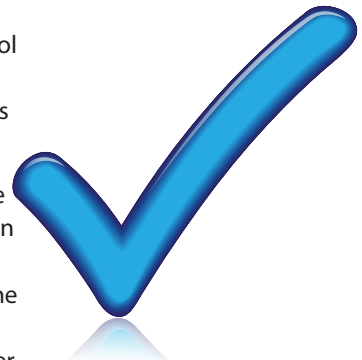


# Do's and Don'ts of Buying a Home

1. Don't use your credit card to buy things for your home before you close. (No excessive spending.)
2. Don't buy a vehicle. Even if you are paying cash versus taking out a loan. Don't do either. Most home loans close within 30-45 days. Your mother taught you that patience is a virtue. Wait until you are in the home.
3. Don't quit your job.
4. Don't open new revolving credit cards (even if the sales person offers you a 20% discount on your current purchase. Say no until after you close.)
5. Do pay all your credit cards on time.
6. Do keep a positive balance in all of your checking and savings accounts.
7. Do keep your money right where it is. Changing banks or moving money back and forth will require explanation, which is just more paperwork for you and your lender.
8. Don't make out-of-the-ordinary large deposits. If you must, be prepared to provide a clear paper trail from where and why.
9. Don't buy large items on your credit cards. We can't stress this enough.
10. Don't lie on your loan application.
11. Don't omit information. (This can be the same as lying!)
12. Don't co-sign on a loan for anyone no matter how much you love them or how many times they promise to pay it back. (This is a good rule whether you are buying a home or not.)
13. Don't make sudden changes in your spending habits or income.
14. Do provide any documentation your loan originator asks for timely. Although it may seem like you are handing over everything but your DNA, keep in mind that you are asking complete strangers to trust you with thousands (if not hundreds of thousands of their dollars). Wouldn't you want to know who you were getting into a contract with, too?
15. Don't just get pre-qualified get pre-approved. Pre-Qualification is a "Yes, but we still have to verify everything you've told us." Pre-Approval is a full underwrite. Which means the lender can say, with confidence you can afford a home within the price range stated. This is a great negotiation tool when house hunting. Sellers like to know they aren't losing out on potential buyers while you're finding out if you can afford the home.
16. Do factor in your lifestyle. A lender will give you a range that includes the top end of how much home you can afford. That number is based on your current expenses not the future. A six-bedroom house requires more heating, cooling (and cleaning!) If it is just you and the dog...it might not make sense.
17. Do some research on your own – know the area you want to be in and what home prices are at this time.
18. Do create a checklist of must haves and a wish list so that you are only looking at homes that meet your expectations.
19. Do think about the future. Consider what you want today and for the next 5 years. The average person stays in a home 7-10 years. If you are confident this is a starter home, see if your lender can approve you for a shorter-term (lower interest rate) loan. Or, if this is your forever home, ask for loan options that help you maximize principal verses interest rate payments.
20. Do relax. You are with the right lender. Trust them and give them what they need to get you approved. You control a lot of the timing. If documentation is required, get it to your originator as soon as possible.
21. Do keep your loan originator's phone number. They are a great source when you want to ask about refinancing, buying a second home or a new home in the future. They already have your history and they can advise you rather quickly.



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