



# HOME SELLER'S GUIDE



## **TIPS FOR SELLERS:**

what you need  
to know



## **TITLE INSURANCE:**

what is it and why  
do you need it?



## **MOVING CHECKLIST**

and tips for a  
stress-free move

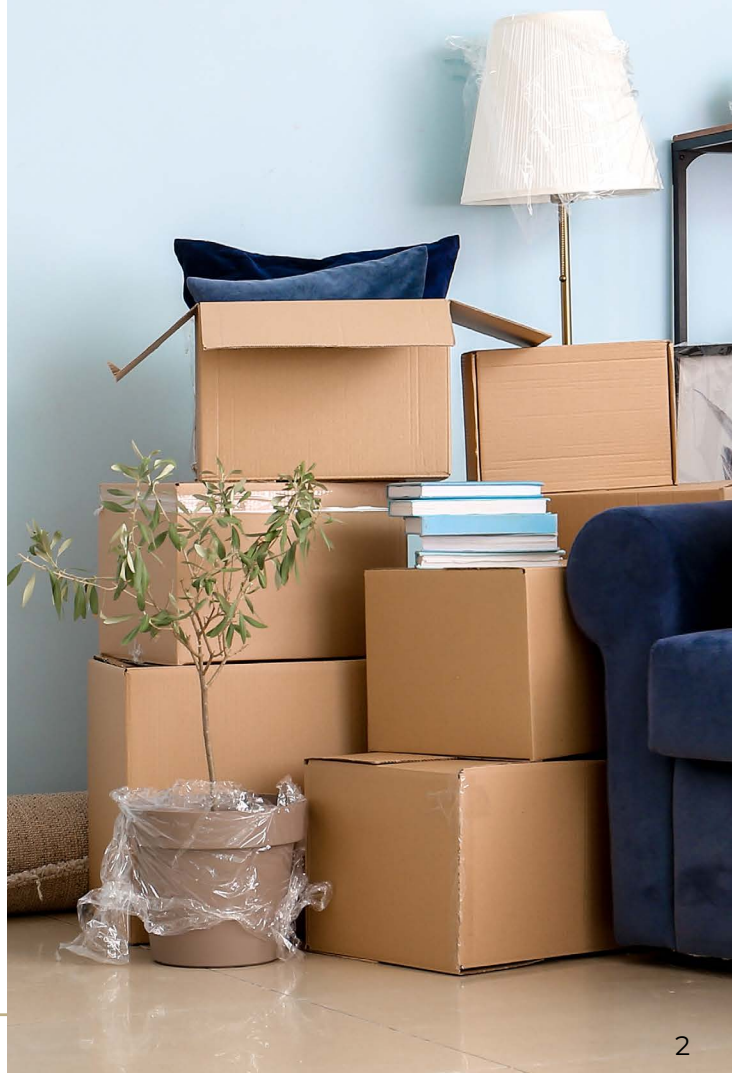
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Home is where  
the heart is...  
...even if you  
can't remember  
which box you  
packed it in!





In the selling process, there are several things to consider before you list your home and after you accept an offer. Here is an overview of the entire process.

## BEFORE YOU LIST YOUR HOME

### Select a Real Estate Agent

- What is their experience in the industry?
- Ask for their track record.
- Ask what marketing material they will provide.

### Determine Your Home's List Price by Using:

- Online estimates of your home's value
- Your home's sales history
- Local listings and open houses

### Determine Your Selling Timeframe

- Two months prior to listing, evaluate your financial situation and budget, tally transaction costs and remaining equity, and collect title, survey, mortgage insurance, and other key documents.
- How long has it taken other houses to sell in your neighborhood?

## ONCE THE OFFER IS ACCEPTED

### Escrow Opened

- Once the offer is accepted and conveyed, escrow is opened with WFG.
- Earnest money is deposited at this time.
- Escrow orders a Title Commitment and sends copies to the real estate agents and the lender.
- Escrow instructions are issued to all parties.

### Funding

- The lender sends funds to WFG.

### Close of Escrow

- The deed is recorded at the County Recorder's office by WFG. You will receive the original back from the county record in about six weeks.
- The keys are transferred from the seller to the buyer.

## How do I open an escrow?

Generally, the real estate agent will open the escrow. As soon as you execute the real estate purchase agreement, the agent will place the buyer's initial deposit, if any, in the escrow account with WFG.

## What information will I have to provide?

You may be asked to complete Seller Information Form(s) and a Statement of Identity as part of the necessary paperwork. Because many people have the same name, the Statement of Identity is used to identify the specific person in the transaction through such information as date of birth, social security number, full middle name, etc. This information is kept confidential by WFG.

## What do I need to do before my appointment to sign escrow documents?

All parties signing the documents must bring proper identification. You may be required to bring a current driver's license, identification card, or current passport with you to the signing. These items are needed to verify your identity by a Notary Public; this is a routine but necessary step for your protection.

## When do I sign escrow instructions, and where do I do this?

Your escrow officer or real estate agent will contact you to make the appointment for you to sign your escrow instructions, Warranty Deed, and final closing papers. At this time, the escrow officer will also tell you the approximate amount of sales proceeds you will receive at closing.

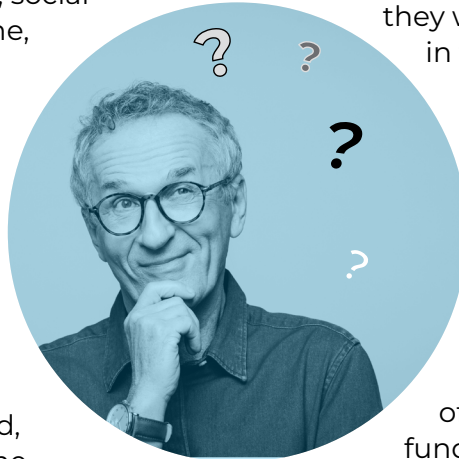
## How long is an escrow?

The length of an escrow is determined by the terms set forth in the real estate purchase

agreement and can range from a few days to several months. The average timeframe, however, is about 30-60 days.

## What is the next step after I/we have signed the closing escrow papers?

After the buyer and seller have signed all the necessary instructions and documents, the escrow officer will return the buyer's loan documents to the lender, if any, for final review. This usually occurs anywhere from 24 hours to a couple of days after the execution of said loan documents. After the review is completed and the lender is ready to fund the buyer's loan, they will notify the escrow officer, who, in turn, will notify all parties.



## What is an "escrow closing"?

An escrow closing is the culmination of the transaction. It signifies the legal transfer of the title from the seller to the buyer. Generally, the Warranty Deed and Deed of Trust are recorded within one working day of the escrow holder's receipt of loan funds and buyer closing funds. This completes the transaction and signifies the "close of escrow." Once all conditions of the escrow have been satisfied, the escrow officer informs you or your real estate agent of the date escrow will close and takes care of the disbursement of all funds in the escrow at closing.

## When and where do I get my final sale proceeds?

The proceeds of your sale are disbursed upon close of escrow once the escrow holder has received confirmation from the county recorders office that the Warranty Deed and other required documents have been recorded and legal transfer has occurred. The proceeds will be delivered as per your instructions to the escrow holder and/or officer at WFG.



## First Impressions Are Lasting

The front door greets potential buyers. Make sure it is fresh and clean. Keep the lawn trimmed, edged, and free of refuse.

## Decorate For a Quick Sale

Faded walls and worn woodwork reduce appeal. Why try to tell a potential buyer how your home could look when you can show them by redecorating?

## Let the Sunshine In

Open draperies and curtains, and let potential buyers see how cheerful your home can be.

## Fix That Faucet

Dripping water discolors sinks and suggests faulty plumbing.

## Repairs Can Make a Big Difference

Loose knobs, sticking doors and windows, warped cabinet drawers, and other minor flaws detract from a home's value. Have them fixed.

## From Top to Bottom

Display the full value of your attic and other utility space by removing all unnecessary articles.

## Safety First

Keep stairways clear. Avoid cluttered appearances and possible injuries.

## Bathrooms Help Sell Homes

Check and repair caulking in bathtubs and showers. Make this room sparkle.

## Arrange Bedrooms Neatly

Remove excess furniture. Use attractive bedspreads and freshly laundered curtains.

## Can You See the Light?

Illumination is like a welcome sign. Potential buyers will feel a glowing warmth when you turn on all your lights for an evening inspection.

## Make Closets Look Bigger

Neat, well-ordered closets show that space is ample.

## Three's a Crowd

Avoid having too many people present during an inspection. A potential buyer will feel like an intruder and will hurry through the house.

## Pets Underfoot?

Keep pets out of the way, preferably out of the house.

## Silence is Golden

Be courteous, but don't force conversation with a potential buyer.

## Be It Ever So Humble

Never apologize for the appearance of your home. After all, it has been lived in. Let the trained real estate agent answer any objections.

## In the Background

The buyer's agent knows the buyer's requirements and can better emphasize the features of your home when you don't tag along.

## Why Put the Cart Before the Horse?

Trying to dispose of furniture and furnishings to a potential buyer before they have purchased the house often loses a sale.

## A Word to the Wise

Let your real estate agent discuss price, terms, possession, and other factors with a potential buyer. Your agent is eminently qualified to bring negotiations to a favorable conclusion.

## Use Your Agent

Show your home to potential buyers only by appointment through your agent. Your cooperation will be appreciated, and will close the sale more quickly.





When your offer has been accepted and conveyed, escrow is opened. An escrow is an arrangement made under contract between a buyer and seller. As the neutral third party, escrow is responsible for receiving and disbursing money and/or documents. Both the buyer and seller expect the escrow agent to carry out their written instructions associated with the transaction and also to advise them if any of their instructions are not being met, or cannot be met. If the instructions from all parties to an escrow are clearly set out, the escrow officer can proceed on behalf of the buyer and seller without further consultation.

## TYPICAL ROLES IN THE CLOSING PROCESS

### The Seller/Agent

- Delivers Purchase Sale Agreement to the escrow agent
- Executes the paperwork necessary to close the transaction

### The Buyer/Agent

- Deposits funds required to close with the escrow agent
- Approves the commitment for title insurance, or other items as called for by the Purchase Sale Agreement
- Executes the paperwork and loan documents necessary to close the transaction

### The Lender

- Deposits loan documents to be executed by the buyer
- Deposits the loan proceeds
- Directs the escrow agent of the conditions under which the loan funds may be used

### The Escrow Agent

- Clears Title
- Obtains title insurance
- Obtains payoffs and release documents for underlying loans on the property
- Receives funds from the buyer and/or lender
- Prepares vesting document affidavit on seller's behalf
- Prorates insurance, taxes, rents, etc.
- Prepares a final statement (often referred to as the "HUD Statement" or "Settlement Statement") for each party, indicating amounts paid in conjunction with the closing of your transaction
- Forwards deed to the county for recording
- Once the proper documents have been recorded, the escrow agent will distribute funds to the proper parties.

Escrow is the process that gathers and processes many of the components of a real estate transaction. The sale is officially closed when the new deed is recorded and funds are available to the seller, in turn transferring ownership from the seller to the buyer. The escrow agent is a neutral third party acting on behalf of the buyer and seller.



The Preliminary Title Commitment contains vital information which may affect the willingness and ability of the parties to close escrow.

## THE INFORMATION IN THE TITLE COMMITMENT INCLUDES:

- The ownership of the subject property
- The manner in which the current owners hold title
- Matter of record which specifically affect the subject property or its owners
- A legal description of the property
- An informational plat map
- The type of title insurance offered by the title company
- Exclusion and exceptions in the Title Insurance coverage
- Recorded deeds of trust
- Easements
- Agreements
- Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions (C.C. & R.'s)
- Taxes



Your real estate agent should review the Title Commitment as soon as it arrives, with particular attention to certain areas:

### 1 Verify the Ownership Vesting

The name(s) on the Title Commitment should match the name(s) on the purchase contract. Sometimes the name of an unexpected owner will appear and corrective documents may be required.

### 2 Verify the Property Address

The plat map and legal description should match the address. An owner could own two properties adjacent to or across the street from each other, causing confusion in identifying the correct property.

1



Receive and Review Purchase Contract, Earnest Money and Pertinent Instructions

Open Escrow and Order Title Commitment

2



Obtain name of new lender

Receive and review title report and distribute

3



Request payoff information, request clarification of other title exceptions (if any)

Request financing information from buyer

4



Order payoff and HOA (if applicable) and any other title exceptions

5



Receive loan documents

Finalize statements, escrow instructions, and pertinent documents

6



Forward documents for recording and recheck

Obtain signatures and closing funds from buyer/seller

Return loan documents and request loan funds

7



Receive loan funds on new loan(s)

8



Disburse funds

Forward final documents to all interested parties (seller, buyer, lender, real estate agents, etc.)

# WHAT IS TITLE INSURANCE?



Title is a bundle of rights in real property. Protecting purchasers and lenders against loss is accomplished by the issuance of a title insurance policy. Usually, during a purchase transaction the lender requests a policy (commonly referred to as the Lender's Policy) while the buyers receive their own policy (commonly referred to as an Owner's Policy).

In short, the policy states that if the status of the title to a parcel of real property is other than as represented, and if the insured (either the owner or lender) suffers a loss as a result of a title defect, the insurer will reimburse the insured for that loss and any related legal expenses, up to the face amount of the policy, subject to exceptions and exclusions contained in the policy.

## How is title insurance different than other types of insurance?

While the function of most other forms of insurance is risk assumption through the pooling of risks for losses arising out of unforeseen future events (such as sickness or accidents), the primary purpose of title insurance is to eliminate risks and prevent losses caused by defects in title arising out of events that have happened in the past. To achieve this goal, title insurers perform an extensive search and examination of the public records to determine whether there are any adverse claims (title defects) attached to the subject property. Said defects/claims are either eliminated prior to the issuance of a title policy or their existence is excepted from coverage. Your policy is issued after the closing of your new home, for a one-time nominal fee, and is good for as long as you own the property.

## What's involved in a title search?

A title search is actually made up of three separate searches:

- Chain of Title – History of the ownership of the subject property

- Tax Search – The tax search reveals the status of the taxes and assessments
- Judgment and Name Search – Searches for judgment and liens against the owners' and purchasers' name

## After the three searches have been completed, the file is reviewed by an examiner who determines:

- Whether or not the Chain of Title shows that the party selling the property has the right to do so.
- The status of taxes for the subject property. The Tax Search will also indicate the existence of any special assessments against the land and whether or not these assessments are current or past due.
- Whether there are any unsatisfied judgments on the Judgment and Name Search against the previous owners, sellers, or and purchasers.

Rights established by judgment decrees, unpaid federal income taxes, and mechanics liens all may be prior claims on the property, ahead of the buyer's or lender's rights.

The title search will only uncover issues in title that are of public record and therefore allowing the title company to work with the seller to clear up these issues and provide the new buyer with title insurance.

Once the searches have been examined, the title company will issue a commitment, stating the conditions under which it will insure title. The buyer, seller, and the mortgage lender will proceed with the closing of the transaction after clearing up any defects in the title that have been uncovered by the search and examination.

Generally there are two policies issued: the **Lender's Policy** which insures the lender for the amount of the loan and the **Owner's Policy** which insures the purchaser for the purchase price.

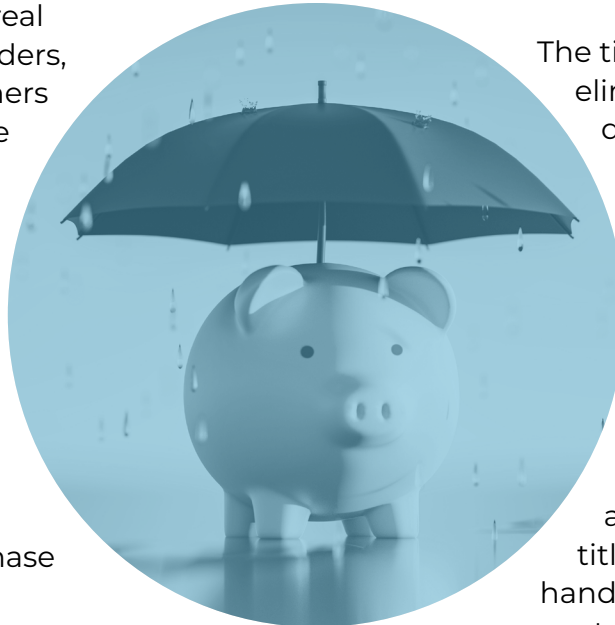


# WHY DO YOU NEED TITLE INSURANCE?



The purchase of a home is likely going to be one of the most expensive and important purchases you will ever make. You and your mortgage lender want to make sure the property is indeed yours and that no individual or government entity has any right, lien, claim, or encumbrance to your property.

The title insurance company's function is to make sure your rights and interests to the property are clear, that transfer of title takes place efficiently, and correctly, and your interests as a homebuyer are protected. Title insurance companies provide services to buyers, sellers, real estate developers and builders, mortgage lenders, and others who have an interest in the real estate transfer. Title companies issue two types of policies - **"Owners Policy"** (which covers the homebuyer) and **"Lenders Policy"** (which covers the bank, savings and loan, or other lending institution over the life of a loan). Both are issued at the time of purchase for a one-time premium.



will pay the legal fees involved in defense of your rights as well as any covered loss arising from a valid claim. That protection, which is in effect as long as you or your heirs own the property, is yours for a one-time premium paid at the time of purchase.

The title company works to eliminate risks before they develop. This makes title insurance different from other types of insurance. Most forms of insurance assume risks by providing financial protection through a pooling of risks or losses arising from unforeseen events, like fire, theft, or accident. The purpose of title insurance, on the other hand, is to eliminate risks and prevent losses caused by defects

The title company conducts an extensive search of public records to determine if anyone other than you has an interest in the property before issuing a policy. The search may be performed by title company personnel using either public records, or more likely, information gathered, reorganized, and indexed in the company's title "plant". With such a thorough examination of records, title problems can usually be found and cleared up prior to purchase of the property. Once a title policy is issued, if for some reason any claim, which is covered under your title policy, is ever filed against your property, the title company

in title that happened in the past. Risks are examined and mitigated before property changes hands. Eliminating risk has benefits to both of you, the home buyer, as well as the title company. It reduces the chance adverse claims might be raised, and by doing so reduces the number of claims that have to be defended or satisfied. This keeps costs down for the title company and your title premiums low. With title insurance you are assured that any valid claim against your property will be taken on by the title company, and that the odds of a claim being filed is slim.



Not all risks can be eliminated by a title search, since certain “hidden defects” like forgeries, identity of person, and failure to comply with the law, cannot be disclosed by an examination of the public records. Where the preliminary title commitment is an offer to insure under certain circumstances, the title policy is a contract, providing coverage against such “hidden defects.”

## THESE HIDDEN DEFECTS MAY INCLUDE:

- A forged signature on a deed
- Impersonation of the real owner
- Mistakes in interpretation of wills or other legal documents
- Deeds delivered without the consent of the grantor
- Undisclosed or missing heirs
- Deeds and mortgages signed by persons of unsound mind, by minors or by persons supposedly single but are actually married
- Recording mistakes and missed recorded documents
- Falsification of records
- Errors in copying or indexing

**In addition to indemnifying the insured against losses which result from a covered claim, the policy also provides for legal fees and defense against future claims against the property.**

Extended Owner’s and Lender’s policies provide broader coverage and are available through the American Land Title Association (ALTA). Coverage is extended to certain matters that are off-record but which are generally discoverable by an inspection of the property or by questioning the parties in possession, such as:

- Unrecorded Liens and encumbrances
- Unrecorded easements
- Unrecorded rights of parties in possession
- Encroachments, discrepancies, or conflicts in boundary lines

**ALTA Policies are available for lenders or owners, and a “Plain Language” ALTA Residential policy is also available for residential property of one to four units.**



# WHAT IS A PAYOFF?



A Payoff is the receipt of funds from the buyer and the payment of the seller's obligations in conjunction with a real estate transaction. The payoff function is performed by the title company.

## PAYOFF FEES

Fees for handling a payoff vary slightly from county to county. The fee is strictly a processing charge and does not cover special handling charges or potential shortages.

## PREFIGURES

Estimated payoff figures are calculated and given prior to closing upon request. These figures are only valid through the date given and are based on the information provided at the time.

## DEMANDS

Demands must include specific payoff information concerning the particular property and must be signed. It is the responsibility of the escrow company to order and provide all necessary demands, including any updates or changes, in a timely manner.

## REFUNDS

Any overpayments of demands will be refunded to the escrow account upon receipt from the lender. Refunds typically take two to six weeks to process.

## SHORTAGES

WFG will require from the escrow account the necessary funds to cover the outstanding obligations. Any shortages must be received prior to payoff.

## DISBURSEMENT CHECKS

Checks are delivered locally to lending institutions by a contracted messenger service. Checks to individuals and out-of-area lenders are typically sent via an overnight delivery company.

## WIRE TRANSFERS

Funds can be wired into or out of the Escrow or Title trust account(s).



**WFG must be in receipt of “Good Funds” prior to the disbursement on a payoff. Types of “Good Funds” include:**

- Funds wired to a WFG escrow/sub-escrow account
- A cashier's, teller's or certified check (next-day availability after deposit)
- Local check (fund availability 2 days after deposit)
- Out-of-area check (fund availability 5 days after deposit)



Having an idea of what is involved in appraising a piece of property can greatly help in maximizing the appraisal value to avoid costly details and re-inspections.

The appraisal process consists of several steps. The following are the major steps in the sequence normally taken by appraisers:

**1** Research the subject property as to size, bedrooms, baths, year built, lot size, and square footage.

**2** Gather data of recent sales in the subject's neighborhood. The appraiser needs to locate at least three and preferably similar-sized homes which have sold and closed escrow in the neighborhood. The homes need to be within one mile of the "comparable properties" or "comps."

**3** Field inspection consists of two parts: first the inspection of the subject property, and second, the exterior inspection of the comparable properties which have been selected to estimate the value of the subject property.

The inspection consists of taking photos of the street scene, front of the home, and rear of the home which may include portions of the yard. The appraiser will make an interior inspection for condition, noting any items that would detract or add to the value of the home. He will also draw a floor plan of the home while doing the inspection.

The inspection of the comparable properties is limited to an exterior inspection. For features that cannot be seen from the street, the appraiser has reports from Multiple Listings Services (MLS), county public records, and appraisal files along with other sources to help determine the condition and amenities of the comparables. After the field inspection has been completed, the appraiser must go through the reconciliation process with the three comparable properties to determine a final estimated value. This method of estimating value is called the "Direct Sales Comparison Approach to Value", and it accounts for nearly all of the considerations in determining value of single family homes.

It is important to consider that the appraiser will be taking photos of the street scene and the front of the property. The street scene gives the lender an idea as to the type of neighborhood the property is located in. The photo of the front of the property gives the lender an idea of its condition and its curb appeal. And lastly, a photo of the back of the property and part of the rear yard is taken. Many homeowners don't take care of the rear portion of their property, so for this reason the rear photo is required.

In most cases, what you see in the condition of the exterior of a home will be repeated almost exactly in the interior. An appraiser will call in advance to set up the appointment to inspect the home. At that time, any information about the property (number of bedrooms, bathrooms, pool, enclosed patio, etc.) should be given. The more that is known about the property prior to inspection, the better the appraiser can focus on researching the most similar comparables.





During the contingency period, your real estate agent will order physical inspections as specified in your purchase agreement. This may help you determine what kind of property inspections you feel are desired or necessary. Your real estate agent will help you arrange for these inspections.

## Who Pays?

Your purchase agreement will specify who is responsible for the costs of inspections and for making any needed corrections or repairs. The cost is negotiable between the parties and should be considered carefully. Your real estate agent will advise you what is customary and prudent.

## Structural Pest Control Process

A licensed inspector will examine the property for any active infestation by wood destroying organisms and conditions likely to cause damage if left untreated.

## Home Inspection

This inspection encompasses roof, plumbing, electrical, heating, appliances, water heater, furnace, exterior siding, and other visible features of the property. A detailed report will be written with recommendations; often times the recommendation is to consult a professional. The inspection fee is usually paid by the buyer.

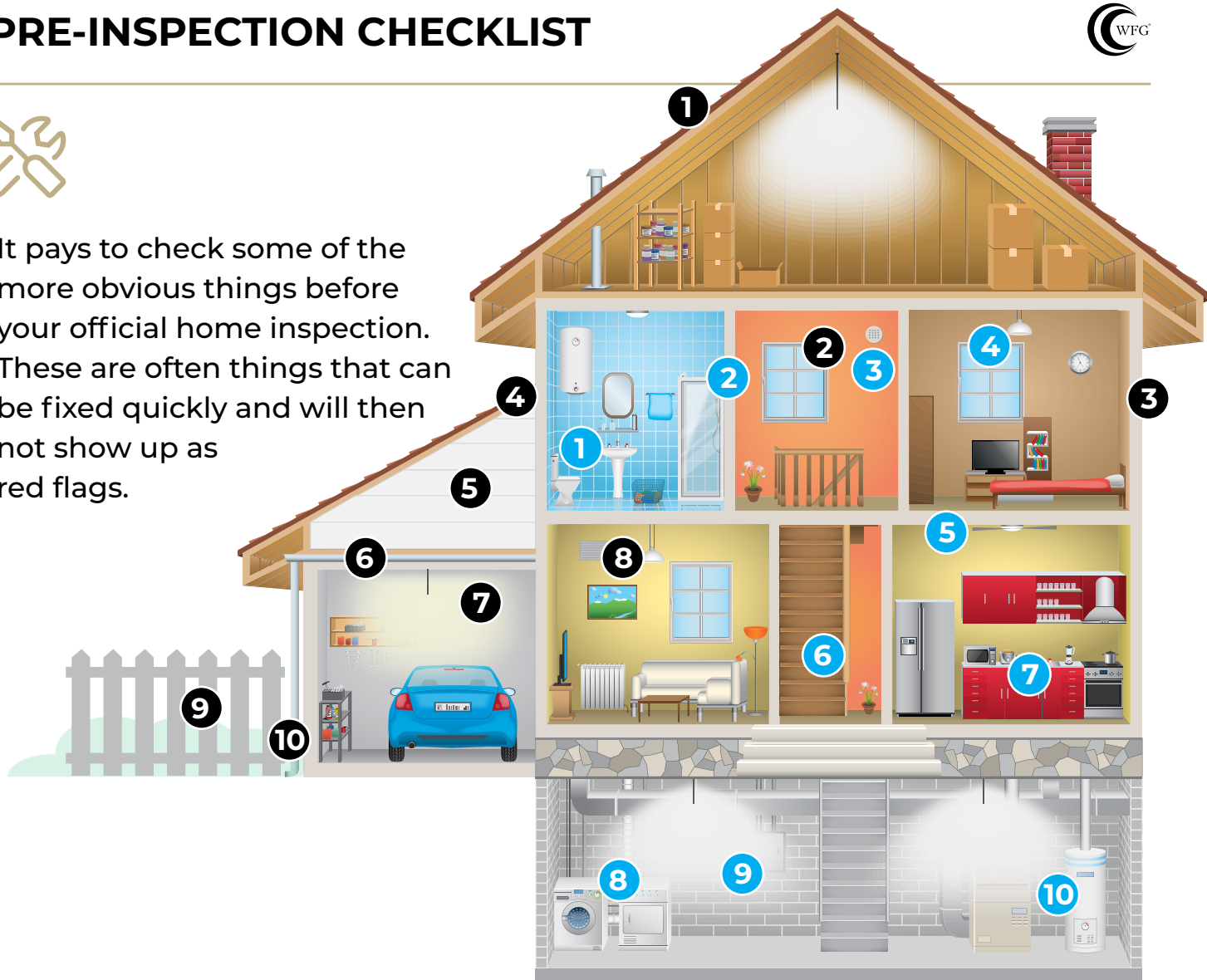




# PRE-INSPECTION CHECKLIST



It pays to check some of the more obvious things before your official home inspection. These are often things that can be fixed quickly and will then not show up as red flags.



## EXTERIOR

		OK	NEEDS FIXING
<b>1</b>	Roof	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>2</b>	Screens/Windows	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>3</b>	Cracked Caulk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>4</b>	Faded/Peeling Paint	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>5</b>	Siding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>6</b>	Gutters/Trim	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>7</b>	Garage Door	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>8</b>	AC Unit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>9</b>	Fence/Deck	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>10</b>	Drainage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## INTERIOR

		OK	NEEDS FIXING
<b>1</b>	Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>2</b>	Showers/Tubs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>3</b>	Smoke/CO Alarms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>4</b>	Lighting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>5</b>	Ceiling Fans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>6</b>	Stairs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>7</b>	Plumbing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>8</b>	Appliances	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>9</b>	Electrical	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>10</b>	Water Heater	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## The Seller

- Listing Agent's Commissions
- Selling Agent's Commissions  
*\*if agreed upon within the listing agreement or within a buyer's agency agreement.*
- Owner's title insurance premium
- Escrow fee, one half<sup>1</sup>
- Real estate excise tax<sup>2</sup>
- Loan costs required under the FHA/VA provisions of contract<sup>3</sup>
- Payoff of all loans in Seller's name (or existing loan balance if being assumed by buyer)
- Statement fees, reconveyance fees (including associated recording charges), and any loan prepayment penalties
- Work orders, such as termite inspection or home repairs<sup>1</sup>
- Home warranty<sup>1</sup>
- Encumbrances (such as judgments and tax liens) against the seller
- Tax pro-ration (for any unpaid taxes up to time of transfer of title)
- Delinquent taxes
- Unpaid homeowner's dues
- Assessments or bonds<sup>1</sup>
- Notary & Courier fees (if applicable)

## The Buyer

- Lender's title insurance premium (if applicable)
- Escrow fee, one half<sup>1</sup>
- Recording charges for all documents in buyer's name
- Inspection fees<sup>1</sup>
- Tax pro-ration (for any taxes from time of transfer of title to end of the tax payment period)
- All new loan charges (except for those required by lender for seller to pay)
- Hazard insurance premium for first year
- Interest on new loan from date of funding to 30 days prior to first payment
- Document preparation (if applicable)
- Home warranty<sup>1</sup>
- Notary fees (if applicable)
- Courier fees (if applicable)
- Selling Agent's Commissions  
*\*if agreed upon within the listing agreement or within a buyer's agency agreement.*

<sup>1</sup> Subject to Purchase and Sale

<sup>2</sup> State Excise Tax under revised 2020 Graduated Rate Schedule:

- 1.1% – Portion of selling price less than or equal to \$500,000
- 1.28% – Portion of selling price greater than \$500,000 and equal to or less than \$1.5 million
- 2.75% – Portion of selling price greater than \$1.5 million and equal to or less than \$3 million
- 3.0% – Portion of selling price greater than \$3 million

This legislation does not affect rates for timberland or agricultural land, which will remain subject to REET at a 1.28% state tax rate. A local REET may apply in addition to the state REET.

<sup>3</sup> Up to \$300 FHA/USDA/VA loans and buyer's share of the escrow fee for a VA loan



Moving can be very stressful, so what do you do when circumstances or opportunities require that you relocate? How do you get through a move in one piece? You might begin by following these helpful stress relief tips.

## Start Early

Few people feel relaxed under a deadline, but having the benefit of time can help calm the nerves. The time to start planning for your move is as soon as you know you need to move.

## Get Organized

The number one method for alleviating emotional stress when moving is to feel like you have control over what's happening. As illusory as that control may be, being organized will help you handle the unexpected.

First, come up with a relocating schedule that will help you break the moving process into phases. Detail exactly which task needs to be accomplished when. Use a checklist to make sure you are taking care of necessary goals by their due dates. Create a system that works to help you keep track of everything. Whether you make up your own or get help from someone with moving experience, having a model to work from will be your saving grace.

## Make it Easy

Don't be married to an initial moving plan simply because it was your first. As you do the footwork, you may discover there is an easier way to get the move done, and you should embrace this! Sure, driving your car cross-country might have seemed the only affordable option initially, but a search for reputable auto shippers and a sale on airfares could make all the difference between a stressful move and a more relaxed one. The same philosophy goes for packing. Rather than take on the entire process yourself, be sure to get quotes for having movers assist you.

## Schedule Time for Stress Relief

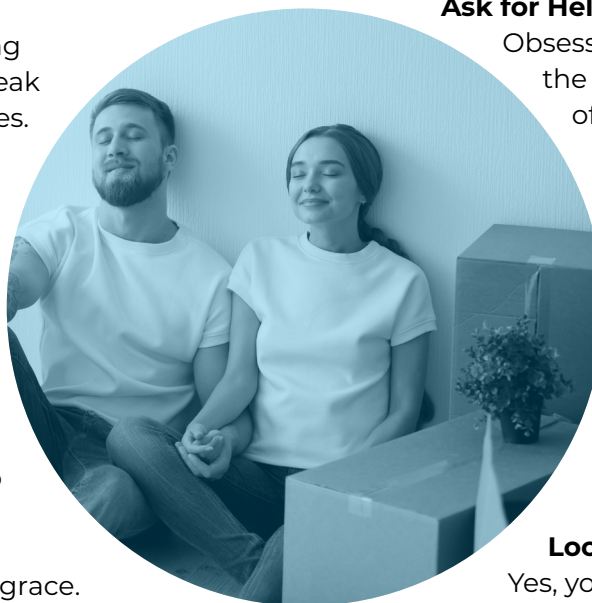
In the weeks leading up to your move, you may be so focused on getting everything done that you neglect your own health. Coping with a move requires that you stay physically and emotionally fit, so get plenty of sleep, eat well, and get some exercise. This would also be a good time to schedule a massage or a spa session. If time allows, try to get a weekend or at least a night away so that you can take your mind off your move for a little while.

## Ask for Help

Obsessive-compulsive people and the detail-oriented among us often have trouble asking for help. While you are making your thorough preparations, also be sure to contact friends and family on both sides of your move to help you in any way possible. Many hands really do make the work lighter, which can relieve a lot of stress. You'll be glad for the company, too.

## Look Forward to the End Results

Yes, you know moving will be hard and potentially fraught with stresses, but you will survive it. Many others have gone before you and lived to tell about it. Know that there is nothing that can happen that you can't handle and focus on the potential for new growth and adventure in your new home. Moving is one of the more stressful things we can experience, but there are ways to make it easier. Prepare, get organized, and stay flexible. Before you know it, you'll be unpacking your things in your new home and wondering what all that worry was about!



## 8 WEEKS BEFORE YOU MOVE

- Inventory Sheets:** Create an inventory sheet of all which is to be moved.
- Research Moving Options:** You'll need to decide if yours is a do-it-yourself move or if you'll be using a moving company.
- Request Moving Quote:** Solicit moving quotes from as many moving companies and movers as possible. There can be a large difference between rates and services within moving companies.
- Discard Unnecessary Items:** Moving is a great time for ridding yourself of unnecessary items. Have a yard sale or donate unnecessary items to charity.
- Packing Material:** Gather moving boxes and packing material for your move.
- Contact Insurance Companies:** You'll need to contact your insurance agent to cancel/transfer your insurance policy.

## 4 WEEKS BEFORE YOU MOVE

- Start Packing:** Begin packing all things destined for your new location.
- Obtain Your Medical Record:** Contact your doctor, physician, dentist, and other medical specialists who may currently be retaining any of your family's medical records. Obtain these records or make plans for them to be delivered to your new medical facilities if changing.
- Note Food Inventory Levels:** Check your cupboards, refrigerator and freezer to use up as much of your perishable food as possible.
- Small Engines:** Service small engines for you move by extracting gas and oil from the machines. This will reduce the chance to catch fire during your move.
- Protect Jewelry and Valuables:** Transfer jewelry and valuables to a safety deposit box so they cannot be lost or stolen during your move.
- Borrowed and Rented Items:** Return items which you may have borrowed or rented. Collect items borrowed to others.



## 1 WEEK BEFORE YOU MOVE

- Your Change of Address:** Change your address with the USPS, DMV, Financial Institutions, Utilities, Government Offices, Health Care Service Providers, Memberships and Subscriptions.
- Bank Accounts:** Transfer or close bank and financial accounts if changing banks. Make sure to have a money order for paying the moving company.
- Service Automobiles:** If automobiles are to be driven long distance, you'll want to have them serviced so you have a trouble-free drive.
- Cancel Services:** Notify any remaining service providers (newspapers, lawn services, etc.) of your move.
- Travel Items:** Set aside all items you'll need while traveling. Make sure these are not packed on the moving truck.
- Contact Utility Companies:** Set utility turnoff date, seek refunds and deposits, and notify them of your new address.

## MOVING DAY

- Plan Your Itinerary:** Make plans to spend the entire day at the house or at least until the movers are on their way. Someone will need to be around to make decisions. Make plans for kids and pets to be at a sitters for the day.
- Review the House:** Once the house is empty, check the entire house (closets, attic, basement, etc.) to ensure no items are left or no home issues exist.
- Double Check With Your Mover:** Ensure the mover has the new property address and all of your most recent contact information should they have any questions during your move.
- Vacate Your Home:** Make sure utilities are off, doors and windows are locked, and notify your real estate agent you've left the property.
- Questions To Ask:** Where is the garage door opener? Where are the keys to the house, mailbox, and other lockable area? Did you retrieve all keys from neighbors and friends?





# NOTIFICATION CHECKLIST



## UTILITIES

- Electric
- Natural Gas
- Water District
- Sewer District
- Garbage Provider
- Cable/Satellite
- Fuel (Propane)
- Phone Services
- Internet

## GOVERNMENT OFFICES

- US Post Office
- Department of Motor Vehicles
- IRS
- Passport Office
- Veteran Affairs
- Unemployment Office

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

- Newspapers
- Magazines
- Movie Subscriptions
- Book or Music Clubs

## FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

- Banks/Credit Unions
- Credit Card Companies
- Lenders
- Insurance Companies
- Retirement Plans
- Investments
- Online Bill Payer
- PayPal

## SERVICE PROVIDERS

- Childcare
- Housecleaning Services
- Delivery Services
- Lawn Care Services
- Veterinarian
- Pool Service

## OTHER

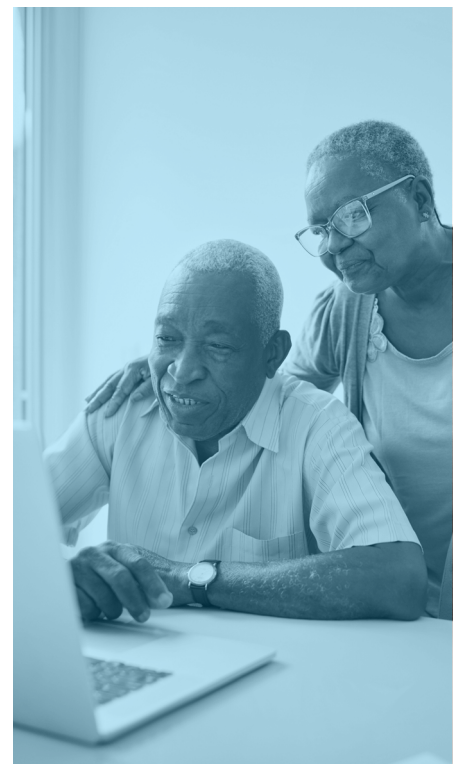
- Friends and Family
- Employers

## MEMBERSHIPS

- Health Clubs
- Membership Clubs
- Community Groups
- Children's Extracurricular Activities

## HEALTH

- Physicians
- Dentists
- Pharmacies





**“OPEN FIRST” BOX:** While preparing to move, pack a clear box with items for immediate use when you arrive at your next home.

Include: scissors, box cutters, hand soap & towels, toilet paper, paper towels and spray cleaner, knife, bottle opener, paper plates & cups, pizza cutter, first aid kit, snacks, garbage bags, and a candle with matches or essential oil diffuser to bring your favorite scent into your new home.

**PRO TIP:**  
*Pack your “Open First” box on the truck last to make sure it is easy to find and it’s the first box opened.*



**LABEL STRATEGY:** Label boxes on their sides for easy identification when stacked. To speed up the unloading process, the

label should identify the intended room along with the contents of the box (i.e. BEDROOM>SHEETS, PILLOWS, ESSENTIAL OIL DIFFUSER).



**SPEED DIAL:** No one likes a *hangry* crowd, and moving makes everyone hungry - especially friends and family that volunteer to help you move.

Have your local pizza delivery service on speed dial and plan ahead by sending a text a day in advance to find out pizza topping preferences. This text will have a two-fold benefit: 1) you won’t have to make any pizza decisions on moving day, and 2) it is a gentle reminder to your volunteers that moving day is tomorrow!



**PACKING STRATEGY:** Just like Goldilocks, you want to find the box that is just right! Consider choosing uniformly sized boxes

- not too big and not too small - so you can stack them easier in the truck. After unpacking, you can give your boxes to the next person you know who is making a move or share a “box giveaway” post on social media.



**CLEAR PACKAGING:** Clear zipper bags will help keep your smaller items organized, visible and easily accessible. Pack small items in

zipper bags, label them and secure in a clear bin ready for moving day (i.e. hardware and screws for assembling a bedroom set).



**PHOTOGRAPH YOUR**

**ELECTRONICS:** Setting up your electronics at the next home can be a bit of a tangled mess. Before unplugging and disassembling your cords and wires, take photos and map them with masking tape for easy reassembly.



Do not wait to inform your children about moving. Tell your kids about the move as soon as possible!

*It is pretty natural to assume that the less time kids have to think about moving, the easier it will be for your children. However, experts say it is actually the opposite. Kids need time to get used to the idea of moving. Don't put off telling them about moving.*

### **Welcome your children's questions about moving.**

Open lines of communication will go a long way toward helping your children feel comfortable with moving and it's okay even if you can't answer all their questions right now. Your kids' questions can give you an idea of how they're feeling about moving — whether they're excited or uneasy. Some questions may also offer an ideal way to get them involved in the moving process, such as suggesting they get online to locate nearby libraries or parks.

### **Be positive and upbeat about the move.**

Your attitude about the move will influence your children's attitude as well. If you dread moving, then the move will seem dreadful to them too. Be enthusiastic, upbeat, and positive about the new experiences and opportunities in store, and your children will be more likely to feel the same way.

### **Let your children know they can help with the move.**

This is a good time to emphasize that the move is a family event and that everyone will be part of the planning, packing, and perhaps even choosing the new home. Start your kids thinking of things they can do and how to get ready for the move. Assure them that their contributions, however small, will be valued and greatly appreciated.

## **MOVING DAY PREP FOR KIDS!**

### **KIDS: Packing Time! Time to Sort Your Stuff!**

Moving is a good reason to get rid of things you don't want anymore, which will also make room for new things you might get in the future! Go through all toys and games and group them into three piles:

- First Pile: Things you want to take with you to the new home.

- Second Pile: Things to toss out (broken toys and games with missing pieces).
- Third Pile: Things you don't want but could be given away to other kids.

### **KIDS: Go Ahead and Ask: "What Else?"**

Ask your parents what else can you do to help with all the sorting and packing that needs to be done. They will appreciate your help!

### **KIDS: Mark Your Stuff as "Yours"**

Design your own personal "seal" for marking your boxes as YOUR property! As your belongings are packed, draw your "seal" on the outside of each box. Be creative! You can create your own work of art to mark your belongings.

### **KIDS: Get Ready for Your First Night!**

Your first night in your new home is very special. Be sure to have your favorite pajamas, your trust blanket or stuffed toy, or your favorite book packed away in your suitcase or backpack. This will be your very own piece that you'll personally be in charge of to take with you to get ready for your first night in your new home!

### **KIDS: Don't Forget to Bring Some Entertainment!**

Don't forget to take some things for you to do on the airplane or in the car on the way to the new home, such as books, video games, toys, or crayons and paper.



Take your time when packing. Stretch out your moving preparation time over several weeks. Avoid panic in the last days. Take steps to ensure that moving day is as relaxed as possible for you and your pets.

## **Make Travel Arrangements For Your Pets.**

If your move involves air travel, contact airline carriers one month in advance. Ask about their pet regulations, and make reservations. Choose a non-stop flight to avoid extra handling and climate or air pressure changes.

## **Visit Your Pets' Veterinarian Before Moving.**

A couple weeks before moving, request a copy of veterinary records, a rabies vaccination certificate, and a health certificate. Be sure your pets are up-to-date with their shots. If you have senior pet or they have health problems, ask whether a mild sedative would be advisable before travel. Can your vet recommend another in your new location? For out-of-state moves, contact the State Department of Animal Husbandry or the state veterinarian about entry regulations - almost all states have entry laws for most animals except tropical fish.

## **Don't Change - Maintain Your Pets' Routines.**

Keep your pets' routines, such as feedings and walks, as normal as possible in the week before moving. Because dogs and cats need to feel in control, they might exhibit behavioral changes or even become ill when stressed. Treat them with the same level of attention you would ordinarily give them.

## **Make A Special Room For Your Pets.**

A few days before moving, choose a small room to be the "pet room." Tape a sign to the door that says "Pets: Do Not Open." Make the sign large enough that friends or movers can see it easily. Move food and water bowls, as well as toys, into this room. Provide dogs and cats with sturdy carriers equipped with litter box (for cats), chew toys, or favorite objects that have a familiar smell. Leave carrier doors open so pets can adapt to them before travel day. On moving day, keep animals in their carriers. As an alternative, consider boarding dogs and cats, or ask a friend to care take care of your dogs or cats during the last few days.

## **Get Tags And Leashes For Your Pets.**

If you have a dog or an indoor/outdoor cat, buy or create identification tags with your new address and phone number. Be sure your pets are wearing them during travel. While you're at it, pick up a cat leash—you'll need it (if you're taking a long road trip or an airplane).



## **Travel Checklist for Moving with Pets:**

- Veterinary records, certificates, and recent photos
- Medications
- Beds (pillows, towels, or other crate liners)
- Plastic bags and scoops for dogs
- Your pets' usual foods and plenty of water from the home you're leaving (changing their water source can be disorienting and upset their stomachs)
- Food and water bowls, a can opener, and resealable lids
- Leashes for cats and dogs
- Litterbox for cats
- Cage covers for birds and rodents
- Paper towels for messes
- Toys, chew bones, and treats
- Provisions for the first day at the new home



Every industry has its own terminology. The following are some common real estate terms and their meanings.

**Addendum:** A list or other material added to a document, letter, contractual agreement, escrow instructions, etc.

**Agency:** Agency is the relationship that occurs when a Broker represents a Buyer or Seller in a real estate transaction. An Agent has fiduciary duties to the Client, such as confidentiality, accounting, reasonable care, loyalty, obedience, advocacy, and disclosure.

**Annual Percentage Rate:** The yearly interest percentage of a loan, as expressed by the actual rate of interest paid. The A.P.R. is disclosed as a requirement of federal truth-in-lending statutes.

**Appraisal:** A valuation of property by the estimate of an appraiser. The appraiser can use any number of valuation methods to determine the appropriate value, including the current market value of similar properties, quality of property, and valuation models.

**As Is:** In an “AS IS” contract, the Seller is saying the property will be sold in its existing physical condition and the Buyer is taking the property’s condition into account when making an offer. The clause does not negate a Seller’s common law duty to disclose known latent material defects.

**Assumption:** Agreement by a Buyer to assume the liability under an existing note secured by a mortgage or deed of trust. The Lender usually must approve the new debtor in order to release the existing debtor (usually the Seller) from liability.

**Beneficiary:** As used in a trust deed, the Lender is designated as the beneficiary, i.e., obtains the benefit of the security.

**Buyer-Broker Agreement:** An employment agreement between a Buyer and a Broker that employs the Broker to locate property and negotiate terms and conditions acceptable to the Buyer for the purchase of a home. The Buyer usually agrees to work exclusively with the Broker and the compensation the Buyer is obligated to pay is often offset by any compensation the Broker receives from the Listing Agent.

**Close of Escrow:** The date that title passes from Seller to Buyer and documents are recorded.

**Chain of Title:** The chronological order of conveyance of a parcel of land from the original Owner (usually the government) to the present Owner.

**Closing Disclosure:** Provided to the borrower at least three business days before he or she becomes contractually obligated for the loan (generally when final loan documents are signed). Like the Loan Estimate, the Closing Disclosure lists information about the loan terms, monthly payments and closing costs. However, these are not estimates, but the actual and final terms of the loan. The two forms work together so borrowers can easily compare them and ensure they are getting the terms promised to them. The Closing Disclosure is required to be used if the loan is subject to the requirements of the Final Rule of the CFPB, effective Oct. 3, 2015.

**Closing Statement:** An all-inclusive summary itemizing debits and credits to each party, Seller and Buyer, and presented in the form of a balance sheet.

**Cloud on Title:** An invalid encumbrance on real property, which if valid, would affect the rights of the Owner. The cloud may be removed by quitclaim deed, or, if necessary, by court action.

**Comparable Sales:** Sales of properties used as comparisons to determine the value of a specific property.

**Conditions, Covenants & Restrictions (CC&Rs):** CC&Rs are recorded against the home and are an enforceable contract. The CC&Rs empower the homeowner’s association, if there is one, to control certain aspects of the home. A Homebuyer should always carefully read the CC&Rs (and any other association documents) because the Buyer will be obligated to comply with all the rules and restrictions.

**Contract:** A contract for the sale of a home must be signed and in writing to be enforceable.



**Contingency:** A contingency is a clause in a contract that requires the completion of a certain act before the parties are obliged to perform their contractual obligations. The most common contingencies are financing, acceptable property condition, and condition of title.

**Conveyance:** Transfer of title to a property. Includes most instruments by which an interest in real estate is created, mortgaged, or assigned.

**Counteroffer:** An offer (instead of acceptance) in response to an offer. For example: A offers to buy B's house for X dollars; B, in response, offers to sell to A at a higher price. B's offer to A is a counteroffer.

**Deed:** Written instrument by which the ownership of land is transferred from one person to another.

**Deed of Trust:** An instrument used in many states in place of a mortgage. Property is transferred to a trustee by the Borrower (Trustor), in favor of the Lender (Beneficiary) and reconveyed upon payment in full.

**Deposit:** Money given by the Buyer with an offer to purchase. Shows good faith.

**Disclosure:** To make something known. All disclosures should be in writing when dealing with real estate interests and real property.

**Due on Sale Clause:** An acceleration clause that requires full payment of a mortgage or deed of trust balance when the secured property changes ownership.

**Easement:** The right to use another person's land for a specified purpose, such as for public utilities, ingress and egress, etc.

**Escrow:** A procedure in which a third party acts as a stakeholder for both the Buyer and the Seller, carrying out both parties' instructions and assuming responsibility for handling all the paperwork and distribution of funds.

**Escrow Account:** Account held by Lender for payment of taxes, homeowner's insurance, and other periodic debts against real property required to protect their security interest.

**Fair Market Value:** Price that probably would be negotiated between a willing Seller and a willing Buyer in a reasonable time.

**Fixtures and Personal Property:** A fixture is an item that was once personal property, but is affixed to the home in such a manner as to become part of the home itself. A Buyer purchases the fixtures affixed to the home, but personal property is not part of the transaction unless it is listed in the contract. The contract should specifically identify all items that are to be conveyed in the transaction.

**Homeowners' Association (HOA):** An association of people who own real property in a given area, formed for the purpose of improving or maintaining the quality of the area. Also an association formed by the builder of condominiums or planned developments, and required by statute in some states. The builder's participation as well as the duties of the association is controlled by statute.

**Homeowner's Insurance:** Property insurance protecting against loss caused by fire, some natural causes, vandalism, etc., depending upon the terms of the policy.

**Homestead Exemption:** A homestead exemption protects equity in a home in case of bankruptcy. The homestead exemption is usually automatic, meaning you do not have to file a homestead declaration to claim it in bankruptcy.

**Lien:** An encumbrance against a property for the repayment of a debt. Examples include judgments, taxes, mortgages, and deeds of trust.

**Listing Agreement:** An employment contract between a Seller and a Listing Broker, that establishes the duties of the Broker and the terms under which the Broker will earn a commission.

**Loan Estimate:** Usually provided to the borrower within three business days of applying for a mortgage loan. It includes the terms of the loan, the projected payments, and an estimate of the closing costs. Since the Loan Estimate is uniform from Lender to Lender, it can be used to compare and shop for the best mortgage to fit a borrower's situation. The form is required to be used if the loan is subject to the requirements of the Final Rule of the CFPB, effective Oct. 3, 2015.

**Mortgage:** The instrument by which real estate is pledged as security for the repayment of a loan.

**Mortgage Insurance:** Insurance written by an independent mortgage insurance company protecting the Lender against loss incurred by a mortgage default, thus enabling the Lender to lend a higher percentage of the sales price.

**Multiple Listing Service (MLS):** The MLS is a repository of information on homes for sale. The MLS is also a means by which Broker participants make offers of compensation to other Broker participants for bringing a ready, willing, and able Buyer for the property.

**PITI:** Payment that combines the Principal, Interest, Taxes, and Insurance.

**Points:** An amount equal to 1 percent of the mortgage loan. Lenders can charge a point as an origination fee to cover the cost of making the loan. A discount point can be paid by the Borrower to lower the interest rate on the loan.

**Power of Attorney:** An authority by which one person (principal) enables another (attorney) to act for him or her.

**Purchase Agreement:** An agreement between a Buyer and Seller of real property, setting forth the price and terms of the sale.

**Quitclaim Deed:** A Deed operating a release; intended to pass any title, interest, or claim that the Grantor may have in the property, but not containing any warranty of a valid interest or title by the Grantor.

**Recording:** Filing documents affecting real property with the County Recorder as a matter of public record.

**Right of First Refusal:** A first right of refusal is a provision in a contract that requires the Owner of a home to give another party (usually a tenant) the first opportunity to purchase or lease the property before it is offered for sale to another.

**Subdivision:** The division of one parcel of land into smaller parcels (lots) created by filing a subdivision plat with the governmental authority (city or county) and receiving approval from the governmental authority.

**Title:** The evidence one has of right to possession of land.

**Title Commitment:** The title commitment reflects the condition of the title to the property. The commitment tells the Buyer whether the taxes and assessments are paid, whether there are deed restrictions, liens, and easements on the property, and what the requirements are to the issuance of title insurance on the property.

**Title Insurance:** There are generally two title insurance policies issued at close of escrow, Owner's Title Insurance and the Lender's Title Insurance. The Owner's policy is an insurance policy that protects the homeowner from defects in the title to the home, such as a forged deed. The Lender's policy protects the Lender against the same sort of title defects until the loan is paid.

**Warranty Deed:** A deed that conveys fee title to real property from the Grantor (usually the Seller) to the Grantee (usually the Buyer).

**§1031 Exchange:** A tax-deferred or §1031 exchange is a transaction involving the transfer of investment or income property and the receipt of like-kind property that will be used as income or investment property. When certain criteria are met, as set forth in section 1031 of the Internal Revenue Code, the income taxes on any gain realized from the sale of the relinquished property are deferred.



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