

Buying a Home

Contact a REALTOR®

A RE/MAX Executive Sales Associate can help you through the entire process of buying a home, starting with the mortgage and continuing right through closing – and beyond. He or she can help you shop for the best interest rate and terms and, if you wish, suggest mortgage lenders.

Get Preapproved for a Loan

Obtain a copy of your credit report and your FICO score and, if necessary, do what you need to do to improve it. The higher your FICO score, the better interest rate you can command. You can get this information online; your RE/MAX Executive agent can also help you. Contact several lenders and determine which one will give you the best deal.

Determine Your Price Range and Area(s) in Which You're Interested

By now you should have a good idea of how much home you can afford. This helps you narrow down your home search. You should also begin researching the neighborhoods in which you might want to live. Your RE/MAX Executive agent can help.

Decide Which Amenities and Features You Must Have – and Which Ones Would Be Nice but not Necessary

How many bedrooms and bathrooms do you want? Would you prefer a newer home or an older one with established landscaping? Are hardwood floors a must? Is an updated kitchen important to you? Walk-in closets? Which features would you be willing to give up if you find the otherwise-perfect home?

Begin Testing the Market

Right here on charlottehomefinder.com, you can find listings that meet your criteria as well as neighborhood data. Identify properties that seem to be fits for you, take an afternoon and go on a driving tour. See what's available in your price range and explore neighborhoods.

With Your Agent, Begin Seriously Looking at Homes

Your agent can add to the list of homes you've already identified – including ones that have just come on the market. Look at homes with a critical eye – does the floor plan work for you, is the property in good condition, would it be right for your lifestyle? In short, can you imagine yourself and your family living there?

Take notes at each home you visit. What do you like and not like? Narrow down your choices; re-visit homes in which you're interested. See them at different times of the day.

Make an Offer

When you've identified the home you want to buy, be prepared to help your agent prepare a written offer quickly. Your agent will be familiar with market values and will help you arrive at a price that gives your offer the best chance of being accepted.

At this stage, try not to become emotionally attached to a home. Your offer may not be accepted for any number of reasons. Have backup homes in mind. Be prepared to negotiate through your agent with the sellers.

Once Your Offer Is Accepted:

- You'll be asked to submit an earnest money deposit that usually isn't refundable.
- Begin making moving arrangements (select a mover, obtain change-of-address cards, inform friends and relatives).
- Have the property professionally inspected.
- If necessary, request repairs.
- Obtain homeowner's insurance.
- Contact utilities (phone, water, power, etc.).
- A few days before closing, stage a walk-through.
- Obtain a cashier's check for the down payment and closing costs.

At Closing:

- Make sure the terms and conditions of the loan statement are correct.
- Carefully read everything before you sign.

ENJOY YOUR NEW HOME!

Why You Should Use a REALTOR® in Your Home Search

Buying a home is probably the largest investment you'll make in your lifetime. Having an experienced, knowledgeable RE/MAX Executive professional representing you in this transaction just makes good sense.

Buying a home is not like buying a car, a mutual fund or other commodity. It can be a life-changing event. RE/MAX Executive agents fully understand the real estate process – and just as important, they understand your local market.

Of course they know the right steps to take, but they can also help you avoid a misstep in your home purchase. If a new freeway is going to be built a few blocks away, they'll probably know it. If you're unsure about school districts, they'll be able to direct you to answers. If you're unsure of a builder's reputation, they'll know how you can confirm it.

Your RE/MAX Executive Sales Associate also performs another important function: minimizing the emotion involved in a home transaction. You may be in love with a home, but your agent can point out factors that might not make it right for you.