thompson

- REAL ESTATE -

231-292-8356

sabrina@terrypufferrealestate.com

The image is a full-page background photograph of a minimalist interior. In the foreground, a light-colored wooden dining table is partially visible on the left, with two matching wooden chairs featuring dark woven seats. The floor is made of large, light-colored rectangular tiles. In the background, there is a white wall and a white cabinet. A large, textured pink spherical object is visible in the distance. The overall aesthetic is clean and modern.

ABOUT US



Hello! I'm Sabrina Thompson.

As a realtor, my focus is to help families find their perfect and dream home. With my dedication and passion for real estate, I thrive to make buying or selling a home an enjoyable and memorable experience.

sabrina@terrypufferrealestate.com

www.terrypufferrealestate.com

@terrypufferrealestate



Home Buyer's ROADMAP



DISCLAIMER: Use this roadmap as a quick overview of the buying process. If you have any questions, please reach out to your realtor!

Real Estate TERMS

PRE-APPROVAL

A pre-approval is a preliminary evaluation conducted by the lender to show that the buyer has the funds to purchase up to a certain amount. This is extremely helpful when you find a home you're ready to put an offer on.

OFFER

An agreement between a buyer and a seller to purchase a piece of real estate. This is sometimes referred to as a sales contract.

CONTINGENCY

When an offer is accepted by the seller, but there are certain conditions that must be met before the sale is final.

CLOSING COST

The fees that are paid at the end of the purchase by either the buyer, seller or both. These include taxes, insurance and lender expenses.

EARNEST MONEY

Also known as "good faith" money, this is money put up by the buyer into a trust or escrow account. This action shows the buyer is serious about purchasing the home.

TITLE SEARCH

A title search proves that the property is, in fact, owned by the seller. You can also purchase title insurance to make that no issues that arise later.

APPRAISAL

The appraisal is the value given to a property based on comparable properties that have recently sold. This is typically required by the lender in order to decide if the requested loan amount is in alignment with the value of the property.

HOME INSPECTION

An inspection is a professional examination of the property's condition. Your agent can recommend a qualified home inspector for you.

DISCLOSURES

All seller's are required to fill out a property disclosure stating what they know about the property - good or bad.

CLOSING

This is the final step of your real estate transaction. At closing the funds from the buyer are provided to the seller and the buyer receives the keys. This process typically takes an hour.



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Preparing to Buy



FINDING *a Great agent* 01

A real estate agent is a huge asset to you as you go through the home-buying process. This is one of the biggest decisions of your life and you need a skilled professional guiding you through the process.

Your agent will be working with your best interests in mind and can help guide you through all the stages of home buying.



CONNECT YOU WITH THE PERFECT HOME

Agents often have access to information about homes going on the market before the public. They can also arrange open houses and tours of homes that match your criteria.

NEIGHBORHOOD KNOWLEDGE

Agents will be able to offer insightful details about the neighborhoods you are considering.

ATTENTION TO DETAIL

The process of buying a home requires a good deal of paperwork. Your real estate agent will help you fill out all documents and get them submitted properly.

PROFESSIONAL NEGOTIATOR

Agents deal with any difficult conversations that need to happen. They will also help you submit a strong offer and negotiate with the seller on your behalf.

EXPERT GUIDE

Realtors are there to help you with any questions you have along the way. They offer an objective opinion when you're analyzing the features you're looking for.

Financials

02



HOW MUCH HOME CAN YOU AFFORD?

Lenders recommend that you spend no more than 3-5 times your annual income on a new home.

You can find many mortgage calculators online, which provide a great starting point. When calculating, don't forget to include extra expenses like attorney fees, home inspection and appraisal costs and money for any home improvements.

DO YOU NEED A DOWNPAYMENT?

While it's ideal if you can put a 20% downpayment on your new home, it certainly isn't necessary.

There are many ways to put down much less and with certain types of loans you may need as little as 3.5%.





CREDIT CHECK

It is important to have a credit check done as this will be a factor in determining your mortgage approval and interest rates.

While sometimes a score in the 500's can get you a loan, ideally you want to aim for 620 or above. The higher the score the lower the interest rate.

PRE-QUALIFIED & PRE-APPROVED

Many times these terms can be used interchangeably in different areas. You will want to ask your real estate agent which is more credible in your market and then apply.

Either way, being pre-qualified or pre-approved shows the seller that you're serious and that you most likely have the funds to purchase the home should you choose to place an offer. Pre-approval can also help you budget as you will know exactly what you can afford.

This pre-approval does not guarantee a loan will be offered so you still want to be careful with your spending during this time. Don't make any large purchases, change jobs or apply for new credit cards during this time.

Find a Home



HOME SEARCHING TIPS

- Take photos with your phone while visiting each house. Organize the photos at home with the address of the property so you can remember details later.
- Focus on the things you can't change like the neighborhood, lot or size of bedrooms.
- Test things as you walk through the home. Open and close windows, turn faucets on and flush toilets to make sure everything is in working order.



Make a list of all the things you need and want in a new home. Think about how many bedrooms and bathrooms you need.

Do you want a big kitchen or is a fenced-in yard more important to you?

We will start touring homes and weigh all the positive and negative aspects of each one.

When you find the house, your next step will be to make an offer and go through any negotiations.

MAKE *an Offer*

04



Once you've found the home you want, the next step is to make an offer. We will look at comparable properties in the area and decide on a strong first offer.

Many owners price a little high expecting to negotiate so we will take that into consideration as well.

NEGOTIATE *an Offer*

Many times after the initial offer is presented the owner will come back with a counter-offer.

As a buyer, don't be afraid to bargain for what you want. Whether that be cost, a new roof or the whole house painted. You don't know what they're willing to do unless you ask.

Inspection

05

It's always a good idea to add a contingency clause into your offer stating that you have a certain amount of time to have the property inspected. This gives you the right to back out of the agreement if you and the seller can't agree on repairs.



Plan to attend the inspection and be prepared to ask any questions you have.

You will receive a report of findings, but it's sometimes easier to see the issue and hear the information directly from the inspector.

After the inspection is complete, decide if there are any pressing issues you want to negotiate with the seller.

Be careful to not be too picky, but also not let major concerns go unaddressed.



FINAL *Steps*

APPRAISAL

06

Your lender will require an appraisal of the home before finalizing the loan.

The home appraiser will take into account the neighborhood, housing market, age and condition of the home, etc.

A property title search will ensure that the sellers are truly the owners of the property and any liens or judgments are disclosed.



and Loan APPROVAL

The loan is only fully complete after the lender approves the loan. You will receive a final approval letter after they review your income, credit report and employment status once more.

Home owners insurance is also required before the mortgage company will finalize the loan.

CLOSING *and Moving*



SCHEDULE

your move

You will want to get movers scheduled as soon as possible. Make sure to avoid scheduling the move and closing on the same day if possible. If you will be doing renovations, start getting quotes from contractors.

Make sure you set up the transfer of utilities for closing day.



Closing



Closing is the final step for you to become the legal owner of your home. You will take a final walk-through just before closing to assure that negotiated work has been completed and everything is in working order.

The closing process itself requires a lot of paperwork and patience. Be prepared with your government issued photo ID, cashier's check and any other documents required by the title company or loan officer.

Don't forget to re-key all the locks and change the garage door opener code when the property is officially yours.

Congratulations on your new home!

Resources

LANDSCAPING & TERMITE

Earth Creations Landscaping - 231-329-8690

Elite Ground Management - 231-531-1624

O'Malley's Pest Control - 231-722-4686

ELECTRICAL & PLUMBING

Keglovitz Electric - 231-750-7431

Andy's Plumbing - 231-780-8923

HOME INSPECTOR

Stone River Inspections - 231-730-2690

MOVING

Two Men and a Truck - 231-544-7732

Brockstar Moving - 231-744-9561



HOME TOURING *Checklist*

ADDRESS OF PROPERTY: _____

DATE VISITED: _____ PRICE: _____

BEDROOMS: _____ BATHROOMS: _____ SQUARE FOOT: _____

LOT SIZE: _____ YEAR BUILT: _____

SCHOOL DISTRICT: _____

CURB APPEAL

1

DISLIKE

2

NEUTRAL

3

4

5

LOVE

INTERIOR

1

DISLIKE

2

NEUTRAL

3

4

5

LOVE

EXTERIOR

1

DISLIKE

2

NEUTRAL

3

4

5

LOVE

PRICE

1

DISLIKE

2

NEUTRAL

3

4

5

LOVE

LOCATION

1

DISLIKE

2

NEUTRAL

3

4

5

LOVE

NEIGHBORHOOD

1

DISLIKE

2

NEUTRAL

3

4

5

LOVE

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: _____

[illegible]

Sabrina Thompson

PROFESSIONAL REALTOR (R)

sabrina@terrypufferrealestate.com



@terrypufferrealestate

