

HOME *Buyer's* GUIDE



DAVID BLAKELY
LICENSED REALTOR®

dl
DI LUSSO
REAL ESTATE



YOUR HOME MATTERS

Greetings! I've had the pleasure of growing up and living in central Ohio, giving me a deep-rooted understanding of our vibrant community.

I'm a proud graduate of Gahanna Lincoln High School, where I was involved in the Band. I went on to The Ohio State University, where I earned my Bachelor's in Business Administration from the Fisher College of Business.

Whether you're a savvy investor or a first-time homebuyer looking to make a smart financial decision for your family, my background and strong business acumen are here to guide you.

When I'm not helping clients, you can often find me enjoying the great outdoors. I love exploring Ohio's beautiful metro parks, whether I'm walking my dog, Zig, mountain biking, or kayaking.

I'm committed to making your real estate experience both successful and enjoyable. Reach out to me, and let's turn your real estate dreams into a reality!



David Blakely

REALTOR®



614.592.3709 cell



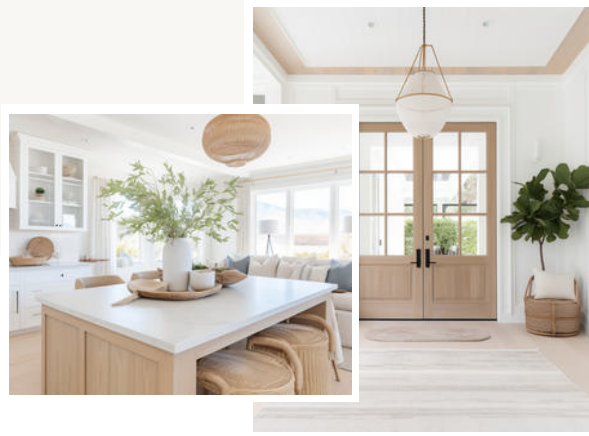
david@dilussorealestate.com



_db_realestate_



dbrealestateservices.com



WHY BUY?

The motivation to buy is different for everyone. Here are some commonly appreciated benefits:

- ✓ **Investment Potential** - Buying a home is a long-term investment. Real Estate often appreciates in value, allowing homeowners to build equity, which can be leveraged for future financial needs or investments.
- ✓ **Stability and Control** - Owning a home offers stability that renting cannot. Homeowners have the freedom to renovate and personalize their home without worrying about rising rent and pesky upstairs neighbors.
- ✓ **Tax Benefits** - Mortgage interest and property taxes are often deductible, reducing the overall tax burden. These financial incentives can make owning a home more affordable in the long run compared to renting.

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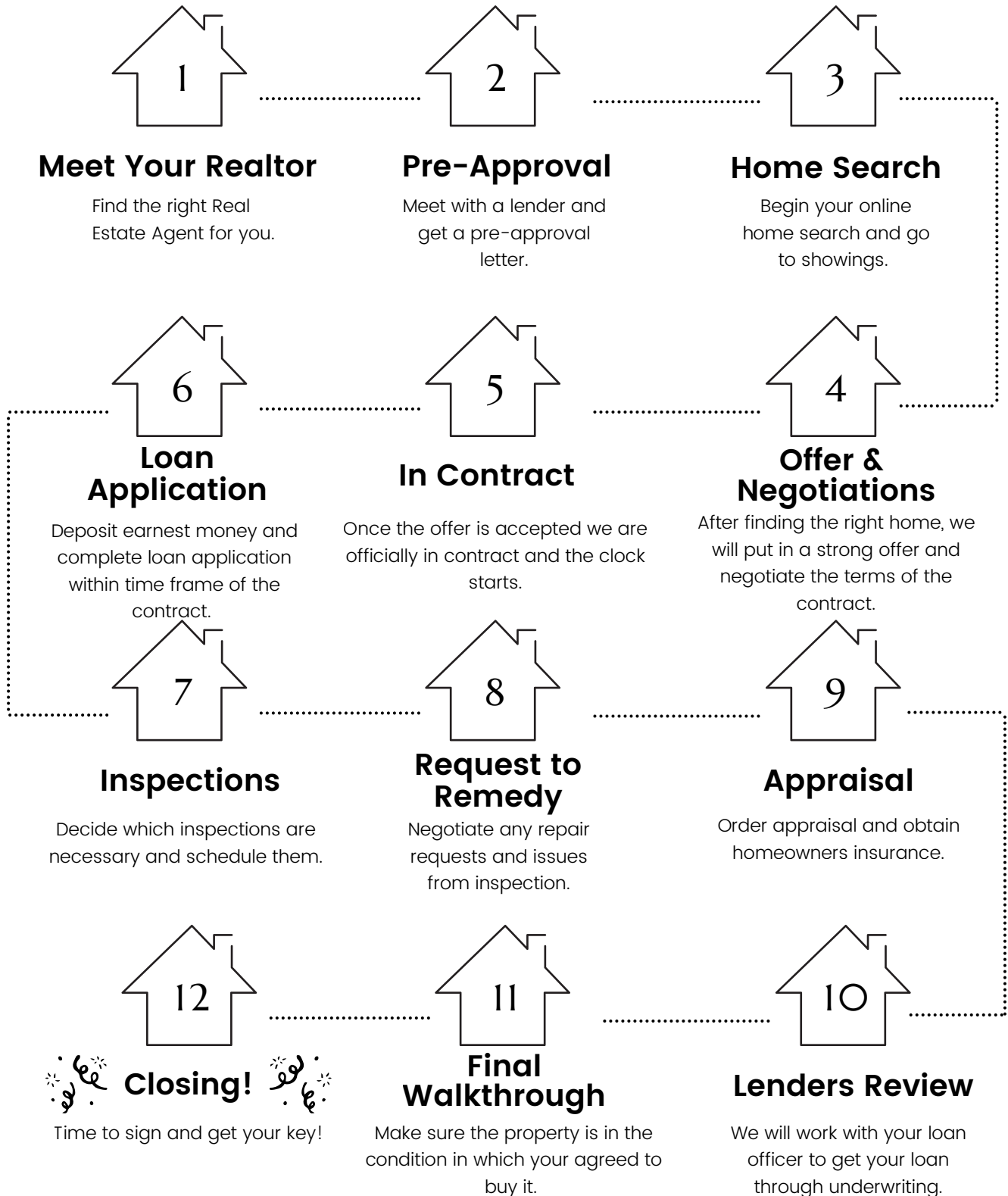
Preparing Your Offer

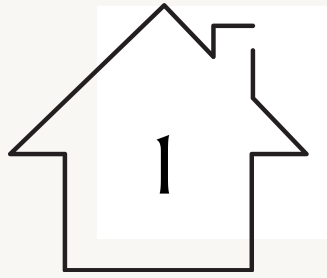
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Buying Roadmap





Meeting with an agent

Congrats! You've completed the first step. Here are a few important things to note :

How we get paid :

Following the NAR lawsuit and settlement, real estate commissions are no longer automatically split between the listing agent and the buyer's agent. Buyers now typically have a written agreement with their agent that outlines how that agent will be compensated. When submitting an offer, buyers often request that the seller contribute toward their agent's commission—commonly around 3% of the purchase price—as part of the overall negotiation, similar to closing costs or repair requests. This contribution is fully negotiable, clearly disclosed, and must be agreed to by the seller. Structuring compensation this way allows many buyers to work with professional representation without needing to pay their agent entirely out of pocket at closing.

Important documents:

Buyer's Agency Agreement

A Buyer's Agency Agreement is a formal contract between a homebuyer and a real estate agent that outlines the terms of their working relationship. This agreement specifies the duties and responsibilities of the agent, the duration of the agreement, and how the agent will be compensated. It ensures that the agent is legally bound to represent the buyer's interests in the home buying process, providing services such as finding properties, negotiating offers, and managing paperwork. This agreement clarifies the commitment from both parties and ensures that the buyer receives dedicated representation. As a result of the NAR Settlement starting 8/17/2024, it is mandatory to have this document signed at the beginning of a relationship with a client.

Consumer Guide

The Consumer Guide is a document provided to potential buyers by real estate agents to inform them about their rights and the different types of agency relationships available in real estate transactions. It outlines the various roles an agent can play, such as representing the buyer, the seller, or both (dual agency). The guide helps consumers understand how agency relationships work, the services they can expect, and the obligations of the agent. Providing this guide is a standard practice to ensure transparency and help buyers make informed decisions about their representation.



PRE-APPROVAL

Before you officially begin your home search, I always recommend to begin with talking to a lender and getting pre-approved. A lender will be able to answer all of your questions regarding finances and give you a clear understanding of the exact price range you will be pre-approved for and an estimate of expected expenses.

QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN INTERVIEWING POTENTIAL LENDERS...

✓ What is the best type of loan for me?

✓ Do I qualify for any special discounts or loan programs?

✓ What interest rate can you offer?

✓ When can you lock in my rate?

✓ What fees can I expect from you?

✓ What are my estimated closing costs?

STEP 2: PRE-APPROVAL

DOCUMENTATION

Finding Your Perfect Home



There are many different factors that the lender will use to calculate your pre-approval. It's always best to be prepared, so here are a few of the documents you can expect to be requested:

- Tax Returns
- W-2 Forms
- Pay Stubs
- Bank Statements
- List of Monthly Debt
- Credit Report

Loan Programs

STEP 2: PRE-APPROVAL

Fixed Rate Mortgages

Description: The interest rate remains the same for the entire term of the loan.

Common Terms: 15, 20, 30 years.

Advantages: Predictable monthly payments, stability.

Disadvantages: Higher initial interest rates compared to adjustable-rate mortgages.

Adjustable-Rate Mortgages (ARMs):

Description: The interest rate changes periodically based on an index, after an initial fixed-rate period.

Common Terms: 5/1 ARM (fixed for 5 years, then adjusts annually), 7/1 ARM.

Advantages: Lower initial rates, potential for lower payments if rates decrease.

Disadvantages: Uncertainty of rate increases, potential for higher payments over time.

FHA Loans

Description: Mortgages insured by the Federal Housing Administration, designed for low-to-moderate-income borrowers.

Advantages: Lower down payment requirements (as low as 3.5%), more lenient credit requirements.

Disadvantages: Mortgage insurance premiums (MIP) required, which increases overall cost.

VA Loans

Description: Mortgages guaranteed by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, available to veterans, service members, and certain members of the National Guard and Reserves.

Advantages: No down payment required, no private mortgage insurance (PMI), competitive interest rates.

Disadvantages: Only available to eligible veterans and military members, funding fee required.

USDA Loans

Description: Mortgages backed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, for rural and suburban homebuyers.

Advantages: No down payment required, low mortgage insurance premiums, competitive interest rates.

Disadvantages: Geographic and income restrictions apply, longer processing times.

Jumbo Loans

Description: Mortgages that exceed the conforming loan limits set by the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA).

Advantages: Allows for financing of high-value properties.

Disadvantages: Higher interest rates, stricter credit requirements, larger down payments.

Interest-Only Mortgage

Description: Borrowers pay only the interest for a certain period, after which they start paying both principal and interest.

Advantages: Lower initial monthly payments

Disadvantages: Higher payments after the interest-only period, potential for negative amortization.

Balloon Mortgages

Description: Short-term loans with lower monthly payments that end with a large balloon payment at the end of the term.

Advantages: Lower initial payments.

Disadvantages: Large final payment, risk of refinancing difficulties.



Down Payment Assistance Programs

STEP 2: PRE-APPROVAL

Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA) Down Payment Assistance

Type: Forgivable second mortgage

Provided by: Ohio Housing Finance Agency

Description: Provides assistance equal to 3% of the home's purchase price for conventional loans or 3.5% for government (FHA/VA/USDA) loans, which can be used toward the down payment, closing costs, or other pre-closing expenses. This assistance is typically forgiven if the buyer remains in the home for a set period (e.g., 7 years).

Who Likely Qualifies: First-time homebuyers and repeat buyers meeting income and purchase-price limits.

OHFA “Your Choice!” Down Payment Assistance

Type: Forgivable assistance

Provided by: Ohio Housing Finance Agency

Description: Offers qualifying homebuyers 2.5% or 5% of the loan amount to help with down payment and closing costs. Borrowers can choose the level of assistance that fits their needs. Forgiveness happens after a period (usually tied to remaining in the home).

Who likely qualifies: Buyers meeting OHFA income limits and purchase price caps.

OHFA Grants for Grads

Type: Forgivable assistance tied to education

Provided by: Ohio Housing Finance Agency

Description: Special down payment help for recent graduates (associate through doctorate earned within the past few years). It provides 2.5% or 5% of down payment/closing cost assistance, typically forgiven after a shorter term (around 5 years).

Who Likely Qualifies: Recent college graduates (e.g., within ~48 months) with associate's or higher degree.

OHFA Ohio Heroes Program

Type: Discount + assistance

Provided by: Ohio Housing Finance Agency

Description: While the main benefit is a reduced interest rate for eligible public service professionals (teachers, healthcare workers, veterans, first responders, etc.), it often pairs with down payment assistance options (e.g., Your Choice!) making homeownership more affordable for essential workers.

Who likely qualifies: Public servants such as teachers, nurses, first responders, veterans, military, etc.

American Dream Downpayment Initiative (ADDI)

Type: Deferred and forgivable loan

Provided by: City of Columbus Housing Division

Description: Available to first-time homebuyers in Columbus City limits. Provides a deferred, forgivable loan up to a percentage of the purchase price (often up to ~6% or capped amount like \$5,000) to help with down payment and closing costs. Forgiveness typically occurs after several years living in the home.

Who Likely Qualifies: First-time homebuyers purchasing within City of Columbus & Columbus City School District limits.

Communities First Down Payment Assistance

Type: Grant (no repayment)

Provided by: The Port of Greater Cincinnati Development Authority (statewide grant)

Description: A statewide grant program offering 3%, 4%, or 5% of the home price toward down payment and/or closing costs with no second mortgage or repayment requirement. Because it's a grant, buyers get instant equity, and there are no restrictions on selling/refinancing. Requires working with a participating lender.

Who likely qualifies: Buyers who meet standard lender guidelines, income limits, and credit minimum (often ~620+).

Local/City-Level or Nonprofit Programs

Provided by: Local housing nonprofits (e.g., NeighborhoodWorks or similar organizations)

Examples: Neighborhood Works or similar nonprofit programs — some community organizations offer set dollar amount assistance toward down payment/closing costs for eligible buyers in Columbus or surrounding areas (income limits typically apply).

Who likely qualifies: Often first-time homebuyers with income below specific limits.



Note: program specifics vary widely and change often, so check current details with the nonprofit or housing agency

Key Things to Know

- Many programs require homebuyer education and have income/purchase price limits.
- First-time homebuyer status is a common eligibility condition, though some programs (like OHFA's Next Home) also assist repeat buyers when paired with assistance.
- Forgivable assistance often becomes a true grant if the buyer remains in the home for the required period. If they sell or refinance early, repayment may be required.
- Some are grants with no repayment (e.g., Communities First), while others are deferred loans forgiven over time.



RECOMMENDED LENDER

Hello! I'm Kevin Simmons, I'm excited to help you navigate the home buying process. Having grown up in Gahanna, I bring a local's perspective and a strong commitment to our community.

With four years of experience in the mortgage industry, I've honed my skills in making complex financial decisions easy to understand. I strive to ensure that every client feels supported and informed every step of the way.

In my free time, I embrace my inner "nerd" by playing Magic: The Gathering and mastering Chess. Colleagues have coined my nickname the "Mortgage Wizard," a nod to my passion for making the mortgage process magically simple and straightforward.

My friendly and dedicated approach builds lasting relationships, setting me apart in the industry. I'm here to be your trusted advisor and to make your home-buying journey smooth and successful.

Let's work together to turn your homeownership dreams into reality! Reach out to me today, and let's get started.



Kevin Simmons

LICENCED MORTGAGE
LOAN OFFICER
NMLS # 2250347



614.562.9285



kevin.simmons@ccm.com



ccm.com/kevin-simmons



RECOMMENDED LENDER

Hi, I'm Mark Jaynes, and I love helping people make smart, confident decisions when it comes to buying a home. As an Owner and Branch Manager at Rapid Mortgage, my goal is simple: make the mortgage process feel clear, manageable, and maybe even a little less stressful than you expected.

I've spent years in the mortgage industry guiding first-time buyers, move-up homeowners, and real estate investors through all kinds of scenarios. No matter where you are in the process, I believe in meeting you where you are, explaining things in plain English, and finding the right solution for your situation—not a one-size-fits-all approach.

Outside of work, I'm a big fan of good bourbon and big challenges. When I'm not exploring a new bottle, I'm usually planning—or recovering from—an extreme hiking adventure. Those experiences have taught me that the best results come from preparation, perseverance, and having someone you trust along for the journey — exactly how I approach helping my clients.

I'm easy to reach, quick to respond, and fully invested in making sure you feel confident every step of the way. Whether things are straightforward or a little more complex, I've got your back.

If you're ready to talk through your homeownership goals, I'd love to help you take the next step.



Mark Jaynes

LICENCED MORTGAGE
LOAN OFFICER
NMLS #12220



614.845.5202



mjaynes@rapidmortgage.com



rapidmortgage.com

STEP 2: PRE-APPROVAL

12 MORTGAGE MISTAKES TO AVOID

DO NOT

- ❑ Cosign on a loan for anyone
- ❑ Quit your job, change jobs, or become self-employed
- ❑ Disregard the lender requirements
- ❑ Buy a car
- ❑ Apply for new credit cards
- ❑ Change banks
- ❑ Lease a new car
- ❑ Spend all your savings
- ❑ Buy furniture before closing
- ❑ Make big credit card purchases
- ❑ Make unusually large deposits to your account (outside of your paycheck)
- ❑ Get behind on your bills



Home Pricing

THERE ARE MANY TYPES OF REAL ESTATE PRICING. IT CAN BE SUPRISING HOW MUCH THESE VALUES CAN VARRY ON THE SAME GIVEN PROPERTY. HERE ARE THE MOST COMMONLY USED:

Market Value

The estimated price a property would sell for in the current market, based on supply, demand, and comparable sales in the area. It's the price most buyers are willing to pay.

Appraised Value

The value assigned to a property by a licensed appraiser, often used by lenders to determine the amount of a mortgage loan. It is based on the property's condition, location, and comparable sales.

Sale Price

The final price a buyer pays for the property, as agreed upon between the buyer and the seller in a transaction

List price

The price at which a property is initially listed for sale by the seller. This is the asking price but may not reflect the final sale price.

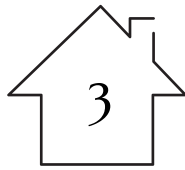
Assessed Value

The value determined by a local tax assessor, typically used to calculate property taxes. This may differ from market value and is based on the area's tax laws.

Insured Value

The value of a property for insurance purposes, reflecting the cost to rebuild or repair the property in the event of damage, excluding the land value. Can also be referred to as *Replacement Cost* or *Actual Cash Value*.





FINDING YOUR HOME

STARTING THE HOME SEARCH



Step One – Setting up your search

After you speak with a lender and get pre-approved, we will begin your online home search. I will set up on an automated search on the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) for you. Additionally, below is a QR code to my website where you can create and save searches as well as favorite properties all on your own.



Step Two – Narrowing down your choices

We will discuss your ideal price range, your must-haves list, deal breakers, location preferences, school districts, and any other factors that will help me find your perfect home.



Step Three – Showings

When a home catches your eye, we will schedule a showing to walk through the property. If you decide it's the one, we will write an offer to be sent to the seller. When that offer is accepted, you will now be Under Contract.





NEW HOME PREFERENCES

Price Range:

Preferred Locations:

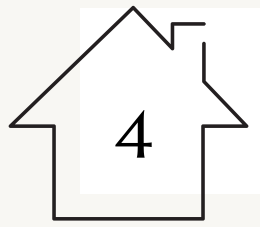
Min. / Max. Bedrooms:

Min. / Max. Bathrooms:

Need:

Want:

Other (basement, garage, yard, architectural style, floors etc.):



OFFERS & NEGOTIATIONS

Presenting a Strong offer

Information Needed

Before we begin writing an offer, we will need to gather some documents and discuss some important details...

- ✓ Pre-approval letter
- ✓ Offer Price
- ✓ Financing Amount
- ✓ Escrow Deposit
- ✓ Closing Date
- ✓ Inspection Period
- ✓ Closing Costs



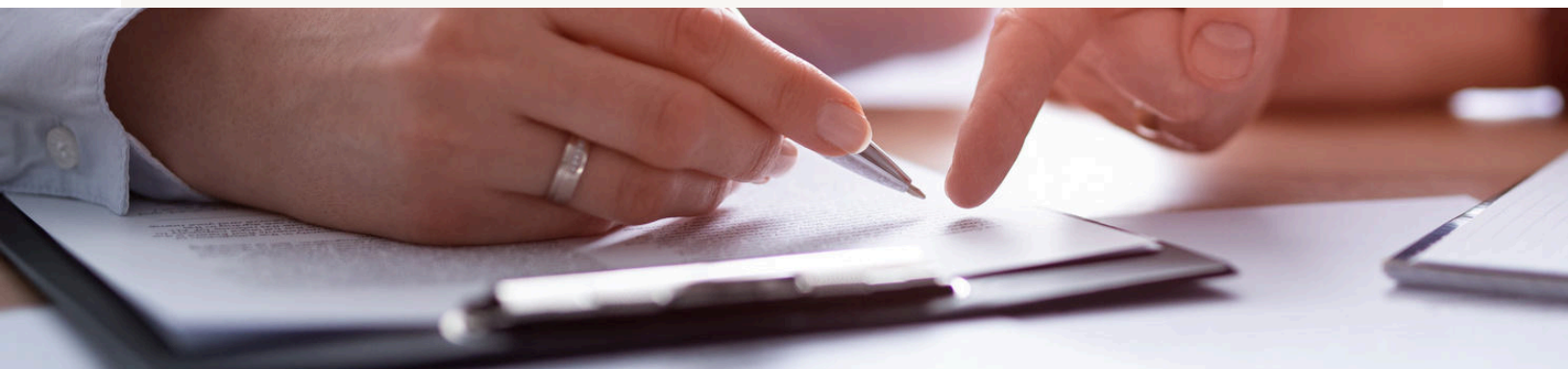
OFFERS & NEGOTIATIONS

Presenting a strong offer

Multiple Offer Situations

It's more common than ever to see homes go into multiple offer situations. This means that your offer is not the only offer on the table for the sellers. Here are some of my best tips to win a multiple offer situation...

- Submit your Pre-Approval letter with your offer.
- Have your lender call the listing agent to share your Pre-Approval details.
- Make a cash offer if possible.
- Offer more than the asking price.
- Be flexible with your closing date.
- Add a personal letter and a photo of you and your family.
- Offer a higher amount for the Escrow Deposit so the seller knows that you are serious.
- Keep your offer clean when it comes to contingencies and don't ask for any that are not a deal-breaker for you.

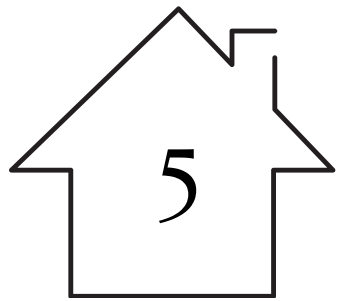




OUR STRATEGY

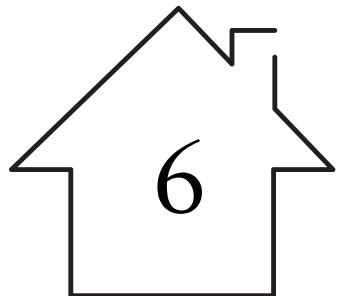
IN CONTRACT

Buying Your Home



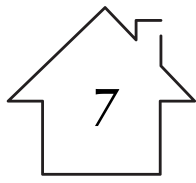
In Contract

Being "In Contract" means you, as the buyer, and the seller have agreed to the terms and conditions of the sale, formalized in a written agreement. This contract outlines important details such as the purchase price, closing date, contingencies, and other agreed-upon terms. Once you're in contract, the property is typically taken off the market, and both you and the seller will work towards fulfilling the contract's requirements to successfully close the sale.



Loan Application

You will typically have 3-5 days after the contract has been accepted to make a formal loan application with your lender. This is a crucial step, where you'll provide your lender with updated information about your financial situation, including your income, assets, debts, and credit history. Getting documentation to your lender quickly is KEY for an on-time closing.

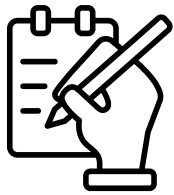


INSPECTIONS

Inspection Time Period

The typical inspection period is between 7-10 days.

It is critical that we begin scheduling the inspections you choose to have done as soon as we are under contract on your potential new home. This will ensure that we do not run out of time or have any delays in the process.



Pro Tip: Ask the inspector to show you the water and gas shut-off valves and the main breaker on the electrical panel in case of emergencies.

Types of Potential Inspections

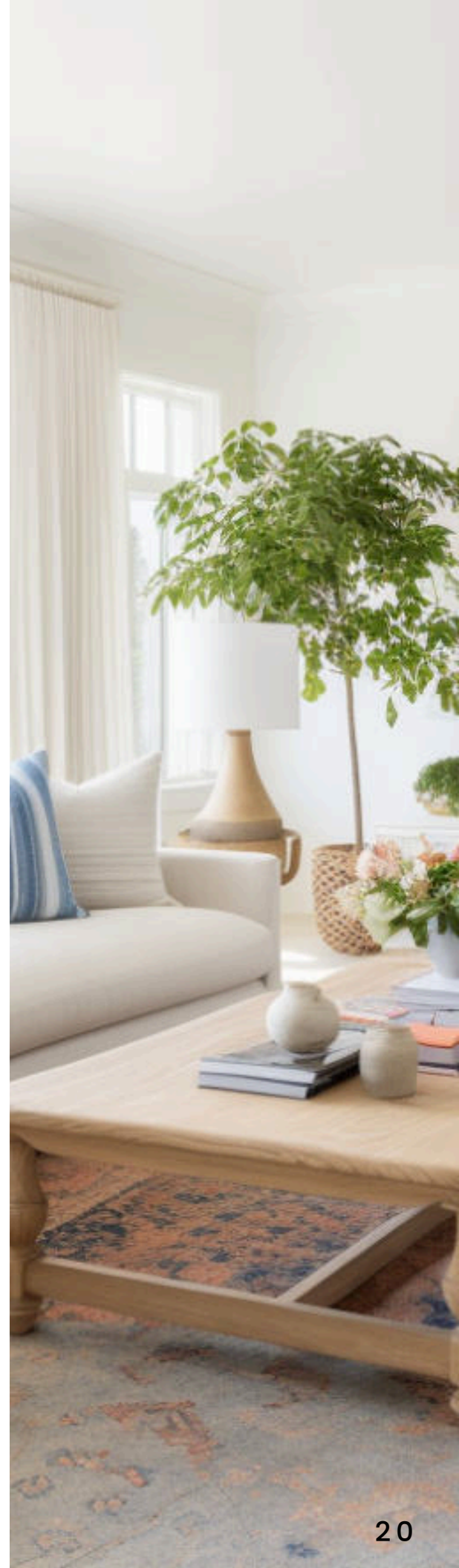
There are several types of inspections you are entitled to have conducted during your inspection period. Here are a few to consider:

- Home Inspection
- Radon Testing
- Wood-Destroying Organism (WDO) Inspection
- Foundation Inspection
- HVAC Inspection
- Mold Inspection
- Lead Based Paint Inspection



REQUEST TO REMEDY

Depending on the results of the home inspection and our negotiation position we will discuss having repairs made, credit to closing, or reduction of home price.



MY RECOMMENDED INSPECTORS

Please feel free to reach out and interview some of the inspectors that I know and trust.

Jim Alavi, K&J Inspections



(614) 738-1672 Cell

<https://kandjinspections.com/>

Jimalavi@kandjinspections.com

Gahanna, Ohio

Flinn Inspection



(614) 662-1000 Office

<https://www.flinninspections.com/>

95 Liberty Ridge Ave., Powell, Ohio 43065

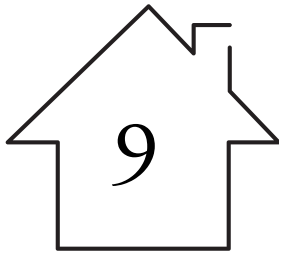
Clarity Inspection



(614) 331-9642 Office

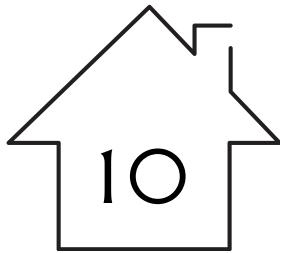
<https://www.clarityinspectionsllc.com/>

1738 Wrenbuty Dr, Galena, Oh 43021



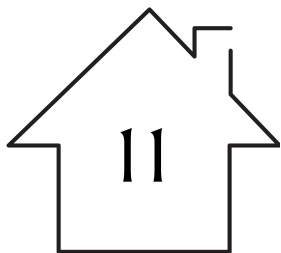
Appraisal

The appraisal will be ordered by your lender after we have made our way through the inspection period. If your contract is contingent on the appraisal, this means that if the appraisal comes back lower than the offer you made, we will have an opportunity to negotiate the price once again.



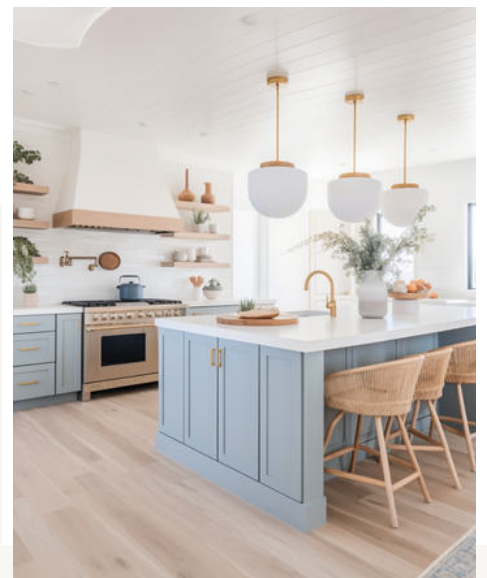
Lenders Review/Clear to Close

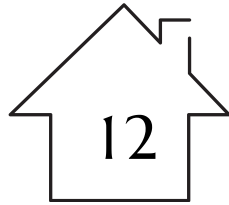
These words are music to my ears, and yours too! This means that that mortgage underwriter has approved your loan documents and we can confirm your closing date with the title company or attorney. Its smooth sailing from here.



Final Walkthrough

The purpose of a final walk through is to make sure that the property is in the condition in which you agreed to buy it. Check lights and outlets work, run water, test appliances, test HVAC, open and close windows, make sure trash is removed from the home. Lastly this is a great opportunity to take pictures and measure for furniture.





🎉 Closing 🎉

The final step of buying a house, known as "closing," involves the official transfer of ownership from the seller to the buyer. During the closing, all necessary paperwork is signed, including the mortgage agreement and title documents. The buyer will also pay any remaining closing costs and receive the keys to their new home. It's a critical moment where all parties ensure that the transaction details are accurate and complete, culminating in the buyer becoming the new homeowner.

Remember to...

- ✓ Bring your CURRENT picture ID with you to closing and make sure your legal name is up to date (most commonly an issue if recently married).
- ✓ Review ALTA (American Land Title Association) or settlement statement for final cash to close amount and wire funds to title company.
- ✓ Switch over utilities before close - I once had a client wait until two weeks after close when their water was shut off to switch over their water bill only to find there was a \$6,000 remaining balance that needed to be paid before service could be resumed.

Get your keys and celebrate buying your home!



Post- Closing Tips & Tricks

- File a change of address form with the post office.
- Call a locksmith to cut new keys.
- Making one extra mortgage payment every year towards principle or doing bi-weekly payments on average cuts 4-6 years off the term of the loan and saves you tens of thousands of dollars in interest over the life of the loan.

Maintenance Reminders

- Check your air filter every time you pay your mortgage; they get dirtier than you think! We recommend changing them every 3 months.
- Clean gutters twice a year and make sure downspouts are draining property away from the house. This is the biggest cause of moisture intrusion into basements. This could save you tens of thousands of dollars down the road in basement repairs.
- Unscrew all exterior hoses in the winter. When water freezes in the spigot, it can cause a leak, leading to an expensive plumbing repair.

LOCAL UTILITIES PROVIDERS

Congratulations on your new home! Below are some utility providers specific to your area.
Give them a call to get your home move in ready.



Electricity



AEP OHIO

1 (800) 672-2231

aepohio.com

Water



CITY OF COLUMBUS

(614) 645-8276

columbus.gov/utilities/about/The-Division-of-Water/

Gas



COLUMBIA GAS OF OHIO

1 (800) 344-4077

columbiagasohio.com

Cable & Internet



BREEZLINE

1 (855) 548-8279

breezline.com

Phone



Spectrum

1 (877) 617-0277

<https://www.flinninspections.com/>

I'VE GOT A GUY

BASEMENT WATER PROOFING

Mike Elis 614.364.1719

Advanced Basement Solutions

advancedbasementsolutionsllc@gmail.com

advancedbasementsolutionsohio.com

HANDYMAN / CARPENTRY

Casey Flanigan 614.499.6433

Flanigan Construction Casey

flaniganconstructionllc@gmail.com

HVAC

Ryan Robinette 614.313.4730

Columbus HVAC Services

Chservices614@gmail.com

columbushvacservices.com

TREE TRIMMING

Caturis Cannon 614.378.8741

Good Soil Lawn and Tree Service

caturiscann34@yahoo.com

LOCKSMITH

Eugene Konoval 440.346.2736

Expert Lock & Key

expertlockandkey@yahoo.com

expertcolumbuslocksmith.com

OUTDOOR LIGHTING

Andrew Freed 614.375.4533

Midwest Lightscares

andrew.lightscares@gmail.com

midwestlightscape.com

PLUMBER

Pipe Mechanical LLC

440.346.2736

pipemechanicalllc@gmail.com

pipemechanical.com

PROPERTY & CASUALTY INSURANCE

Jason Brofford 614.471.4888

Detwiler-Brofford Insurance Inc.

Jason@detwilerinsurance.com

detwilerinsurance.com

I'VE GOT A GUY

TITLE COMPANY

Mark Zipser 614.286.3855

LandSel Title

maz@landsel.com

landsel.com

ROOFING, SIDING, GUTTERS & WINDOWS

Tyler Brooks 614.812.0811

LColdstream Exteriors

tyler@coldstreamexteriors.com

coldstreamexteriors.com/columbus

MOVING & STORAGE

Krupp Moving & Storage

614.820.8070

kruppmoving.com

PAINTER

Bobby Emberly 614.456.8922

Emberly Painting

emberlypainting@gmail.com

Other services: Cabinet refinishing, Garage epoxy

ELECTRICIAN

John Melcher 614.377.9901

jmelectric614@gmail.com

STEAM CLEANING

Ken Doctor 614.779.8800

docssteamkleen.com

Services: carpet, upholstery, air duct cleaning,
stain & pet odor treatment

HOME INTERNET

Jamie Kleppel 614.600.3111

Friendly Computers

jamie@friendlycomputers.net

Other services: Security Camera's, Hang TV's

CLEANING SERVICES

K&A Cleaning Services

614.469.9706

614.906.8941

kacleaningservices614@gmail.com

I'VE GOT A GUY

HOME STAGING

SB Home 614.747.1650

SB Home Staging and Design
info@sbhomestagingdesign.com
sbhomestagingdesign.com

HOME WARRANTY

SafePro 614.230.7277

SafePro Home Warranty
Info@safeprohw.com
safeprohomewarranty.com

WINDOW CLEANING/ PRESSURE WASHING

Tim Crowder 614.428.4364

Window Genie
ecolumbus.owner@windowgenie.com
WindowGenie.com

Client Testimonials

MEET SOME OF OUR HAPPY CLIENTS



“Great help. Being in the Marines I couldn’t physically be in Ohio to look at houses, David drove all around the Columbus area, all the way to Circleville and Lancaster to help. He took plenty of pictures and videos of every house that he went to, and had the networking circle to have professionals come and check out what repairs I would be looking at. Give him the specifics of what you’re looking for and he will find what you need.”

-RICHARD J.



Working with David to purchase my first home was an absolute pleasure! His resilience and poise no matter how things turn out are impressive and admirable. He knows how to dress for any occasion and brings a level of professionalism to the forefront that you just don't get to experience with most people. His leadership is reflected in how his team trusts his processes knowing that his has their best interests. David knows the game well and is very detail-oriented, structured, and proactive, never leaving you wondering what's next. Thank you, David, for helping me turn a dream into a reality!

-TREYVON B.



Notes

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Your Home Matters

Thank you for choosing me to help you buy your home. I look forward to working with you to achieve all of your real estate goals.



David Blakely

REALTOR®



614.592.3709 cell



david@dilussorealestate.com



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dbrealestateservices.com

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