

Your mortgage closing checklist

Closing is the final and likely most important stage of your homebuying journey. This checklist will help you prepare and learn what to expect so you can close with confidence.

Be a savvy homebuyer

- **Prepare in advance.** Your closing is when you legally commit to your mortgage loan. Know what to plan for so everything goes smoothly.
- **Don't rush.** Make sure you're getting what you expected.
- **When in doubt, ask!** Ask questions until you feel comfortable with every detail.
- **Beware of mortgage closing scams.** Protect your life savings by knowing what to look for and how to avoid it happening to you.
- **Trust your gut.** If something feels wrong, speak up and know that walking away may be better than signing a bad deal.



CFPB's Buying a House tool

www.consumerfinance.gov/buying-a-house

Before closing

Taking a few key actions can make your home closing go more smoothly. Use this worksheet to prepare in advance.

1. Determine who will conduct your closing, where it will be, and when.

Although the type of company conducting your closing can vary based on where you live, you can shop for the company of your choice.

① Who will be conducting my closing? What is their title?

Name: _____ Phone: _____

- Title agent Escrow agent
 Closing attorney Other _____

② When is my closing? Where is my closing?

Date: _____ Time: _____

Address: _____

2. Ask the person who will conduct your closing what to expect.

The closing process can vary by region and area. Learn the details of your closing in advance.

③ What do I need to bring to my closing?

- Review the list on page 4 and make any necessary changes.

④ About how much will I need to pay at closing? How do I pay?

\$ _____ Cashier's check Wire transfer

⑤ If I decide to walk away at closing, will I still owe the seller money?

3. Request your closing documents three days in advance of closing.

By law, you must receive your Closing Disclosure three business days before closing.

These are some of the most important documents you'll see at closing:

- Closing Disclosure
 Promissory Note
 Mortgage / Security Instrument / Deed of Trust
 Deed, document that transfers property ownership (purchase only)
 Right to Cancel (refinance only)

4. Protect yourself from a mortgage closing scam.

Closing funds are **tempting targets for scammers**. Beware of emails with last-minute changes to your payment or wire instructions. It may be a scam.

5. Schedule time in advance of your closing to review documents.

6. Compare your Closing Disclosure to your most recent Loan Estimate.

Look at the table on the top of page three of your **Closing Disclosure**. By law, only certain costs can change.

7. Read the rest of your closing documents.

Use our **document summaries** to learn more about why your closing documents are important.

8. Arrange your payment for the amount due at closing.

Record the names and phone numbers for two trusted individuals (i.e. real estate or settlement agents) who can securely confirm payment instructions in case of a scam attempt.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

- I have this person's number saved.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

- I have this person's number saved.

Set aside enough time to carefully review the documents for errors and to make sure you have a clear understanding of the loan terms.

Date: _____ Time: _____

Search for answers to these questions, and if you can't find the answers, ask your loan officer:

- ① Are the loan type, interest rate, monthly payment, and other key terms the same as I expected?
- ② Are there any fees that I don't understand or that have changed significantly?
- ③ Do I have an escrow account? Do I understand how that works?
- ④ Is my personal information correct on all of the documents?
- ⑤ What happens if I don't pay my loan?
- ⑥ Do the key numbers (loan amount, monthly payment, interest rate) match exactly across all of my documents?
- ⑦ How can I exercise my Right to Cancel (refinance only)?
- ⑧ If you're unable to get the rest of your closing documents in advance, take the list of questions above with you to closing.

- I have my cashier's check or wire transfer ready.

- If you receive an email with last-minute changes to the wire instructions or to verify your personal information, it may be a scam. Contact the trusted parties you identified on Step 4 to confirm the payment details, using only the primary phone numbers that you saved.

At closing

Your closing day has finally arrived! Bring this worksheet to your closing and use it as a guide.

1. Bring these things or people with you to closing.

- A cashier's check or proof of wire transfer for the exact amount of money you need to close.
- The list of people to call that you prepared earlier.
- Your Closing Disclosure. You'll want to compare it to the final documents one more time.
- A trusted friend, advisor, or lawyer, if you want an advocate at the table.
- Your co-borrower or the person who is co-signing your loan.
- Your check book, in case there are any last minute changes.
- Your driver's license or ID.

2. Get answers to these questions at your closing.

- ①** How will I pay my property taxes and homeowner's insurance?
 - Included in my monthly payment.
 - I have to pay them on my own.
 - ②** Where will I send my monthly payments?
-

- ③** If I have Homeowners' Association dues, how do I pay?
-

- ④** Who should I call if I have questions after closing?

Name: _____ Phone: _____

3. Don't forget these closing tips.

- Take all the time you need. You have a right to read and understand your closing documents, no matter how long it takes.
- Trust your gut. Don't go forward until you feel comfortable.

After closing

Congratulations! Now that the paperwork is over, set yourself up for success as a homeowner with these final steps.

1. Save your closing packet.

You should save the entire set of documents, exactly as you received it.

Double check that your packet includes these important documents:

- Closing Disclosure
- Promissory Note
- Mortgage / Security Instrument / Deed of Trust
- Deed, document that transfers property ownership (purchase only)
- Right to Cancel (refinance only)

2. Change your address.

- Bank accounts, investment accounts, and credit card companies
- Department of Motor Vehicles and car insurance
- Cell phone company, health/life insurance, and other bills
- US Postal Service

3. Revise your budget and plan for future expenses.

- Include Homeowners' Association (HOA) fees, and if you don't have an escrow account, property taxes and homeowner's insurance.
- Settle in to your new budget for a few months before making major unplanned or non-essential home repairs or renovations.
- Set aside money each month in an emergency fund to cover essential repairs or loss of income.

4. Review your homeowner's insurance.

Contact your insurance company with questions or changes.

- ?(?) Does it cover floods? Earthquakes? Other disasters?
- ?(?) Could you get a discount for having smoke alarms or if you get your car insurance with the same company?
- ?(?) Could you save money by increasing your deductible?

5. Pay attention to:

- ➊ Changes in your monthly payment. Even if you have a fixed-rate loan, your total monthly payment can change if your taxes, mortgage insurance, or homeowner's insurance go up or down.
- ➋ Servicing changes. The "servicer" is where you send your mortgage payments, and your servicer might change. If your servicer changes, you'll get a [change-of-servicer notice](#) in advance.

6. Watch out for:

Marketers often target new homeowners. Give yourself a chance to adjust to your new budget before applying for new credit or making large purchases.

- ➌ Offers for new credit cards or home equity lines of credit. If you want to opt-out of the offers, you can do so [online](#) or by calling (888) 567-8688.
- ➍ Offers from home improvement contractors. Not only should you wait before making major investments, but scams are common. Research a contractor's reputation and always get three quotes before choosing a contractor.
- ➎ Offers for "mortgage protection (life) insurance," often sent in official-looking envelopes. Most homeowners are better off with standard life insurance, which is more flexible and usually cheaper.
- ➏ Bi-weekly payment plans offered for a fee. A bi-weekly payment plan can be smart for people who get paid bi-weekly—you'll pay off your loan quicker and save money—but you don't have to pay for this service. You can often set it up yourself.
- ➐ Refinance offers that don't save you money. Don't refinance too often or fees can really add up. When considering a refinance, make sure you're saving money with a lower interest rate.

7. Act fast to avoid foreclosure if you are struggling to make your payments.

If you're struggling to make your payments, talk to your mortgage servicer and call a housing counselor. Your mortgage servicer is required to explain what options are available to avoid foreclosure. [HUD-approved counselors](#) are trained professionals who will help you at little or no charge.

The CFPB is here to help you.

Have questions or need a definition? [Get answers from Ask CFPB](#).

Have a complaint? [Submit a complaint through the CFPB](#).



Consumer Financial
Protection Bureau

Learn more at consumerfinance.gov/buying-a-house.

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