



A GUIDE TO

Buying Your Home

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Alisa Snider

IS HERE FOR YOU

I recognize that buying a home regardless of the price range is one of the most significant events in a person's financial life. My goal is to provide the highest level of service to all of my clients, addressing any questions or concerns throughout the process. From the day we partner together, consider me your dedicated real estate advisor. I work closely with you to understand your unique needs, lifestyle preferences and desired home features. I am here to handle every last detail of the purchase process, from negotiating the terms of your sale, recommending attorneys, lenders, inspectors, contractors, moving companies and anything else you may need during or after your transaction. I pride myself on my 28+ years of experience as a top realtor, my professionalism, energy and dedication to my clients.

This guide contains helpful information on the home buying process. After you have had a chance to review this information, please let me know if you have any questions.

I am SO excited to get started on finding you your dream home!

Sincerely,

Alisa Snider

About

A L I S A S N I D E R

I recognize that buying or selling a home, regardless of the price range, is one of the most significant events in a person's financial life. My goal is to provide the highest level of service to all of my clients addressing any questions or concerns throughout the process. I am affiliated with Keller Williams because they have stayed ahead of the changing real estate environment and have invested heavily in the latest technology. This has allowed me to provide my buyers and sellers the tools to compete in today's sophisticated marketplace. I pride myself on my professionalism, experience, energy, and dedication to my clients. I would love to help you get started in achieving your real estate goals.

You can expect from me:

- A "Neighborhood Specialist" with 28+ years of in-depth community and market knowledge
- Personalized service tailored to your individual needs
- Effective negotiation skills needed in today's real estate market

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

- NJ Realtors® Circle of Excellence Sales Award
- Selected by Bergen County Magazine as a Bergen County Top Real Estate Agent
- Numerous Keller Williams Monthly Top Agent Awards
- Corporate Relocation Specialist
- 55 Places.com Partner Agent
- Neighborhoods.com Partner Agent
- ABR® designation (Accredited Buyer Representative)
- e-PRO designation - An e-PRO Realtor® has successfully completed the e-PRO certification program, which includes the most current technology for real estate professionals
- Member of the National Association of Realtors
- Member of Greater Bergen Association of Realtors
- Member of New Jersey Multiple Listing Service
- Member of Garden State Multiple Listing Service



The Home

BUYING PROCESS

#1 PARTNER WITH ALISA

- Get local insight and current market conditions
- Discuss towns that will fit your needs and budget
- Determine your home wish list
- Review properties we are touring

#2 GET PRE-APPROVED FOR A LOAN

- Provide names of trusted lenders
- Discuss mortgage options
- Determine your down payment
- Obtain a pre-approval letter

#3 FIND YOUR NEW HOME

- Schedule home tours
- Compare homes and neighborhoods we looked at and begin narrowing down towns you want to live in
- Discuss likes and dislikes about the homes we viewed
- Determine if any homes warrant submitting an offer

#4 MAKE AN OFFER AND NEGOTIATE THE TERMS

- Discuss offer/price strategy
- Submit initial offer (all offers must be in writing)
- Review and sign seller's disclosure and lead paint form (if applicable)
- Negotiate purchase price and terms
- Once offer is accepted revise contract for buyer and seller to sign
- Choose a real estate attorney (I can provide recommendations)
- Begin attorney review
- Buyer's attorney prepares contract rider
- Conclude attorney review

The Home

BUYING PROCESS

#5 ATTORNEY REVIEW COMPLETED – UNDER CONTRACT

- Schedule home inspection and negotiate repairs with seller
- Send deposit money to sellers attorney (can be a regular check)
- Apply for mortgage (if applicable)
- Make lender aware of the mortgage commitment date per the contract
- Have your attorney order a survey if necessary
- Have your attorney order title insurance
- Stay in close contact with your lender to ensure a timely closing. Get them requested documents immediately to avoid delays
- Obtain funds for closing (make transfers now so you are ready before closing)
- Shop for homeowners insurance

#6 BEFORE YOU CLOSE

- Stay in close contact with me, your lender and attorney
- Hire a moving company (I can provide trust-worthy names)
- Change your address through USPS
- Set up utilities to be activated or transferred (I will provide details of providers)
- Wire funds for closing once final numbers are determined (DO NOT wire money unless you have spoken to your attorney, there are rampant fraud scams)
- Schedule closing date and time
- Schedule final property walk-through

#7 CLOSING DAY

- Connect with your attorney to wire closing funds if not already done so
- Complete final property walk-through (if any issues were found inform your attorney so they can be worked out before or at the closing)
- Bring photo id(s)
- Bring your checkbook
- Sign mortgage and or closing paperwork

CONGRATULATIONS YOU ARE A HOMEOWNER!

Financing YOUR HOME



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Financing

YOUR FUTURE HOME

STEP 1: ESTIMATE WHAT YOU CAN AFFORD

Make a rough estimate of how much home you can afford based on your income and current debt. Lenders and financial experts recommend that your monthly debts should be no more than 36% of your monthly income. For a more conservative estimate, this should be based on your take home pay instead of your gross pay. A loan is considered able to be repaid if the debt to income ratio doesn't exceed 43%.

If you have additional outstanding debts such as student loans or credit cards, you will need to factor in those monthly payments into your total monthly debt payment. An online mortgage calculator can help you determine your preliminary borrowing power at current mortgage rates based on your income and your current outstanding debt. Keep in mind there are many other factors that will determine how much a lender will approve you to borrow. Just because you qualify for a high loan amount, doesn't mean that is what you should borrow. You need to feel comfortable with your monthly payment, taking into account personal circumstances that will affect your financial future.

STEP 2: GET A MORTGAGE PRE-APPROVAL

One of the first steps in the home buying process is to consult with a mortgage professional about your financing options. A professional advisor will not only be able to give you information on the best rates and terms available in the current market, but can also explain what options you have given your unique financial situation. I work with highly skilled mortgage professionals who can give you a more accurate idea of what you can afford and can get you to closing table with no issues. I suggest getting pre-approved with one of my preferred lenders.

Once you know what you can afford, we can focus your search on homes that are in your price range. When I find your dream home you can move quickly having your approval in hand when presenting an offer. No seller will entertain an offer without seeing that a buyer qualifies for a mortgage.

Financing

YOUR FUTURE HOME

STEP 3: THE LOAN APPLICATION AND GATHERING THE DOCUMENTS

Your credit history is one of the factors used by a lender to determine your interest rate. The better your credit, the better terms the lender will be able to offer you. You will also need the following documents to start the loan process.

- Social Security Number
- Federal Tax Returns (2 yrs)
- W2 or 1099 Forms (2 yrs)
- Pay Stubs (most recent)
- Employers (names/addresses last 2 yrs)
- Current Bank Statements (checking, savings)
- Creditor Information (student and auto loans, credit cards, child support, other mortgages)
- Investment Account Statements (stocks, bonds, CD's, IRA's/retirement, etc.)
- Documentation of other income (rental, social security, child support, pension)
- Divorce Decree
- Bankruptcy or discharge papers
- Gift letter (for funds given showing proof it is a gift and does not have to be repaid)

Keep in mind improving any of these areas will help you qualify for better lending terms. For example, if it is possible to pay off a car loan or credit card balance before seeking financing for your new home, the better the financial terms you could receive. This can save you thousands of dollars over the life of your mortgage.

Special situations like being self-employed, separated, divorced or retired may require applicants to provide additional information. Each lender will have their own requirements and may have special loan programs for various borrower situations.

STEP 4: KNOW YOUR MORTGAGE LENDER

When shopping for your mortgage, you will want to review the various lender and home loan options that are available.

Home loans are available through thrift institutions (commercial and savings banks), mortgage companies, credit unions and mortgage brokers. A mortgage broker versus a traditional lender has access to several lenders (including banks) and can offer you a wider selection of loan products and terms. They can shop for the best deal based on your circumstances. Most mortgage brokers make themselves available on evenings and weekends. They are on top of your loan throughout the process. I have found they can close your loan very quickly 2-3 weeks on average, if a quick closing is important to you. Many of the traditional lenders do not offer the personalized service you get with a mortgage broker and cannot close loans as quickly. I can assist you with recommendations for both traditional lenders and mortgage brokers. I know who can get the job done with no issues and get you to the closing table on time.

Financing

YOUR FUTURE HOME

STEP 5: KNOW YOUR LOAN TYPES

There are several borrowing options for home buyers and the type of loan you choose should be based on your unique financial situation. Your lender should suggest the best loan option for your situation and financial goals.

FIXED RATE (TRADITIONAL LOAN)

These loans are usually structured with repayment terms of 15, 20, or 30 years. The lender charges a fixed interest rate over the life of the loan. With this loan type your monthly mortgage payments will remain the same for the length of the loan.

ADJUSTABLE RATE LOAN (ARMS)

Also known as variable rate loans, ARMs often offer a lower rate for the initial period of the loan. This introductory interest rate may be lower than rates offered for fixed rate mortgages. The interest rate will fluctuate over the life of the loan based on market conditions. Changes in the rate occur at certain time periods, with the lender setting a maximum rate on the fluctuation. If you are considering an ARM, you want to be sure you understand what a rate increase will do to your monthly payment. ARMs can be a good choice for a buyer who doesn't plan on staying in a home for many years. It can give you more purchasing power if the initial interest rate is lower, and you plan on selling the home before the interest rate will get adjusted.

FEDERAL HOUSING ADMINISTRATION (FHA) LOANS

To obtain a Federal Housing Administration (FHA) loan a borrower must apply and qualify with a certified FHA lender. This is a great loan for a buyer who does not have a large down payment. A borrower can obtain a loan with as little as a 3.5% down payment of the home's purchase price.

VETERANS ADMINISTRATION (VA) GUARANTEED LOANS

VA home loans are available to qualified veterans and their spouses. The VA does not require any down payment and allows the borrower to receive a competitive interest rate. Please note, this loan does require additional home inspections that ensure VA requirements are met. The loan will not be approved if items are not fixed or repaired. This may cause delays or an additional financial burden a seller may not be willing to accept.

Financing

YOUR FUTURE HOME

STEP 6: DETERMINE YOUR DOWN PAYMENT WHAT IS PRIVATE MORTGAGE INSURANCE (PMI)

The largest upfront cost in purchasing a home is the down payment. Most traditional lenders will want a borrower to have a down payment of at least 20% of the purchase price. Borrowers who are unable to do so are required to purchase Private Mortgage Insurance (PMI). This insurance protects the lender in case of default by the borrower. If PMI is required, ask your lender what the total cost of the insurance is and how much it will increase your monthly payment. Once you reach a certain threshold on your loan to value ratio, you will be able to cancel the PMI.

STEP 7: WHAT TO AVOID AFTER APPLYING FOR A MORTGAGE

DON'T CHANGE JOBS OR THE WAY YOU ARE PAID AT YOUR JOB - Your lender must be able to track the source and amount of your annual income. If possible, you will want to avoid changing from salary to commission or becoming self-employed during this time as well.

DON'T MAKE LARGE CASH DEPOSITS INTO YOUR BANK ACCOUNTS - Lenders need to source your money and cash is not really traceable. Before you deposit any amount of cash into your accounts, discuss the proper way to document your transactions with your lender.

DON'T MAKE ANY LARGE PURCHASES - New debt comes with new monthly obligations. When you have additional debt that will have an effect on your debt to income ratio. Higher ratios make for riskier loans and sometimes qualified borrowers no longer qualify with this added debt. Try to wait until after your closing to make large purchases like a car or furniture for your new home.

DON'T CO-SIGN OTHER LOANS FOR ANYONE - When you co-sign, you are obligated. As I mentioned above, that obligation brings higher debt ratios as well. Even if you swear you won't be the one making the payments, your lender will have to count the payments against you.

DON'T CHANGE BANK ACCOUNTS - Remember, lenders need to source and track your assets. That task is significantly easier when there is consistency among your accounts. Before transferring money between accounts, speak with your lender.

DON'T APPLY FOR NEW CREDIT - It doesn't matter whether it's a new credit card or a new car. When you have your credit report run by organizations in multiple financial channels (mortgage, credit card, auto, etc.), your FICO® score will be impacted. Lower credit scores will change your interest rate and possibly your eligibility for a loan approval.

DON'T CLOSE ANY CREDIT ACCOUNTS - Many clients erroneously believe that having less available credit makes them less risky and more likely to be approved. A major component of your credit score is your length and depth of credit history (as opposed to just your payment history) and your total usage of credit as a percentage of available credit. Closing accounts has a negative impact on both those determinants of your score.

Home loans

MADE SIMPLE



Integrated with KW technology, Keller Mortgage makes for a swift, simplified experience that expedites the process so you can move into your new home, faster. Available exclusively through KW agents like me, you'll enjoy unprecedented savings on time and money.

THE PRE-APPROVAL, PERFECTED

- 1 Apply directly and digitally
- 2 Simplify & expedite the process

THE ZEROPLUS LOAN

- 1 Keller Mortgage exclusive
- 2 Eliminate signing and lender fees
- 3 Shave off up to \$1,000 from third-party costs
- 4 Enjoy super-low interest rates

Finding YOUR HOME



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Your

HOME WISHLIST

Buying a new home can be very exciting. Finding what you truly want and need that is within your budget can sometimes be challenging. Making these decisions begins with setting priorities. Most home buyers invariably face trade-offs. Please take some time to consider all of the things you are really looking for by answering the questions below.

BASIC CRITERIA:

- Ideal Price Range
- Do you need to sell your current home in order to purchase?
- Your ideal time frame to move
- Type of Home (single family, townhouse/condo, investment)
- Who will be living in this home?
- Pets?
- Number of bedrooms
- Number of bathrooms
- Garage or parking space for ___ cars

HOME PREFERENCES:

- Home style (colonial, ranch, split level, bi-level, contemporary, victorian, cape cod, new construction, townhouse/condo)
- Your top 5 interior must-have features (rank in order of preference)
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.
- Are you willing to update a home or must it be move-in ready?
- Are there any other considerations I should be aware?

PREFERRED TOWNS:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Your

NEW HOME MUST HAVES

	WANT	NEED	NOT IMPORTANT
Large Property			
Deck			
Patio			
Fenced-In Yard			
Pool			
Garage			
Porch/Sunroom			
Home Office			
Home Orientation <i>(home needs to face a particular direction)</i>			
Fireplace			
Hardwood Floors			
Stone/Granite Counters			
Basement			
Walkable Neighborhood			
Close To Public Transportation			
Proximity To Certain Landmarks			

Let the

SHOWINGS BEGIN!

It is time to go see homes in person! I will schedule showings and provide a copy of the listings for all of the properties we are going to see in a day. I suggest the following tips in order to make our day the most productive:

FOCUS AND ORGANIZATION

Bring along a pad and pen to take notes. Make notes on the listing of the things you liked about the home. Take pictures/videos of the rooms you like to help refresh your memory of individual properties.

VISUALIZE THE HOUSE EMPTY & WITH YOUR DECOR

Little changes you make to the home after you move in go a long way. Taking down wallpaper, painting and pulling up carpets to expose hardwood floors can drastically change the look of a house. Visualize the home the way you want to decorate it.

BE OBJECTIVE

Instead of crossing a home off the list right away just because it isn't updated, try to envision what could be done to the home in the future. If the house is in a great neighborhood and has all of the features you are looking for, the price can be negotiated to take into account the updates it needs. This may be the perfect house!

Let's

MAKE AN OFFER

Before you make an offer on a property you want to purchase, it is critical to have your pre-approval letter in hand. This shows the seller you are serious about your offer and you are financially able to purchase the seller's home.

After you have found your dream home and you are ready to make an offer, the next step is to prepare the contract. This is the document we complete and send to the seller's agent who will then discuss it with the seller. This offer must be in writing or prepared electronically using the Statewide New Jersey Realtors® Standard Form of Real Estate Sales Contract. We will discuss all aspects of the home together and decide what price and terms we want in our offer. I will go over all details of the contract line by line, so that you understand what you are signing before presenting it to the seller's agent.

It is critical to present the seller with an offer that reflects the true market value of the property so that your offer is taken seriously. Many times we see multiple offers in our area and that is where my experience comes in. I know how to prepare the winning offer and have strategies to get you that hot property!

AFTER YOU MAKE YOUR OFFER A SELLER WILL:

- Accept your offer
- Reject your offer
- Make a counter offer

In most cases a seller will not accept your initial offer outright and will make a counter offer. I will work with the seller's realtor skillfully negotiating on your behalf to make a deal. I will communicate with you throughout the entire process, strategizing our next steps in our counter offer. Once the buyer and seller agree on the terms, the initial contract is revised and signed by both parties. After all signatures are obtained we begin the attorney review process.

Under CONTRACT



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Getting --- TO THE FINISH LINE

Once we are out of attorney review and under contract, we have a few more steps before we can close on your purchase.

STEP 1: HOME INSPECTION

As a buyer, you will want to hire a professional inspector to evaluate the condition of the home you are purchasing. The goal of a home inspection is to give you an objective, independent and comprehensive analysis of the condition of your potential new home. A home inspection is not a renegotiation opportunity for the buyer. The goal is to find deficiencies in the home and have them addressed by the seller. If something in the home is older (for example the heating system) a seller will not replace it if it is in working order. Older mechanical systems and items that you will need to address when you purchase the home should have been taken into account when making your initial offer on the property.

A professional inspector will check the structure, construction, and mechanical systems. This usually includes:

ELECTRICAL	PLUMBING	HEATING	AIR CONDITIONING	HOT WATER HEATER
ROOF	FOUNDATION	WINDOWS	APPLIANCES	TERMITE/INSECTS
INSULATION	ATTIC	ASBESTOS	WALLS/CEILING	EXTERIOR
GARAGE	DECK/PATIO	FLOORING	BASEMENT	FIREPLACE
RADON	WALKWAYS	DRIVEWAY	FLOORS	DOORS

You may also choose to do an oil tank sweep on the property to check to see if there is an underground oil tank. This is usually done by a separate inspection company and there will be an additional charge for this inspection. In addition, if the house has a septic system, you will need to have a separate inspection done by a septic company.

Each inspector will send you a written report for any inspections performed on the home. We will review the reports in detail and decide what items if any, you will ask the seller to address. Your attorney will then send an email to the seller's attorney requesting the repairs. Repairs are negotiated between the buyer and seller through their attorneys. Many times a seller will give the buyer a credit in lieu of repairs. This way the buyer can address those items once they close on the property with anyone they choose. If an inspection uncovers major issues or a seller refuses to address anything the buyer asks for, a buyer has the right to get out of the contract (this of course will depend on the terms in the contract).

Getting --- TO THE FINISH LINE

STEP 2: GETTING AN APPRAISAL (FOR BUYERS OBTAINING A MORTGAGE)

An appraisal will be ordered by your lender and is an estimate of the value of a property by a licensed appraiser. The primary goal of the appraisal is to justify the lender's investment (your mortgage). If the appraisal falls short of the amount you are purchasing the home for, you may be denied a mortgage or offered a smaller loan and you will have to come up with more of a down payment. Your contract may include a clause that if the appraisal comes in below the purchase price you have the right to renegotiate the purchase price or cancel the contract. If this should happen we will work together to discuss your options. I have found most times the appraisal amount will come in at the purchase price amount.

STEP 3: PROPERTY SURVEY

If the seller does not have a recent survey, I suggest having your attorney order one. A survey will determine whether the house is within property borders, whether there are encroachments on the property by neighbors, and will show any easements on the property. For an additional charge, a surveyor can mark out the property so you know exactly where the property lines are. You may want to have this done if you plan on doing an addition or adding a fence in the future.

STEP 4: TITLE INSURANCE

Simply explained "title" is the right to own, possess, use, control and dispose of property. When you buy a home, you are actually buying the seller's title to the home. A deed is the written legal evidence that the seller has conveyed their ownership rights to you. Your attorney will order title and conduct a title examination to discover any problems that might prevent you from getting clear title to the home. Generally, title issues can be cleared up before closing. Title insurance will protect you against title defects that were not discovered in the course of the title search. If such defects were discovered later, your title insurance would cover you.

STEP 5: CLOSING

We are ready to close on your property! The closing is the legal transfer of ownership of the home from the seller to the buyer. Closings are usually held at the office of the buyer's attorney or an agreed upon location. Before the closing you will need to:

- Have homeowner's insurance in place
- Review the Closing Disclosure with your attorney. This document details all costs associated with your transaction, including the amount you will need to bring to closing
- Transfer funds for the closing after getting final numbers from your attorney
- Set-up and transfer utilities in your name
- Schedule a final walk through with me to ensure the condition of the house is the same as it was at the time of inspections. We will also check to see that any agreed upon repairs have been completed.
- Bring photo ID
- Bring your checkbook

GET YOUR KEYS, CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR HOME PURCHASE!

Frequently

ASKED QUESTIONS

Do I work exclusively with you to find a house?

Yes you do!! I make myself available to you days, nights and weekends. When you call, text or email me, I will always respond promptly. No one will work harder than me to find you your dream home. For that I request your loyalty to me. My 28+ years of experience is invaluable to you. No real estate deal is typical. Experience matters when it comes to multiple offers or any other issues that may arise. The odds are I have experienced it!

How will you tell me about new homes that come on the market?

I will email you when new homes come on the market, as well as homes that get price reductions and homes that come back on the market. In addition, I will keep you informed of exclusive listings that are not on multiple listing. I screen all listings before I send them to you weeding out bad locations and homes that don't meet your requirements. I will not waste your time and put you on an MLS drip campaign that gives you all homes in your price range that may not meet your requirements.

If I see a realtor sign or a home online can you get me information?

Absolutely!! The odds are I can show you any property you find and can get you additional information you may not be able to source. Give me what information you have on the home and I will get you what you need.

What happens if I go to an open house without you?

Most times I will accompany you, but when I can't it is essential that you tell the agent at the open house that you are working with me. If you know which homes you are going to visit I can give the listing agent a heads up that you are coming. This way you can walk the home freely and the agent knows you are working with me. If you decide this is the home you want to make an offer on, get in touch with me immediately! You are going to want me to represent you when negotiating. Any agent sitting the open house that tells you they must write the offer is violating the Realtor® Code of Ethics. You will want your own Realtor®, I will write the offer for you.

Do you have a list of recommended vendors who can help get me a mortgage, inspect a home, renovate and so on?

When purchasing a home, you are going to need other important players on your team – specifically a real estate attorney, mortgage lender, home inspector, painters, and contractors. I work with highly skilled vendors that I have recommended for years, many of whom I have used for my own home. Many of my past clients have utilized my recommendations and have been extremely happy. Of course it is ultimately your decision to choose who you want to work with.

How does For Sale by Owners (FSBO) work?

Homeowners trying to sell their home without a realtor are usually doing so in the hopes of saving the commission. I have found most FSBO's have over priced their home and many of them give up and end up listing with a realtor. If you do see a FSBO home and want to take advantage of my experience and pricing expertise, let me contact the owner and make the appointment. Most times the seller will work with an agent although their home is not listed.



Thank you
FOR YOUR TIME

I sincerely look forward to assisting you with your home purchase. Should you have additional questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to me anytime.



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