

A Guide to Buying Your First Home



ABOUT ME

DARREN RIVERS

- 500+ Homes Sold in South Puget Sound
- Proven Pricing and Negotiation Expertise
- Local Market Knowledge & Area Connections
- Full-Service Team Behind Every Listing
- Weekly Updates and Transparent Communication



“DARREN WAS HONEST, RESPONSIVE, AND HELPED US FEEL COMPLETELY CONFIDENT FROM DAY ONE TO CLOSE.” — CHRIS S.

MEET OUR TEAM



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CLIENT TESTIMONIALS



JOSE SANTIAGO

“Darren did an amazing job getting us into the home of our dreams! He made every effort to facilitate all of our needs during our home buying experience. Not once were we not informed along the way. Above and beyond in all aspects of the home buying process! Highly recommend calling darren if you are in need of finding your dream home. We will continue to work with him from here on out! Thanks Darren!!

JIM WARD

“Very impressed in his knowledge of the area and his connections. He learned what we were searching for and delivered. His followup and timeliness was greatly appreciated. Even after the deal closed, Darren provided excellent references to businesses that could address electrical, plumbing, HVAC, and handyman needed. Super realtor!! Jim



THE BUYER ROADMAP

This is a brief summary of the timeline for purchasing your home. Remember, as your Real Estate Agent, I will be there to be sure you feel confident during each step of this process.



FINANCES

Before you officially begin your home search, We,, always recommend to begin with talking to a lender and getting pre-approved. A lender will be able to answer all of your questions regarding finances and give you a clear understanding of the exact price range you will be pre-approved for and an estimate of the expenses to expect.

Questions to ask when interviewing potential lenders...

- What is the best type of loan for me?
- Do I qualify for any special discounts or loan programs?
- What interest rate can you offer?
- When can you lock in my rate?
- What fees can I expect from you?
- What are my estimated closing costs?



PART 2: FINANCES

There are many different factors that the lender will use to calculate your pre-approval. It's always best to be prepared, so here are a few of the documents you can begin to gather together and can expect to be requested:

Tax Returns



W-2 Forms



Pay Stubs



Bank Statements



List of Monthly Debt



HOME SEARCH

As your Real Estate Agent, my number one goal is to help you achieve your own. I make it my priority to understand your situation when it comes to buying your home so we can accomplish your goals.

STEP ONE

After you speak with a lender and get pre-approved, we will begin your online home search. We will set you up on an automated search on the Multiple Listing Service (MLS).

STEP TWO

We will discuss your ideal price range, your must-haves list, deal breakers, location preferences, school districts, and all of the other factors that will help me to best help you during the home search period.

STEP THREE

When you decide you are interested in a home, we will schedule a showing to view the home in person. If you decide it meets your criteria, we will write an offer for the home. When we get an accepted offer, you will now be Under Contract.



MUST HAVE HOME CHECKLIST

Place a check mark next to any amenity that you consider a must have on your next home.

KITCHEN

- ☐ Island
- ☐ Updated countertops
- ☐ Walk in Pantry
- ☐ Updated cabinets
- ☐ Breakfast nook
- ☐ Updated appliances

BATHROOMS

- ☐ Bathtub
- ☐ Updated bathroom
- ☐ Walk in shower
- ☐ Guest bathroom

MAIN LIVING AREA

- ☐ Walk-in closet
- ☐ Split floor plan
- ☐ Storage space
- ☐ Master on main floor

ADDITIONAL FEATURES

- ☐ Hardwood floors
- ☐ Fireplace
- ☐ Lot size/acres
- ☐ Garage
- ☐ Open floor plan
- ☐ Front porch
- ☐ Separate laundry area
- ☐ Parking space



IMPORTANT INFO

What other factors will influence your decision? (School zones, distance to work, specific neighborhoods, etc.)



What features are important to you in your new home?

What are the must-haves in your new home?



What are the deal breakers in a new home?

Any specifics not mentioned above:

OFFERS & NEGOTIATIONS

INFORMATION NEEDED

Before we begin writing an offer, we will need to gather some documents and discuss some important details...

- Pre-approval letter
- Offer Price
- Financing Amount
- Escrow Deposit
- Closing Date
- Inspection Period
- Closing Costs



OFFERS & NEGOTIATIONS PART 2



MULTIPLE OFFER SITUATIONS

Sometimes we see homes go into multiple offer situations. This means that your offer is not the only offer on the table for the sellers. Here are some of my best tips to win a multiple offer situation...

- Submit your Pre-Approval letter with your offer
- Have your lender call the listing agent to share your Pre-Approval details
- Make a cash offer if possible
- Offer more than the asking price
- Be flexible with your closing date
- Add a personal letter and a photo of you and your family
- Offer a higher amount for the Escrow deposit so the seller knows that you are serious
- Keep your offer clean when it comes to contingencies and don't ask for any that are not a deal-breaker for you



ESCROW AND EARNEST MONEY

Congrats! We are almost there. You will turn in your Earnest Money Deposit, we will get inspections scheduled, negotiate repairs, and move forward with your loan application. The entire process from contract to close typically takes about 30 days.



INSPECTION PERIOD



INSPECTION TIME PERIOD

**The typical
inspection period is
between 5-10 days**



It is critical that we begin scheduling the inspections you choose to have done as soon as we are under contract on your potential new home. This will ensure that we do not run out of time or have any delays in the process. Typical Home inspections cost about \$500-\$650

PREPARING FOR CLOSING DAY

1

LOAN APPLICATION & APPRAISAL

After the contract has been executed, the application for your loan will begin with your lender. The appraisal will be ordered by your lender after we have made our way through the inspection period. If your contract is contingent on the appraisal, this means that if the appraisal comes back lower than the offer you made, we will have an opportunity to negotiate the price once again.

2

HOME INSURANCE

You will need to obtain a Homeowner's Insurance Policy that will begin on the day of closing on your home. If you don't already have an insurance company you plan to work with, please feel free to reach out to us and I will be more than happy to provide you with a list of recommendations.

3

IMPORTANT REMINDER

As excited as you may be to begin shopping around for furniture and all of the things that help make a house a home, don't! Be very careful during this period not to make any major purchases, open new lines of credit, or change jobs. If in doubt, be sure to call someone on our team.

4

CLEAR TO CLOSE

These words are music to our ears!! This means that that mortgage underwriter has approved your loan documents and we can confirm your closing date with the title company and you get your keys soon!

MY RECOMMENDED PROS

Please feel free to reach out and interview some of the lenders that I know and trust.



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THE RIVERS GROUP



Thank you for choosing us to guide you in the exciting journey of buying your home. We're honored to be part of this process and look forward to working with you to achieve all of your real estate goals.

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A kitchen scene with white cabinetry. The upper cabinets have glass doors with a white 'X' pattern, displaying blue glass bottles. Below them are solid white cabinet doors. To the right, a wooden cutting board hangs on a white herringbone backsplash. A wooden table is partially visible on the right side. The floor is made of light-colored wood planks.

"Real Estate goes beyond
being just a job for me; it's
my passion. I am dedicated
to helping all my clients
achieve their real estate
goals and providing an
exceptional home buying
experience."

DARREN RIVERS