

Basics Of Home Buying

Contributed by Ron King
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Know Your Wants And Needs

Before embarking on your journey of house hunting, you must know what you really want to find. Sit down with pen and paper and list all the features you care most about, such as:

- Location (in a particular city, school district or neighborhood)
- Size -- how many bedrooms and bathrooms
- Parking -- a 1-car garage or 2?
- Style -- 2-story house or ranch style home?
- Heating -- central heating and/or air conditioning?

Equally important, on a new sheet of paper list all the features you absolutely do not want in a house. For example:

- high-traffic area.
- high noise area (airport, train station or highway in close proximity)
- maintenance -- major repairs needed

As you look at houses, keep both lists in mind. Your lists may change over time as you do more looking. You'll want to add or remove features, or perhaps you'll become willing to make compromises. Realize that you most likely will not find the "perfect" home. Experienced homebuyers will tell you, perfect homes are not

found, they are made perfect through hard work.

Get Your Credit Report In Order

Prior to looking at properties, you must get your finances in order. This is the time to review your credit report and clean it up, if need be, to maximize your credit score. Many people do not realize how important it is to check your credit report periodically to make sure it is accurate. You should pay off any past due amounts, or negotiate a settlement price to close the debt. Get such agreements in writing, before paying any settlement. Keep all receipts for any settled items from your credit report since it may take months to get the debt actually removed.

Research Your Home-Buying Options

Decide what kind of property you are interested in. Do you want a HUD property, a foreclosure, real estate, or property for sale by owner?

A number of web sites list homes according to city, state, or price range. Visit these sites to see pictures of homes, many with virtual tours, and review the listing features.

Get Pre-Approved For A Loan

You're ready now to find a lender and get yourself pre-approved for the loan. Being pre-approved offers a number of advantages. It will clarify the price range you can afford. Also, once you find the home you want, you can place an immediate offer. If you have to wait for pre-approval, someone could buy the house right out from under you.

Several special programs are often available from lenders, such as the FHA or Ameri-Dream, that can save you money in the closing. Ask the lender about any special programs before you decide on a loan.

Find A Good Real Estate Agent

It is wise for the first time homebuyer to work closely with a real estate agent, no matter what type of property you're looking for. A knowledgeable real estate agent will make your house-hunting much easier. A good real estate agent is usually a good negotiator, and will be able to help you with the complicated paperwork involved in placing an offer on a house or in closing a deal.

It's essential that you have a real estate agent working for you as the buyer,

rather than relying on the seller's agent for the house you want to buy. The latter can involve a conflict of interest, which usually works to your disadvantage.

To select a real estate agent, you should check with your friends and neighbors for recommendations. Find an agent you feel comfortable with and who is knowledgeable about the area you hope to buy in.

These are just the basics of home buying. You will find many details you need to master as you move through the buying process, but having these basics under your belt will give you a head start.

Visit

<http://www.home-buying-review.com> to learn more. Ron King is a full-time researcher, writer, and web developer, visit his website at <http://www.ronxking.com>

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