

Buyers

Getting Started

The first question you're bound to ask is, "How much home can I afford?" That depends on a number of factors:

Your selected location. Are you set on a specific area? Downtown? The suburbs? A rural setting?

Your preferred type of home. Detached? Semi? Duplex? High-rise? Link? Townhouse? New or Resale? There are a variety of home styles you will want to explore.

Your income. After all, it's not just the mortgage you have to take into account. There are property taxes, utilities, and in some cases condo or strata fees. As a general rule of thumb, your monthly home-carrying cost should not exceed 30-35% of your income.

Market conditions. Is it a buyer's, sellers or balanced market?

There are also additional costs to keep in mind. It's a good idea to work out exactly what you want and what you can afford before you begin the search. Be specific! After all, you don't want to suddenly come to the realization that your dream house has come with a nightmare of bills and expenses. Stick to looking at houses in your price range. The more you've thought it out, the better your sales representative can meet your needs.

Part of deciding just what you can afford can be accomplished by meeting with your bank or a mortgage broker and negotiating a pre-approved mortgage. There are many types of mortgages and many different terms. Research all of your options. This ensures that there are no surprises once you're ready to make an offer.

Once you've figured out your monthly expenses and what you can afford, you can start your search. It could happen that the first home you see is the one you want; or you might look at home after home with none of them catching your interest. Rest assured, the home you're looking for is out

there, and when you find it, you're ready to make an offer. If your offer is accepted, the next steps are closing and moving into your new home.

Purchasing a home is easy once you put your plans into action.