

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU TEAM UP WITH A KNOWLEDGEABLE,
CARING REALTOR TO FIND YOUR DREAM HOME?

HOME BUYER HANDBOOK SECRETS

THE SECRETS TO BUYING A HOME THAT
MOST AGENTS DON'T TELL YOU



Jenelle McCleary, Licensed Oregon Realtor

Don Nunamaker, Realtors

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www.GorgeHomeBuyers.com



THINKING OF BUYING A HOME?

- Are you tired of making someone else's mortgage payment?
- Will you go another year with little or no tax write-offs?
- Did you know there are over 50 ways you can buy a home?
- Would you like to build equity in your financial future?

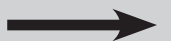
Why should I work with a REALTOR?

YOU NEED TO KNOW THE FACTS!



CONTINUE READING

to find out the facts about owning a home and how it will become a reality, not just a dream!



FIRST, ARE YOU READY TO BUY?

Answer these four questions. If you answer yes to all of them, then you are probably ready to buy a home.

1

Do you have a steady, reliable income?

In other words, have you been employed on a regular basis for the last two years and do you expect to maintain your employment?

2

Do you have a good record of paying your bills?

Have you made regular, on-time payments?
If not, read on; there is still hope.

3

Do you have money saved up for a down payment and closing costs?

Many home buyers think that a down payment of 20 percent is needed. It's not. Many loans exist today that allow buyers to put down 10 percent to as little as 3 percent on the purchase of a home. So don't give up just because you can't come up with a 20 percent down payment.

* Are you a veteran? Don't forget to ask me about VA loans!

4

Can you pay the mortgage each month?

As well as additional costs that go along with homeownership, such as taxes, insurance, and maintenance?

BUYERS QUICK TIP

In real estate, the motto is...

IF YOU SNOOZE,
YOU LOSE!

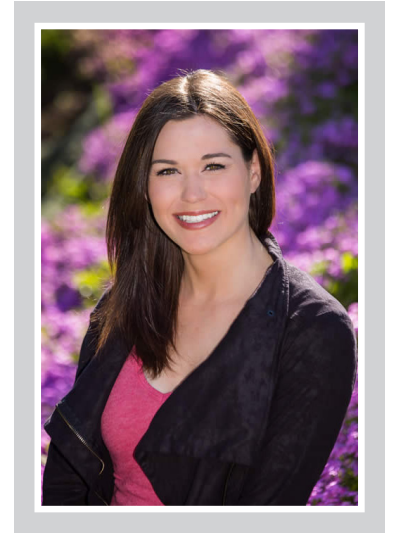
The finer right-priced properties do not last! When looking for a home, remember, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays are best!

Weekends are worst!

Most buyers look for homes on the weekends. This is the time you will most likely find yourself in multiple-offer situations competing with other buyers, and when you compete, you'll always pay more to get the house.

JENELLE MCCLEARY

A native to the Columbia River Gorge, my background is in marketing. I have owned a private marketing firm that specializes in digital, print and social marketing strategies since 2012. This expertise can help me to effectively find your next home in the modern age. I am an excellent salesperson who believes in listening to my clients, anticipating their needs and guiding them through the process from start to finish. I have lived in Dufur, The Dalles, Hood River, Parkdale, and Portland, Oregon, which has given me great personal experience of each area, as well as the knowledge necessary to help you find the home you are looking for here in the Columbia River Gorge.



I am known for outstanding customer service, a great work ethic and dedication. I offer my clients more than just expertise and customer service however; I also bring my confidence, energy, and a healthy competitive spirit to the table. As a broker, you can trust that I will use my years of business experience in sales and marketing in order to get you the best price on your new home. My attention to detail, strong communication skills, persistence, and integrity are all virtues that will benefit me (and you!) when it comes to your real estate needs.

I will take a simple yet diligent approach to find the perfect home for you and your family, here in the Columbia River Gorge. My fearless attitude, resourcefulness, and determined nature make me the right person for all your Gorge real estate needs, just let me prove it to you!

Helping you make the right move!



JENELLE'S MISSION STATEMENT

*To help everyone I meet to love their new home
as much as I love my own.*

*To provide outstanding customer service and attention
throughout the entire home-buying or selling process,
ensuring as smooth a transition as possible.*

*To fulfill my fiduciary responsibilities of
loyalty, confidentiality, disclosure, and
accountability for all of my clients.*

To utilize my knowledge of the area as a native.

*To improve my professional advice by continuing
education in all facets of the market and industry.*

*To treat others not only as I would wish to be treated,
but as they wish to be treated as well.*

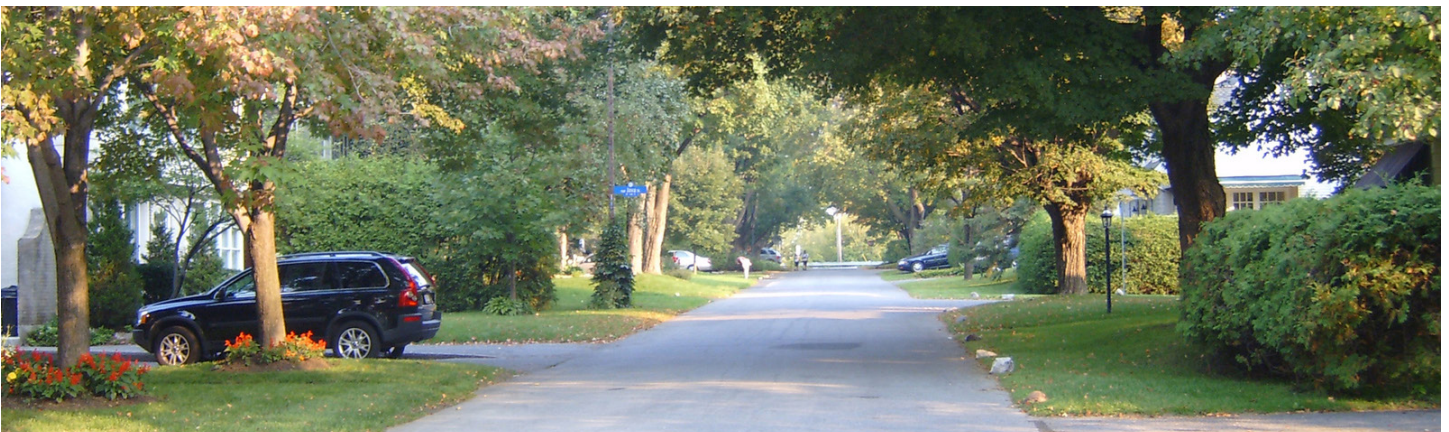
Jenelle McCleary

THE ROLE OF YOUR BUYER AGENT

Why hire Jenelle McCleary?

Buying a new home can be more than just a huge financial decision. It can be an emotional one as well. That is why it is important to choose the right real estate representative, one who is not a “salesperson” trying to sell you on something; but someone who wants to help you accomplish what you have decided you want to do. In order to do this successfully, your full-service real estate representative must be:

- ▶ Your Property Specialist
- ▶ Your Transaction Coordinator
- ▶ Your Community Consultant
- ▶ Your Marketing Manager
- ▶ Your Experienced Negotiator
- ▶ Your Trusted Advisor and Consultant
- ▶ Your Real Estate Professional



One-Stop Home Shopping

- ▶ I offer you “One-Stop Home Shopping.” Simply tell me what you want.
- ▶ I can show you any property in the Columbia River Gorge area, anywhere, anytime!
- ▶ I can sell your current property, too!
- ▶ I cover all the possibilities so that you can make the best choice.
- ▶ You don’t have to play “phone tag” with different realtors or builders.



DON NUNAMAKER, REALTORS TAKE CARE OF EVERYTHING FOR YOU.

- ▶ Are you looking for a resale anywhere?
- ▶ Is your preference new construction anywhere, by any builder?
- ▶ Did you see a for sale sign somewhere?
- ▶ Was the home you saw listed for sale by another company or builder?
- ▶ Did you see an ad in the paper or in a magazine?
- ▶ Did you find something that appealed to you on the Internet?
- ▶ Do you want to sell or buy in another geographic area? It would be my pleasure to refer you to a reputable realtor anywhere in the US to either buy or sell a property. We have built a very efficient national referral network. Just ask!

REMEMBER: *I am here to help!*

Always call Jenelle McCleary of Don Nunamaker, Realtors

I AM HERE FOR ALL OF YOUR REAL ESTATE NEEDS.



ESTABLISHING COMMON GOALS





**FOR
RENT**

UNDERSTANDING THE ADVANTAGES OF HOMEOWNERSHIP

Buying

vs.

Renting

- ▶ You will have a great tax write-off.
- ▶ Your housing expense may never go up.
- ▶ You can use, decorate, make physical changes to, and enjoy your home as you see fit.
- ▶ You may increase your equity as your home appreciates in value.
- ▶ You are not at the mercy of a landlord.
- ▶ Your house will become “home,” not a temporary living situation.

- ▶ You will have no tax write-off.
- ▶ Your rent can go up each year, typically four to ten percent.
- ▶ You must get permission from your landlord to make any changes to your dwelling.
- ▶ You have no equity build-up. Your money is gone for good.
- ▶ You can be evicted, lose your security deposit, and more.
- ▶ Your living situation is always temporary.

So let's get started on the purchase of your new home!

COMMUNICATION...

The key to a successful home purchase.

Together, we will sit down to discuss the type, size, style, and location of the kind of home you are interested in purchasing. After extensive research on my part, we will preview homes together that fall into that category.

Through constant communication and the benefit of the newest technology, instant Home Finder Service, I will keep you apprised of any new homes that come on the market in which you might be interested. Once we have found that perfect home, we will negotiate with the sellers to get the best possible price and terms for the home you desire.

You will benefit from my years of experience in the real estate business at no cost to you. As you already know, my commission comes from the seller.

Real Estate Advisor

- ▶ Property Information
- ▶ Area Information
- ▶ Financing Sources
- ▶ Real Estate Skills
(Negotiating, Agreements, Settlements)

Successful Purchase

Buyer Contribution

- ▶ Property Requirements
- ▶ Area Selection
- ▶ Financing Information
- ▶ Property Selection



DON'T BUY YOUR HOME FROM SOMEONE WHO WON'T GUARANTEE THEIR WORK!

Historically, realtors were not required to work with buyers under a formal buyer agency agreement. Most states now require that all real estate agents disclose agency in the form of a Consumer Notice. A real estate agent can work with a buyer in a variety of agency relationships.

Most agents do not educate their clients. I prefer to work with my buyers strictly in a Buyer Agency Relationship. What does this mean to you? This means I work strictly for you, the buyer, and your best interest!

MY PLEDGE TO BUYERS:

I feel so strongly about it, I put it in writing.

To provide unsurpassed service to help you buy your home at a fair market price, in the shortest time, with the least inconvenience to you, I will:

- ▶ Explain real estate agency relationships.
- ▶ Maintain communication during the term of the agreement.
- ▶ Analyze your property needs and desires.
- ▶ Orient you to current market conditions.
- ▶ Provide helpful community data.
- ▶ Explain local real estate practices and procedures.
- ▶ Provide information on lenders and financing alternatives.
- ▶ Search the local Multiple Listing Service for suitable properties.
- ▶ Coordinate appointments and show all properties of interest, whether the properties are our listings or not.
- ▶ Provide relevant market data as to fair market value of homes.
- ▶ Disclose all known material defects of the property.
- ▶ Explain the offer-presentation process.
- ▶ Deliver State required Property Disclosure form.
- ▶ Carefully explain and prepare Offer to Purchase forms.
- ▶ Arrange to present all offers to seller in a timely manner.
- ▶ Strive to obtain the best possible price and terms for you.
- ▶ Explain post-purchase activities and responsibilities.
- ▶ Follow up on all post-purchase activities.
- ▶ Keep confidential any information that you designate in writing as confidential.

YOUR COMMITMENT TO ME

I have explained in depth the advantages of working with me, Jenelle McCleary of Don Nunamaker, Realtors as your exclusive buyer's agent. In return, I ask you:

- ▶ To communicate responsibly and honestly.
- ▶ To willingly provide pertinent information as needed.
- ▶ To promptly inform Jenelle McCleary of Don Nunamaker, Realtors of changes in timing, requirements, or other critical information that will affect your service commitment.
- ▶ To submit a loan application and all lender-required information within the time frames of the contract when obtaining financing.
- ▶ To enter into contracts in good faith and make every effort to adhere to all negotiated contingencies.
- ▶ To inform all other real estate agents that you are represented by Jenelle McCleary of Don Nunamaker, Realtors.

I agree to work solely with Jenelle McCleary of Don Nunamaker, Realtors for the next _____ days in a cooperative effort to locate and purchase a new home.

Signature _____

Date _____





THE A TO Z OF FINDING YOUR HOME



THE HOME-BUYING PROCESS

This book has been specially designed to assist you with the purchase of your home. I understand the many questions and concerns of home buyers and how this information may be helpful throughout the transaction. I assure you that is my goal to provide the most professional and informative service available. Always call me whenever you have a question.

I am here to help!



THE STEP-BY-STEP HOME-BUYING PROCESS

1

Get pre-approved by a lender

Being pre-approved by a lender before you make an offer on a home can save you thousands of dollars later. I am happy to recommend a top lender for you to contact before our consultation.

2

Your consultation

I will quickly go over the basics of buying a home and provide you with the state's Broker Disclosure Form. Next, I will ask you many important questions to help me get a clear picture of what your needs, wants, and desires are. This takes about 30 to 45 minutes.



3

Find your new home

Once I know all your particulars, I will use technology to search the Multiple Listing Service, as well as other resources, for properties that meet your needs. When we go out to see the selected homes, bring your checkbook! Don't be surprised when you fall in love with a home your very first day – most people do!

4

Draft your purchase agreement

Once we have found your dream home, we'll go back to my office and complete a residential purchase agreement. A sample copy of this will be given to you at your initial consultation.

5

Write earnest money check

At this time, you also submit an earnest money check to go with your offer. This check is usually written for an amount equal to at least one percent of the home. I will take the check and the purchase agreement to the seller's agent and negotiate the sale on your behalf. If the seller accepts your offer by signing the sales contract, you will have "mutual acceptance" at which time your check will be cashed and later applied towards your down payment and closing costs.

6

You bought your new home

This point is often the hardest part of the home-buying process. Why? Because buyer's remorse may set in. Although a majority of home buyers are very excited, some still feel a bit of buyer's remorse. This happens because it's time for an important decision, a large financial commitment, and pages upon pages of legal documents. So remember, the butterflies you feel are completely normal!

7

Formalize your financing

Now that the paperwork is signed, complete a formal loan application if you haven't already done so. Expect to pay for an appraisal and an extensive credit report. If you have asked for any inspections to be done on your new home, you may need to pay the inspector at the time of inspection.

8

Prepare to move

Your closing and possession dates will be determined when you write the offer to purchase and are agreed upon by both the buyer and seller. I will work hard to make sure that everything runs smoothly and to make it as easy and pleasant for you as possible. I'll coordinate your inspection, appraisal, and lenders to help identify any problems and find solutions.

By reading this handbook, you now know more about the "real world" buying process than 90 percent of those who are looking to purchase a home! Please feel free to call me at any time during the process. Although I will work hard to make sure that you are informed, there may be information that needs further explanation.



UNDERSTANDING CLOSING COSTS

Application Fee: Fee charged by the lender to offset fixed costs related to mortgage loan processing such as appraisal credit report, and underwriting.

Closing Fee: The fee charged by the closing agent who prepares the closing documents and closes the loan on behalf of the lender.

Commitment Fee: This is often called an origination fee.

Discount Points: Each point is equal to one percent of the mortgage amount. The lender uses points to adjust the yield on the mortgage when it is sold to an investor. By paying more points, the borrower can obtain a lower mortgage interest rate.

Funding Fees: Normally applicable to VA loans only, equal to one percent of the loan amount. The fee is due at closing or may be added to the loan amount and financed.

Homeowner's Insurance: A one-year premium is due in advance at time of closing.

Mortgage Insurance: Insurance that is required by the lender when the down payment is less than 20 percent. In the case of loan default, this insurance reduces the lender's loss.

Pre-Payables: Adjustments to escrow accounts from the date of closing to the date of the first payment. Interest is paid through the end of the month of closing. Taxes are paid through the end of the month of closing plus the following month. Two months of PMI (Principal Mortgage and Interest) are collected. Two months of homeowner's insurance must be provided along with a receipt showing that the first year's premium is paid.

Processing Fees: Fees charged by the escrow processor, either working for the escrow company, title company, or real estate company for administrative services performed from the point of contract through closing.

Recording Fees: Fees charged by state or municipal entities for entering the closing documents into the public record.

Survey Fee: The title company checks the survey for encroachments from within or from outside the subject property.

Title Insurance: Provides protection for lenders and homeowners against financial loss resulting from legal defects in the title.

Underwriting Fee: Practices vary from lender to lender. Check the good faith estimate for the amount of the underwriting fee.



BUYING: THE RISKS YOU FACE AND HOW TO AVOID THEM



AVOIDING THE MOST COMMON MISTAKES HOME BUYERS MAKE

Which are:

- 1 Not understanding the local market and what is available.
- 2 Not screening the masses, trying to see everything, both in your own price range and not.
- 3 Not understanding pricing and the value of certain amenities.
- 4 Weak negotiating. This mistake alone can cost a buyer thousands of dollars.
- 5 Not requiring the proper inspections.
- 6 Not understanding all available financing.
- 7 Looking for the perfect home.
- 8 Not previewing schools, shopping, and other neighborhood amenities.

By utilizing my skills and expertise, your home purchase will go smoothly and you will avoid these common mistakes.



HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE FINANCING PROCESS



THE BEST ADVICE...

GET
PRE-APPROVED

Most real estate agents and lenders highly recommend that you, as a home buyer, get pre-approved with a lender before selecting a home to purchase.

This way, you will have the best information about the right price range for your pocketbook.



NOT SURE HOW TO FIND A LENDER?

I have worked with numerous lenders in all kinds of price ranges and credit situations. Utilize my knowledge and contacts to find the right lender and financing for your new home.

GREAT REASONS TO GET PRE-APPROVED

1. Pre-approval determines which loan program best fits your needs.
2. You won't waste time considering homes you cannot afford.
3. You are ready to write and present an offer on the home you really want when you find it.
4. Your buyer specialist can give the seller a pre-approval letter for you.
5. In today's market, with multiple offers on properties, pre-approval puts you in a much better negotiating position.
6. You will know the amount needed for down payment and closing costs.
7. If you are a first-time buyer, you may be able to qualify for a special first-time buyer program that may allow you to afford more home for your money.
8. If you feel you would like and can afford a higher mortgage payment, other options may be available.
9. Peace of mind.

LOAN APPLICATION CHECKLIST



When it comes to getting pre-approved for your loan, your lender will ask you for the following items. To expedite the process, have the following information ready when you apply:

Borrower Information

- Full name
- Marital Status
- Age
- Address
- Previous address (if less than 2 years at current address)
- Landlord (past 24 months)
- Length of employment
- Previous employer (if less than 2 years at current employer)
- Social Security number
- Name and age of dependents

Income

- Base pay (pay stubs for 1 month)
- Overtime
- Bonuses
- Real estate income
- Interest income
- Alimony/child support (Copy of Divorce Decree) (Need not be disclosed, if you choose.)
- Other regular income (Social Security, retirement accounts, etc.)
- Last 2 years' W2s and federal tax returns
- Bank statements (past 3 months)



LOAN APPLICATION CHECKLIST (CONTINUED)



Assets

Names and addresses for these accounts will be required along with account numbers.

- Cash (savings, checking, money market)
- Securities (stock, mutual funds)
- Value of real estate
- Proceeds from sale of current home
- Cash value of life insurance
- Automobiles
- Personal property

Liabilities

You will need the total due, monthly payments, and amount of payments remaining.
Names, addresses, and account numbers will also be required.

- Automobile loan
- Bank loan
- Real estate mortgage
- Personal loan
- Notes payable
- Credit cards
- Alimony/child support
- Outstanding judgments
- Miscellaneous debt
- Bankruptcy and discharge of bankruptcy



WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO KNOW ABOUT HOME INSPECTIONS



WHY EVERY BUYER NEEDS A HOME INSPECTION

Why You, as a Buyer, Need a Home Inspection

A home inspection gives you more detailed information to help you make a wise decision. In a home inspection, a qualified inspector takes an in-depth, unbiased look at your potential new home to:

- 1** Evaluate the physical condition: structure, construction, and mechanical systems.
- 2** Identify items that impact the habitability of the home that will need to be repaired or replaced.
- 3** Estimate the remaining useful life of major systems, equipment, structure, and finishes.



What Goes Into a Home Inspection

A home inspection gives you an impartial, physical evaluation of the overall condition of the home and items that need to be repaired or replaced. The inspection gives a detailed report on the condition of the structural components, exterior, roofing, plumbing, electrical, heating, insulation and ventilation, air conditioning, and interiors.

Be an Informed Buyer

It is your responsibility to be an informed buyer. Be sure that what you buy is satisfactory in every aspect. You have the right to carefully examine your potential new home with a qualified home inspector. You may arrange to do so before signing your contract, or may do so after signing the contract as long as your contract states that the sale of the home depends on the inspection.



THE HOME INSPECTION

Most buyers choose to have home inspections done at their expense when purchasing their new home. In fact, many offers are subject to a home inspection. The home inspection allows you to buy a home with confidence. Some items on your inspection report will include:

Exterior

Exterior walls, windows, doors, porches, decks, balconies, garage

Roof

Roof type and material

Interior Plumbing System

Hot and cold water system, the water system and sewage disposal, water pressure and flow, hot water equipment

Electrical System

Type of service, number of circuits, type of protection, outlet grounding, load balance

Central Air System

Energy source, type of cooling equipment, capacity, distribution

Attic

Structural, trusses, insulation, ventilation information

Fireplace

Notes about the chimney, damper, masonry

Interior Walls, Ceilings, Floors, Windows, and Doors

Walls, floors, ceilings, stairways, cabinets, countertops

Garage

Doors, walls, floor, automatic garage door opener

Appliances

Included could be a wide range of built-in and other home appliances listed in the purchase agreement

Lot and Landscaping

Ground slopes away from foundation, condition of walks, steps, and driveway





COMMONLY ASKED BUYER QUESTIONS



QUESTION:

I went to an open house, and the listing agent said that he could represent me better and “fairer” than any other agent, so I really didn’t need a buyer agent. Is that true?

A: Of course agents try to be fair and nice to the buyer since they want to make the sale. But, because they are bound by Real Estate License Laws, the Law of Agency, and their Code of Ethics, they can only do so much without jeopardizing their license to practice. For instance, the listing agent cannot tell you if a property is overpriced or how to negotiate the best purchase price. Ask yourself if the seller has representation, shouldn’t you? As your buyer agent, I will always negotiate only in the best interest of you, the buyer.

QUESTION:

Is there a contract or some other kind of paperwork associated with a buyer agent like there is with a listing agent?

A: For years, sellers have been entering into contractual relationships to “list” their properties with real estate brokers. They are called listing agreements. You establish a contractual relationship with me by signing a buyer agency agreement, just as signing a listing agreement makes a listing agent accountable to the seller. The buyer agency agreement is also a written commitment to you of services that I will provide.



QUESTION:

What if another agent, or company, has a property listed that I am interested in?

A: No problem! I belong to the Regional Multiple Listing Service (RMLS), so I can show you homes listed with any agent.





QUESTION:

Isn't the agent who shows me the home representing me?

A: If you walk into an open house, or a new construction-site model home and any agent tells you that they are the only one who can “write” up the paperwork, don't believe it! Agents who list properties enter into a signed contract with the seller to represent them in the sale of their property. My advice is that unless you have previously interviewed the agent and have entered into a written Agency Agreement wherein they have promised to represent only your best interest and you trust him/her, walk away.

QUESTION:

If you work for the buyer and you negotiate the price down, aren't you also lowering the amount of commission you will make? Isn't that a conflict of interest?

A: The difference is minimal. If I save you \$5,000 on the purchase price of your home, I would only earn approximately \$150 less in commission. Your goodwill and word-of-mouth advertising will be worth much more than that. I also have a legal obligation to represent your best interest.

QUESTION:

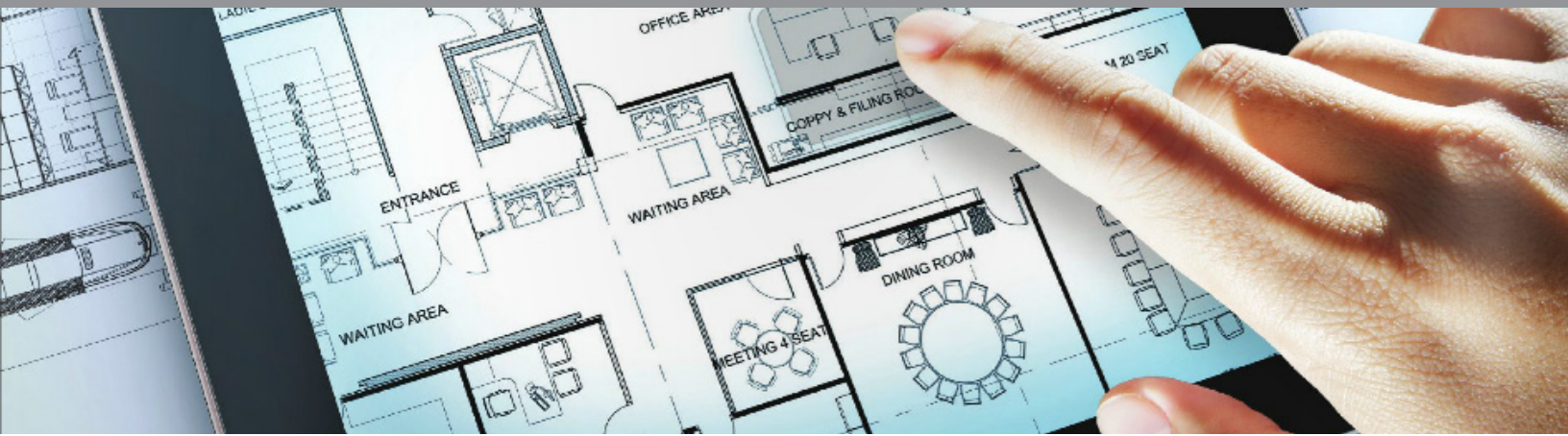
I'm moving to another city. Can you find me a buyer agent at my destination?

A: Yes. As soon as you find out that you are moving, call me and I will provide you with the name and phone number of an Accredited Buyer Agent nearest your destination. I can even screen agents for you at absolutely no cost whatsoever!

QUESTION:

How are you, as a buyers agent, paid for your services?

A: The typical fee paid to me at closing is paid by the seller and is usually divided between the listing broker (the company who has the home listed for sale) and me, your buyers agent broker. Unless there are some unusual circumstances, my portion of the commission comes from the seller's proceeds of the transaction.



QUESTION:

If I sign an Agency Agreement with you, Jenelle McCleary of Don Nunamaker, Realtors, does it really matter? Does it really make a difference?

A: Absolutely! Yes! Let's put it this way: If you had to go to court, would you use the other person's attorney? The second you enter into a contract with an agent, he/she has responsibility and accountability duties. Real estate agents who act as seller agents must negotiate in the best interest of their clients (the sellers). Buyer agents negotiate in the best interests of the buyer, do not disclose confidential information about the buyer, and reveal all facts that affect the value of properties to the buyer.

QUESTION:

Why should I use an agent to buy a builder's new construction home?

A: The advantages are the same as those for purchasing a resale home. I will:

- Serve as your personal real estate advisor.
- Guide you through the process with professional representation.
- Provide you with valuable insight into the market.
- Help you find the perfect home quickly.
- Offer you expertise in contract writing, negotiation, and closing assistance.
- Give you advice regarding all builder's products.
- Find the best match for your specific needs.

The builder has a professional real estate representative watching out for his/her interests, and you need and deserve the same expert representation watching out for yours.

It is extremely important that your interests be professionally represented when you enter into a contract for a semi-custom or build-to-suit home. These transactions are very complex. The contract details must be exactly in order to protect you and to ensure that you get precisely the home you want.



QUESTION:

Do I save money if I buy directly from the builder?

A: There is absolutely no financial advantage for you to buy directly from the builder. You do NOT save any money! Builders have a “single price” policy, meaning that you are charged the same price whether your interests are represented by a buyer agent or not. Just as in any resale, the seller pays your agent’s fee. It pays for you to have someone looking out for your personal interests.

Remember, the builder requires that your buyer agent accompany you on your first visit to the builder’s sales center. Always call me before your meeting so that I can be sure that I am available to accompany you and help to show you all builder products that interest you.

If you do go to a builder model/sales center without your buyer agent, please give the builder’s representative my business card and always tell the builder that you are working with Jenelle McCleary of Don Nunamaker, Realtors. Then, be sure to let me know so that I can assist you regarding the builder and their product.

Using a buyer agent is a definite advantage for you!



WHAT MY CLIENTS HAVE BEEN SAYING



MY CLIENTS SAY IT BEST

“We really enjoyed working with Jenelle! She made the whole house buying process easy! She’s also very knowledgeable about every step along the way! Thanks Jenelle!”

– Donna W.

“Jenelle is the sweetest, most kindhearted person I know. She’s hardworking and will do her best to help! You’re in great hands with Jenelle!”

– Emily H.

“Jenelle was an excellent asset to us as first-time home buyers! She was quick to answer all of our questions and get us all the information we needed. The process of building our house from out of state was tricky at times, but she pulled through for us to make sure we met with the right people at the right time over FaceTime or on the phone. She kept us in the loop with all the information we needed as well as kept us up to date with everything that was required of us during each stage of the process. If you’re looking for a realtor that will go above and beyond to help you through the process of purchasing a home, get in touch with her! I highly recommend Jenelle as a realtor for your first home purchase or your dream home!”

– Elise & Caitlin M.

“Jenelle was a great help guiding us through both the buying and selling process. She was always available for short notice showings, questions or anything else we needed. She sold our home very soon after listing, was able to secure our new home quickly and made the whole process seamless. I would very much recommend her and would use her for any future transactions.”

– Jeremy M.

“Jenelle made our home buying process a breeze. She walked us through; helped educate us on the ins and outs. She kept us informed with emails and texts. Jenelle had good people lined up to work with us for home inspection and escrow, etc. She was quick to get info to our lender so there were no slow downs. We are very satisfied with our home buying experience with Jenelle.”

– Harvey W.



CHECKLIST FOR A HASSLE-FREE MOVE





MOVING TIMELINE AND CHECKLIST

One month before your move:

- Arrange for moving your furniture and personal belongings either by hiring a moving company or renting a truck. Get estimates from several moving companies or truck rental companies and be sure to obtain a hand truck (appliance dolly) if you're moving yourself.
- Gather moving supplies: boxes, tape, rope, and anything else you might need.
- Plan your travel itinerary and make transportation and lodging reservations in advance if you are driving to your new home. (Leave a copy with a friend or relative.)
- Some moving expenses are tax deductible (if the move is employment-related), so you will want to save your moving-expense receipts for tax deductions, including meals, lodging, and gasoline. Record expenses incurred during your house-hunting trips.
- Develop a plan for packing. Pack the things you use the most last. See Tips on Packing in the next section.
- Notify others of your new address: post office, charge accounts, subscriptions, relatives and friends, national and alumni organizations, church, mail order clubs (books, videos, catalogs), firms with which you have time payments, and your past employer to make sure you receive W2 forms and retirement account information. Save your old address labels to speed up filing out change-of-address forms for your new address.
- Notify federal and state taxing authorities or any governmental agency necessary.

Two weeks before you move:

- Notify and get refunds from your present utilities: gas, electric, water, cable, and phone. Arrange for services at your new address. Notify long-distance phone company and arrange for service at your new address.
- Have your car serviced if you are driving a long distance to your new home.
- Recruit people to help you on moving day.
- Arrange for someone to take care of your pets and children during the move.
- Confirm moving company or rental-truck arrangements.

One day before you move:

- Keep moving materials separate so they don't get packed until you are finished.
- Pick up rental truck if you are moving yourself.
- Fill up your car with gas and check oil and tires.

Additional moving checklist items:

- Decide what to move and what not to move. Possibly have a garage sale (extra cash and less to move). See “Tips on Having a Garage Sale” on the next page.
- Transfer your bank accounts. Your new bank will be happy to open your account by mail or email.
- Request records from doctors and dentists, including eye-glass prescriptions, dental x-rays, and vaccinations.
- Obtain your children’s school records to make for an easier transfer.
- Draw up a floor plan of where your furniture should be placed. This will help avoid confusion for you and your movers.
- Pay existing bills and close out local charge accounts.
- Arrange any special movers, that may be necessary for an expensive piano or to break down and move a pool table or above-ground swimming pool.
- Cancel or transfer deliveries, newspaper, garbage collection, etc. Coordinate the transfer of gas and electric, water and sewer so as to avoid lapses in service and extra expenses.
- Check on personal items that might be in a safe-deposit box, at a neighbor’s house, on lay-away, or in a repair shop (e.g., shoe repair, jewelry store, small-appliance repair, or dry cleaner).
- Make arrangements for transporting your plants and pets. See page 40 for more information.
- Transfer insurance policies or arrange for new policies.
- Gather all valuables, jewelry, important papers (birth certificates, deeds, documents) to take with you personally.
- Pack an arrival kit of necessities just in case you arrive before the mover, if applicable.
- Purchase moving insurance. Your mover’s liability for lost or damaged goods will not equal their replacement cost. Have valuable items appraised.
- Check with your attorney about your will, if crossing state lines.
- Ask for professional referrals if available (e.g., doctor, accountant, etc.).



Tips on having a garage sale:

- Allow plenty of time (3-4 weeks) to prepare for the sale.
- Choose a date that will not conflict with holidays.
- Weekends are more convenient for most people than weekdays.
- Your sale is likely to attract more people if you join together with neighbors in an effort to have more merchandise. Some homeowners' groups are sponsoring neighborhood sales that are proving popular!
- Practical household goods are popular items; adult clothing has less appeal.
- Merchandise your items attractively in neat, clean surroundings.
- Cluster like-items together; place the more desirable items in the back of the garage so browsers are urged to look at other merchandise on their way to the most popular items.
- All items should be clean, polished, and in good repair.
- Locate your appliance table near an outlet so customers can try before they buy!
- Be sure that there is adequate parking space and a place to load large items.
- Have plenty of bags and boxes for packing and newspapers for wrapping glass items.
- Place a classified ad in the local paper. Include 3-4 items for sale, directions, and other details.
- Take advantage of free publicity on bulletin boards in grocery stores and other public places.
- Provide directional signs to your property.
- If your home is listed for sale, have flyers about your home available for people to take.
- Visit other sales to form an idea on how to price things. Be prepared to bargain down your prices.
- Post a notice that all sales are final and payment must be cash.
- Have plenty of change in a cash box that is kept in a protected spot. Keep a record of sales, especially when there are several sellers. One recording method that is simple and efficient is to use small white stickers for prices. When an item is purchased, remove the sticker and place it next to the name of the seller on a piece of paper.
- On a hot day, have ice water or lemonade available so people will stay longer, and on cold days serve hot chocolate.
- Tell your real estate agent about some of the major items in your sale. She/he may have a client looking for just that thing! One person's trash is another's treasure!

Tips on packing:

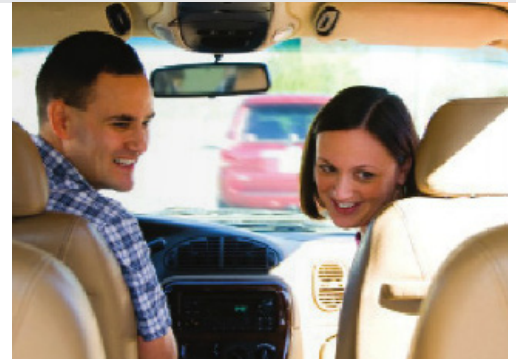
- Use strong containers that are in good condition and can be secured tightly with twine or strapping tape. These can usually be purchased from your moving company. Purchase special boxes for dishes, wardrobe, and other special items.
- Label each box with its contents, which room it should go in, whether it is fragile, and whether it should be loaded last so as to be unloaded first.
- Don't load more than 50 pounds into any one box, and make sure that the weight is evenly distributed.
- Cushion contents with newspaper or other packing material to prevent breakage. Use newsprint paper or tissue paper for items that might be soiled by newspaper. Towels and cloth napkins are great for wrapping fragile items.
- Pack books tightly in small boxes. Alternate bindings and wrap valuable books separately.
- Have your rugs and draperies cleaned before moving and leave them in their wrappings for easier handling.
- Remove all breakables and liquids from drawers and pack them separately. Seal medicines and other containers to prevent leaking and pack them in a leak-proof bag or container.
- Pack linens and clothing in drawers, but don't overload them.
- Carry all valuables with you. Do not pack jewelry, documents, coin or stamp collections, or anything that will be difficult to replace. The contents of a safety deposit box can be moved for you by your bank.



MOVING WITH CHILDREN

(Adapted from information at www.MoversGuide.com.)

If you think moving is hard on grown-ups, imagine what it's like for kids. They're starting over and trying to meet new friends while getting used to a new home, neighborhood, and school. Think about your children's specific needs before, during, and after the change and you'll make a big difference in how your children feel about the move and how they adjust afterwards.



BEFORE THE MOVE: Preparing

- Give your children a chance to talk about their feelings and let them know how you are feeling too.
- Help them make a list of phone numbers and addresses of friends, relatives, and other important people. Knowing they can stay in touch with these people will be reassuring.
- Visit your new home and line up some activities for your child to be part of after the move; a sports team, music lessons, or a scouting troop.

DURING THE MOVE: Remembering What's Important

- Stay as upbeat and calm as you can. Your own mood will impact your children's moods.
- Involve your children in the packing. Older children can put their own belongings in boxes, and children of all ages will enjoy decorating the boxes containing their things.
- Don't pack things that your children treasure. Take special blankets, favorite books, and other prized items in the car or on the plane with you.
- Help your children say goodbye to the important people in their lives. For their friends, a party is a fun way to celebrate the friendship.
- For many families, moving day means a long car trip or a cross-country flight. Prevent backseat blues and airline angst by adding travel fun and games to your plans.

AFTER THE MOVE: Getting Settled

- To make your new home seem more like home, hang your child's or family portrait in a prominent location or create a tabletop display of family photographs.
- Don't spend too much time unpacking, at least not right away! In the first few days, take time to enjoy your new home with your family. Take walks and check out local restaurants.
- Above all, listen. Be there when your children get home after the first day at their new schools, even if it means having to leave work early. Ask often how things are going, and take time to listen.

Moving your pets:

Cats and Dogs

Cats and dogs can either be shipped by air or taken along in the car. If you are flying to your new destination, your cat or dog can ride in the baggage compartment. Your pet will need a health certificate from your vet. Call the airline in advance to find out about special boxes they may have. If you are going to make a container for your pet, make sure that the container complies with airline regulations. It is a good idea to put a piece of clothing with your scent in the animal's box so he/she feels more at home.

If you aren't flying with your pet but are having him/her shipped by air, make sure that someone is on the other end to pick your pet up from the airport and take care of him/her until you arrive. The easiest way to care for your pet before your arrival is a kennel. Many kennels can take your pet several days before your move (keeping him/her safe and out of your way). Or you can take your pet to the airport and arrange to have a kennel on the other end pick him/her up and take care of him/her until you arrive.

Think twice about taking your dog or cat with you on a long cross-country trip. Not only can animals get car sick, but being cooped up in a car all day can make them nervous and upset. They must be fed and have plenty to drink (make sure that you take along a water dish), they have to make "rest stops," and they have to be on a leash to keep them from running off anytime the car door is opened.

Some motels and hotels don't allow pets. Others have special facilities for handling travelers' pets. Call in advance and check out the available literature on hotels along your route. National chains usually publish such information.

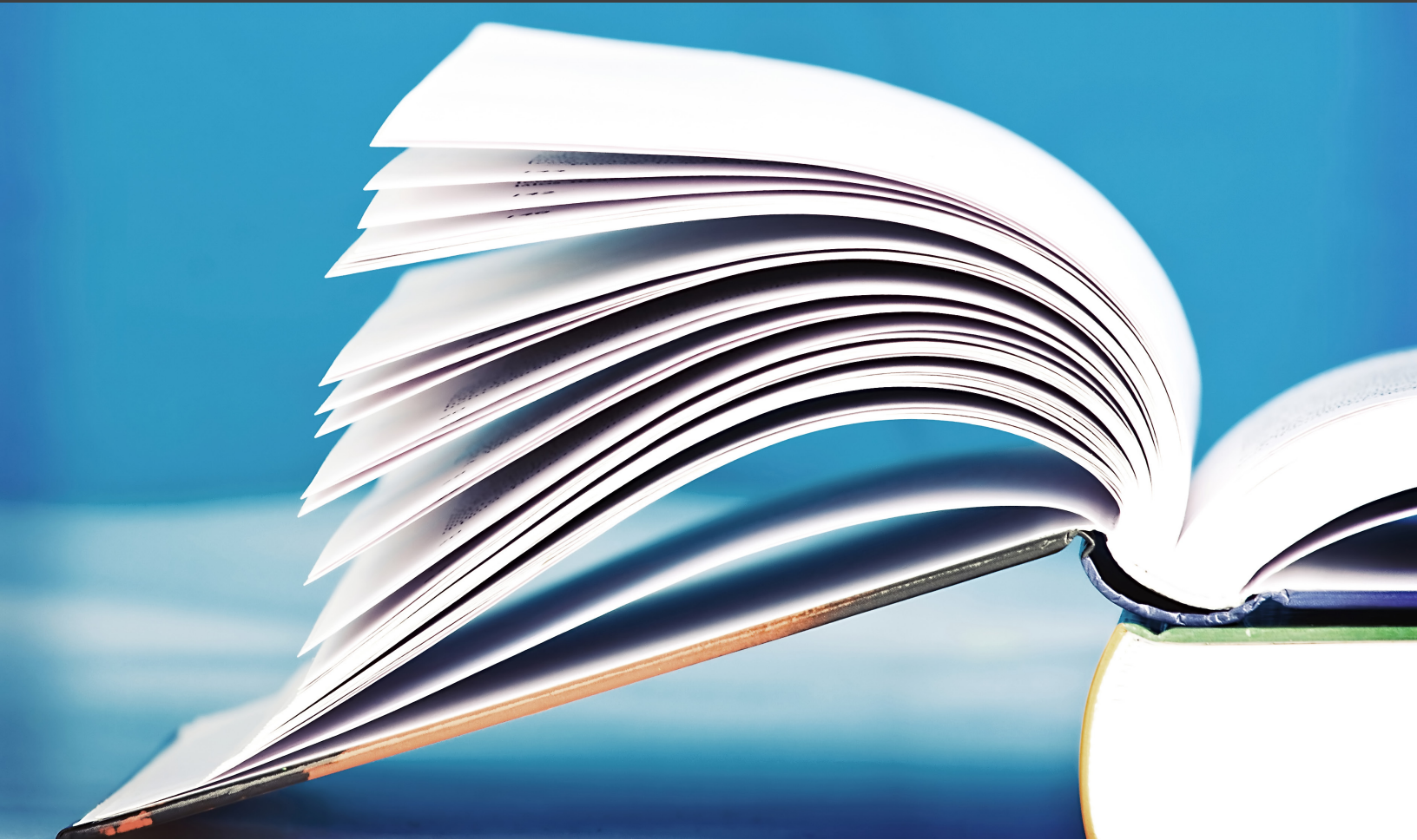
Smaller Animals

Hamsters, birds, mice, and such can be transported in the family car fairly easily. Make sure that the animals have enough food and water in their cages and are out of drafts or extreme temperatures. Cover cages with a cloth to keep the pets quiet and restful.

Fish

It is not practical to move fish in their aquarium. A gallon of water weighs eight pounds. Plan on giving the fish away and restock the aquarium when you arrive at your new home.





GLOSSARY OF TERMS



Abstract of Title

The summary of the public records relating to the ownership of a particular piece of land. It represents a short legal history of an individual piece of property from the time of the first recorded transfer to present.

Acceptance

Consent to an offer to enter into contract.

Adjustable Rate Mortgage (ARM)

A mortgage in which interest and payment rates vary periodically, based on a specific index, such as 30-year Treasury Bills or the Cost-of-Funds index.

Adjustments

Money credited or debited to either/both buyer and seller at closing, including real estate taxes, association fees, garbage fees, rents, etc.

Agency

A mutual-consent, legal relationship in which a seller or buyer engages a broker-agent in the sale or purchase of property.

Agent/Realtor

A licensed person who represents the seller (and/or buyer) and who provides market assessment, offers sales or buying strategy, recommends various services and sources important to the seller or buyer, is a member of the National Association of Realtors (NAR), and subscribes to NAR's strict Code of Ethics.

Amortization

A method by which monthly mortgage payments are equalized over the life of a loan, despite the fact that the proportion of principal to interest changes.

Annual Percentage Rate (APR)

The total finance charge (interest, loan fees, points) expressed as a percentage of the mortgage amount.

Appraisal

A professional and unbiased written opinion of a property's value that is based on recent, comparable sales; quality of construction and current condition; and style of architecture.

Appreciation

Increase in value to any cause.

Asking Price

The price at which a property has been placed on the market for sale.

Assessed Value

The established value of a property for tax-assessment purposes, which may or may not reflect market value.



Assumption of Mortgage

The taking of title to property by a grantee, wherein he or she assumes liability for payment of an existing note secured by a mortgage or deed of trust against the property, becoming a co-guarantor for the payment of a mortgage or deed for trust note.

Balloon Mortgage

A short-term mortgage, generally at a fixed rate of interest, to be paid back in predetermined, equal monthly payments with a large final payment for the balance of the loan to be paid at the end of the term.

Broker

A person licensed to represent home buyers or sellers for a contracted fee. Brokers manage real estate offices and employ licensed agents to sell properties.

Bridge Loan

A short-term mortgage made until a longer-term loan can be made; it's sometimes used when a person needs money to build or purchase a home before the present one has been sold.

Building Codes

State and local laws that regulate the construction of new property and the rehabilitation of existing property.

Cap

A limit on the total amount an interest rate can be increased in a specified time and over the lifetime of an adjustable-rate mortgage.

Capital Gains

The taxable profit derived from the sale of a capital asset. A gain is the difference between the sale price and the basis of the property, after making appropriate adjustments for closing costs, fix-up expenses, capital improvements, allowable depreciation, etc.

Closing

The final settlement at which time the title is transferred from seller to buyer, accounts are settled, new mortgages are signed, and all fees and expenses are dispersed or satisfied.

Closing Costs

All fees, taxes, charges, commissions, surveys, lender fees, inspection fees, and other costs paid by the buyer and/or seller at the closing.

Commission

A previously agreed upon percentage of the home's sale price paid to the listing and selling agent(s).

Comparables

Similar properties in type, size, price, and amenities that have sold recently, been adjusted, and are used for comparison in the appraisal report.

Condominium (Condo)

Real estate ownership in which a property owner has title to a specific unit but shared interest in common areas.

Contingency

A condition that must be satisfied before a contract is binding.

Contract

An agreement to do or not to do a certain thing.

Contract for Deed

A contract ordinarily used in connection with the sale of a property in cases where the seller does not wish to convey title until all or a certain part of the purchase price is paid by the buyer.

Contract of Title

A summary or digest of the conveyances, transfers, and any other facts relied on as evidence of title together with any other elements or records that may affect the marketability of the title.

Conventional Mortgage

Most popular home financing form not insured by Federal Housing Administration (FHA) or guaranteed by Veteran's Affairs (VA). Available from many lenders at varying rates, terms, and conditions.

Conversion Clause

Clause in an ARM permitting conversion from an adjustable loan to fixed-rate loan.

Counteroffer

An offer made by a buyer or seller to the other party, responding to the asking price or a subsequent adjustment to that price to complete a purchase of sale.

CRV

Certificate of Reasonable Value. A document of appraisal issued by VA establishing their opinion of the maximum value.

Curb Appeal

A term used by REALTORS that encompasses all that a buyer sees from the street that may induce the buyer to look more closely at the property.

Deed

A legal "instrument" that conveys the title to a property from seller to buyer.

Disclosure Laws

State and federal regulations that require sellers to disclose such conditions as whether a house is located in a flood plain or if there are any known defects that would affect the value of the property.



Discount Points

Additional charges made by a lender at the time a loan is made. Points are measured as a percent of the loan, which each point equals one percent. These additional interest charges are paid at the time a loan is closed to increase the rate of return so as to approximate the market level.

Down Payment

The buyer and lender determine the down payment requirements during the pre-qualification process. The down payment is usually expressed as a percentage of the purchase price: e.g., 0%, 5%, 10%, 20%, 25%, 30%.

Earnest Money (Escrow Deposit)

Money paid by the buyer at the time an official offer to purchase is submitted to the seller, intended to demonstrate the good faith of the buyer to complete the purchase. Earnest money is applied against the purchase price when the sale is finalized. Under certain conditions, the earnest money may be forfeited if the buyer fails to complete the purchase under the terms of the sales contract.

Easement

A right to use the land of another.

Encroachment

A situation where a property owner violates the property rights of his/her neighbor by building something on the neighbor's land or by allowing something to hang over onto the neighbor's property by violating property lines either intentionally or unintentionally.

Encumbrance

A condition that limits the interest in a title to property such as a mortgage, deed restrictions, easements, unpaid taxes, etc.

Equity

The difference between the sale price of a property and the mortgage balance owed on the property.

Equity Mortgage

A mortgage based on the borrower's equity in their home rather than on their credit worthiness.

Escrow Account

A third-party account used to retain funds, including the property owner's real estate taxes, the buyer's earnest money, or hazard insurance premiums.

Exchange

The trading of equity in a piece of property for equity in another property.

Fair Market Value

The highest price an informed buyer will pay, assuming there is no unusual pressure to complete the purchase.

Fannie Mae

The Federal National Mortgage Association (FNMA) is a privately owned corporation created by congress to buy mortgage notes from local lenders and provide guidelines for most lenders to use to qualify borrowers.

Fee Appraisal

The act or process of estimating values of real estate or any interest therein for a fee.

FHA-Insured Mortgage

A loan made by a local lending institution and insured by the Federal Housing Administration, whereas the buyer pays the premium.

Firm Commitment

A lender's agreement to make a loan to a specific borrower on a specific property. An FHA or Private Mortgage Insurance (PMI) agreement to insure a loan on a specific property, with a designated purchaser.

Fixed-Rate Mortgage

A mortgage with a set interest rate for the entire term of the mortgage.

FMHA Loan

A loan insured by the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation (FHLMC), a federally controlled and operated corporation to support the secondary-mortgage market.

Foreclosure

A legal procedure whereby mortgaged property is seized and sold as payment for a debt in the event of default.

Freddie Mac

The nickname for Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation (FHLMC), Freddie Mac is a federally controlled and operated corporation to support the secondary-mortgage market. It purchases and sells residential conventional home mortgages.

Graduated-Payment Mortgage

This mortgage offers low initial monthly payments that increase at a predetermined rate and then cap at a final level for the duration of the mortgage.

Home Inspection

A formal survey of a home's structure, mechanical systems, and overall condition, generally performed by an inspector or contractor.

Home Warranty

A policy available to the buyer or seller as insurance against unanticipated home-repair costs.

Homeowner's Policy

A hazard insurance policy covering, at the very least, the appraised value of a house and property.

Inspection Contingency

A written stipulation contained in an "offer to buy" that makes the sales contract predicated upon the findings of a professional home inspector.



Installation Debts

Long-term debts that usually extend for more than one month.

Interest

The predetermined charge or fee paid to a lender by the borrower for the use of monies loaned.

Investor

The holder of a mortgage or the permanent lender. Any person or institution that invests in mortgages.

Joint Tenancy

Joint ownership by two or more persons with right of survivorship; all joint tenants own equal interests and have equal rights in the property.

Land Contract

A contract ordinarily used in connection with the sale of property in cases where the seller does not wish to convey title until all or a certain part of the purchase price is paid by the buyer.

Lease Purchase Agreement

The buyer makes a deposit for the future purchase of property with the right to lease the property in the interim.

Lien

A legal claim against a property that must be paid when the property is sold.

Listing

A contract through which a seller agrees to terms and fees with an agent who will sell the property to a buyer.

Loan Commitment

A written promise by a lender to make a loan under certain terms and conditions. These include interest rate, length of loan, lender fees, annual percentage rate, mortgage and hazard insurance, and other special requirements.

Loan-to-Value Ratio

The relationship between the amount of a home mortgage and the total value of the property.

Lock-in Rate

A commitment made by lenders on a mortgage loan to “lock in” an interest rate pending mortgage approval. Lock-in periods vary.

Market Price

The actual price at which a property is sold.

Market Value

The price that is established for a property by existing economic conditions, property location, size, etc.

Marketable Title

Merchantable title, free and clear of objectionable liens or encumbrances.

Mold

Mold is a superficial and often woolly growth produced on damp or decaying organic matter or on living organisms. See www.epa.gov/iag/molds/moldguide.html for a guide that provides information and guidance for homeowners and renters on how to clean up residential mold problems.

Mortgage

A legal claim received by the lender on a property as security for the loan made to a buyer.

Mortgagee

The lender of money or the receiver of the mortgage document.

Mortgage Broker

An independent, third-party, licensed broker who arranges loan transactions between lenders and borrowers by facilitating the application and approval process.

Mortgage Insurance Premium (MIP or PMI)

The consideration paid by a mortgagor for mortgage insurance either to the FHA or a PMI company. On an FHA loan, the payment is one half of one percent annually on the declined balance of the mortgage. It is a part of the regular monthly payment and is used by the FHA to meet operating expenses and provide loss reserves.

Mortgagor

The borrower of money or the giver of the mortgage document.

Multiple Listing Service (MLS)

A system through which participating brokers agree to share commissions on a predetermined percentage split on the sale of properties listed on the system.

Origination Fee

This fee is a supplemental fee paid by buyers to lenders, usually stated as a percentage or as points.

Personal Property

Any property which is not real property: e.g., money, savings accounts, appliances, cars, boats, etc.

PITI

Common real estate acronym meaning Principal, Interest, Taxes, Insurance.

Point

A single percent of the loan principal, often charged by the lender in addition to various fees and interest.



Prepayment

When a borrower pays off an entire mortgage before the scheduled payoff date.

Prepayment Penalty

A fee included in the mortgage agreement that is required of the borrower in the event the loan is paid off before the due date. Look for a clause that says, "There shall be no prepayment penalty."

Prequalification

An informal estimate of the "financing potential" of a prospective borrower.

Principal

The amount of money borrowed against which interest and possibly fees will be charged. OR: One of the parties to a contract.

Private Mortgage Insurance (PMI)

Insurance issued to a lender by a private company to protect the lender against loss on a defaulted mortgage loan. Its use is usually limited to loans with high loan-to-value ratios. The borrower pays the premiums.

Promissory Note

A written contract that contains a promise to pay a definite amount of money at a specific time in the future.

Proration

Proportionate division of expenses based on days or time occupied or used by the seller and/or buyer.

Purchase Agreement

A written, legally binding contractual agreement between a buyer and a seller for the purchase of real estate.

Qualification

Ability of a borrower to satisfy a lender's mortgage-approval requirements.

Radon

A colorless, odorless gas formed by the breakdown of uranium in sub-soils. It can enter a house through cracks in the foundation or in water and is considered to be a hazard. Your realtor can supply a radon brochure.

Real Property

Any land and whatever by nature or artificial annexation is a part of it.

Referral

The recommendation by one agent of a potential buyer and/or seller to another agent either locally or long distance.

Refinancing

The process of applying for a new mortgage to gain better terms or use of equity.

Relocation Specialist

A firm or person specializing in advising buyers or sellers on relocating to different and/or new communities. There are designations for realtors that indicate additional educational training. Look for the Certified Relocation Professional (CRP) designation.

Return on Investment (ROI)

The profit gained as the result of money spent on an improvement or addition to a home or property.

Settlement Disclosure Statement

A statement or list providing a complete breakdown of costs involved in finalizing a real estate transaction prepared by the lender's agent prior to closing and reviewed at closing by the buyer and seller.

Survey

The process by which a parcel of land is measured and its area ascertained. Title companies study the survey to check for encroachments.

Title

A legal document that defines the property, right of ownership, and possession.

Title Defect

An outstanding claim or encumbrance on property that affects marketability.

Title Insurance

An insurance policy that protects the buyer against errors, omissions, or any defects in the title.

Title Search

A highly detailed search of the document history of a property title for the purpose of identifying any and all legal encumbrances to the property prior to title transfer to a new owner.

VA Mortgage

The Department of Veterans Affairs has made guaranteed mortgages available through banks and other lending institutions to active military personnel, veterans, or spouses of veterans who died of service-related injuries.

Walk-through Inspection

The final inspection by the buyers, usually in the company of the buyers' real estate sales agent, to ensure that all conditions noted in the offer to purchase and all seller-related contingencies have been met. This inspection is most often completed immediately prior to the closing and after the seller has vacated the premises.

Zoning

Virtually all local communities have established specific restrictions for land use, new construction, and remodeling activity. These are available to you through a local regulatory department such as the Building Inspector's Department or office or the Planning and Zoning Board.





YOUR HOME-SHOPPING SCORECARDS



YOUR HOME-SHOPPING SCORECARD

Property Address:

What I liked about this home:

What I did NOT like about it:

Property Address:

What I liked about this home:

What I did NOT like about it:



Property Address:

What I liked about this home:

What I did NOT like about it:

Property Address:

What I liked about this home:

What I did NOT like about it:

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