BUYING A NEW HOME

THANK YOU FROM THE BOTTOM OF OUR HEARTS. DID WE HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT WE WERE DOING? ABSOLUTELY NOT. BEING FIRST TIME HOME BUYERS, MY HUSBAND AND I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT, BUT RYAN WAS THERE EVERY STEP OF THE WAY. WHEN WE HAD QUESTIONS, RYAN WAS ALWAYS THERE. WHEN WE WANTED UPDATES ON THE HOUSE, HE MADE IT HAPPEN. RYAN WENT ABOVE AND BEYOND FROM START TO FINISH. LITERALLY. FROM THE TIME THE HOUSE ONLY HAD ITS WOOD FRAMEWORK TO SEEING THE HOUSE PAINTED FOR THE FIRST TIME. HE WAS THERE FOR ALL IT. MEMORIES I WILL CHERISH FOREVER. IF WE COULD DO IT ALL AGAIN, WE WOULD. AND WITHOUT A DOUBT, WE WOULD ALWAYS CHOOSE RYAN TO BE OUR REALTOR.

ANDREW & KRISALEY

WELCOME

I AM EXCITED TO GUIDE YOU THROUGH THIS JOURNEY!

Thank you for choosing to put your trust in me for the process of buying and/or selling your home. Every member of my team is committed to ensuring that ALL of your real estate needs are not just met, but exceeded! I've created this book for your convenience and we hope that it will be a valuable resource. While the entire process is outlined for you here, please know that I will be staying in constant contact with you throughout the process. Your experience will be unique and I will adjust our service according to your wants and needs. My focus is on your complete satisfaction.

Ryan Hammond

ESTATE DIRECTOR

DRE#02097560
209.370.0490
408-659-9378
RYAN@CRAFTBAUER.COM
AGENTRYANHAMMOND.COM
@RYANJONHAMMOND

MEET THE _TEAM

RYAN HAMMOND

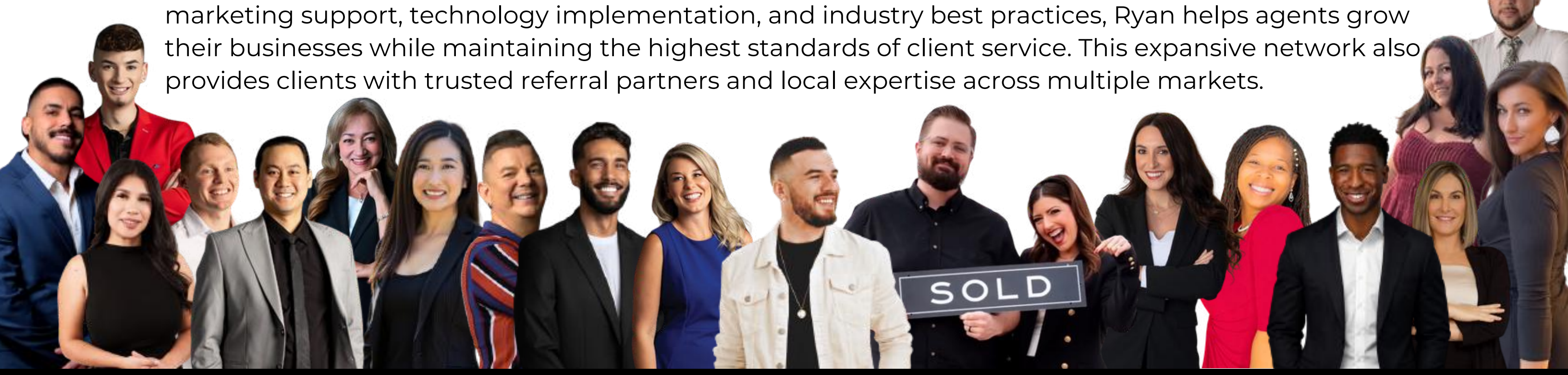
Estate Diretor
Ryan, is a leader at the forefront of Real Estate technology and digital marketing. With a passion for streamlining processes and driving success, Ryan leverages his expertise to optimize team performance and transaction management. As a seasoned mentor, he also empowers new agents to reach their full potential, providing guidance and support every step of the way. His unique blend of technical savvy, operational expertise, and leadership makes him an asset to the organization

SHANA GATES

Principal Partner | Chief Strategy Officer
Shana Gates is an experienced real estate leader with nearly two decades in the industry and a strategic focus on the luxury market since 2012. As Principal Partner and CSO, she oversees a high-performing team known for delivering concierge-level service and innovative marketing to discerning buyers and sellers. Based in Indian Wells, Shana brings deep market insight, operational excellence, and a commitment to client success.

AGENTS PARTNERS AND NETWORK

In addition to serving his own clients, Ryan provides leadership, mentorship, marketing guidance, and business development support to a growing network of real estate professionals through Real Broker. Spanning Northern California, Sacramento, the Central Valley, the Bay Area, Orange County, Los Angeles, the Coachella Valley, Texas, New York, and additional markets nationwide, these relationships are built on collaboration, education, and shared success. Through ongoing coaching, strategic marketing support, technology implementation, and industry best practices, Ryan helps agents grow their businesses while maintaining the highest standards of client service. This expansive network also provides clients with trusted referral partners and local expertise across multiple markets.



_ABOUT ME

IaRyan Hammond is an Estate Director with Craft & Bauer | Real Broker, serving home buyers and sellers across Southern California with dedication, expertise, and a personal touch. A familiar face from the television show American Idol, Ryan brings the same warmth and authenticity that resonated with audiences to every client relationship he builds.

With nearly a decade of experience in residential, new construction, commercial, and land transactions, Ryan is a second-generation Realtor who views each deal not just as a transaction, but as the beginning of a lifelong partnership. Clients often tell him, “It feels like you’re part of the family now,” which reflects the personal connection he values most in his work.

Ryan’s professional background extends beyond real estate. Having worked as a digital marketing specialist and marketing designer, he brings a unique edge to every listing. This expertise allows him to craft visually compelling campaigns and employ innovative strategies that capture attention, maximize exposure, and ultimately drive stronger results for sellers. His ability to combine creative design with advanced marketing technology ensures that properties stand out in even the most competitive markets.

Now based in Southern California, Ryan leads with cutting-edge digital marketing strategies designed to give sellers maximum visibility and buyers the best opportunities. His strong grasp of real estate technology and market dynamics ensures that clients stay ahead in a competitive landscape.

While Southern California is his home base, Ryan has not forgotten his roots in Northern California’s Central Valley, where he grew up and launched his career. To this day, he maintains a trusted team there to serve clients in that region, offering the same high level of service and care to the communities that shaped him.

Ryan’s favorite moments are walking buyers through homes, discovering what excites them most, and celebrating with them as they receive the keys to their new chapter. For sellers, he thrives on crafting tailored marketing plans that showcase each property’s unique qualities and drive results beyond expectations.

With his blend of industry knowledge, marketing expertise, leadership experience, and a genuine heart for people, Ryan continues to be a trusted partner for both buyers and sellers across California—making the process as smooth, successful, and memorable as possible.

Ryan Hammond

ESTATE DIRECTOR

DRE#02097560

408-659-9378

RYAN@CRAFTBAUER.COM

AGENTRYANHAMMOND.COM

@RYANJONHAMMOND

_MY COMMITMENT TO YOU

01 GETTING YOU IN THE DOOR

We will narrow down the homes that fit your unique wants and needs get you in the door! Looking at dozens of homes every week, I can help you identify potential problems within a home.

02 HANDLING CHALLENGING CONVERSATIONS

When repairs or changes in price need to made, I will be your guide and handle requesting any repairs or changes in price to the sellers.

03 STAYING ON TOP OF THE PAPERWORK

Buying a home involves many types of documentation. I have the experience and knowledge to navigate real estate contracts. Ensuring that nothing is overlooked and that you truly understand what a paper means before ever signing.

04 NEIGHBORHOOD EXPERT

Working daily in neighborhoods with inspectors, contractors, and negotiating with sellers, I have the market knowledge you need to get the best results from your purchase. Understanding the local real estate market can go a long way when it comes time to make an offer on a house.

05 PROBLEM SOLVER

I will work hard to protect all of your interests and take on any issues that may arise throughout the entire process. Hopefully making buying a home a fun and stress-free process.

STEPS TO BUYING A NEW HOME

STAGE 1 - PREP WORK

STEP 1

DECIDE WHETHER YOU'RE READY TO BUY A HOME

STEP 2

CALCULATE HOW MUCH YOU CAN AFFORD ON A HOUSE

STEP 3

SAVE FOR A DOWN PAYMENT AND CLOSING COSTS

STEP 4

DECIDE WHAT TYPE OF MORTGAGE IS RIGHT FOR YOU

STEP 5

GET PREAPPROVED FOR A MORTGAGE

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STEP 14

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STEP 15

CLOSE ON YOUR NEW HOME!

01

STAGE 1 - PREP WORK

DECIDE WHETHER YOU'RE READY TO BUY A HOME

Sure, there's being financially ready to buy a house, but are you emotionally ready? Even if it's just going to be your starter home, you're making a big financial commitment and putting down some roots.

You'll want to think about your other goals for the next few years. Are you buying with a partner, and if yes, are you on the same page when it comes to money? Is there any chance you'd need to relocate for work? Are you thinking of starting a family?

These big-picture questions can add to the pros (or cons) of whether this is the right time to buy a house.

WONDERING IF YOU SHOULD BUY A HOUSE? LET'S LOOK AT SOME OF THE FACTORS THAT LENDERS AND HOMEOWNERS ALIKE SHOULD CONSIDER.

INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Your lender won't just want to see how much money you make. They'll also want to see a work history (usually about 2 years) to make sure your income source is stable and reliable.

Preparing your income is all about pulling the right documentation together to show steady employment. If you're on the payroll, you'll likely just need to provide recent pay stubs and W-2s. On the other hand, you'll need to submit your tax returns and other documents the lender requests if you're self-employed.

DEBT-TO-INCOME RATIO

Debt-to-income ratio (DTI) is another financial instrument mortgage lenders use to evaluate your loan application. Your DTI helps your lender see how much of your monthly income goes to debt so they can evaluate the amount of mortgage debt you can take on.

DTI is calculated by dividing your monthly debt by your gross monthly income. For example, if your monthly debts (credit card minimum payments, loan payments, etc.) total $2,000 per month and your gross monthly income is $6,000, your DTI is $2,000/$6,000, or 33%. Your lender will use the debts shown on your credit report to calculate your DTI.

Depending on the type of loan you're applying for, your lender may also calculate your housing expense ratio, also sometimes referred to as front-end DTI. This is a ratio that looks at your total monthly house payment (principal, interest, taxes and insurance) compared to your monthly income. For example, if you have a $1,200 house payment and the same $6,000 monthly income, your housing expense ratio is $1,200/$6,000, or 20%.

It's smart to review your DTI before you apply for a loan. In most cases, you'll need a back-end DTI of 43% or less to qualify for the most mortgage options, although this number varies based on your lender, loan type and other factors.

CREDIT HEALTH

Your credit score plays a huge role in what loans and interest rates you qualify for. Your credit score tells lenders how much of a risk you are to grant a loan.

Taking steps to improve your credit score and reduce your debt can pay off big as you prepare to get a mortgage. Better numbers mean better loan options with lower interest rates.

Your credit score is based on the following information:

- Your payment history
- The amount of money you owe
- The length of your credit history
- Types of credit you've used
- Your pursuit of new credit

What score will you need to qualify for a home loan? Most lenders require a credit score of at least 620 to qualify for the majority of loans. A score above 720 will generally get you the very best loan terms.

TIMING

Deciding whether it's a good time to buy a house or not depends on a variety of personal factors (such as financial readiness and lifestyle preferences) and market conditions (such as economic health and current mortgage rates).

Ultimately, the right time to buy a home comes down to your own unique situation. Be sure to consult a financial expert before making any big financial decisions such as buying a house.

CALCULATE HOW MUCH YOU CAN AFFORD

Once you decide you're ready to buy a home, it's time to set a budget. A good place to begin is by calculating your DTI ratio. Look at your current debts and income and consider how much money you can reasonably afford to spend each month on a mortgage.

Homeownership comes with several costs you don't need to worry about while renting. You'll need to pay property taxes and maintain some form of homeowners insurance. Factor these expenses into your household budget when you decide how much you can afford on a house.

Mortgage lenders consider DTI an important qualifying factor. The amount of debt you have is considered a very reliable predictor of the risk associated with the approval of any mortgage loan. Therefore, it's important to know your numbers.

LET'S LOOK AT HOW DTI IS CALCULATED.

Step 1: Add Up All Of Your Monthly Debts

Your debt payments could include:

- Monthly rent or house payments
- Monthly child support payments or alimony
- Student loan payments
- Car payments
- Monthly credit card minimum payments
- Any other debts you might have

You don't need to add in:

- Grocery bills
- Utility bills
- Taxes
- Any other bills that may vary month to month

Step 2: Divide Your Monthly Debts By Your Monthly Gross Income

Next, do a simple calculation. For example, let's say your debts add up to $2,000 per month. If your monthly gross income (your before-tax income) is $6,000 per month, then your DTI ratio is 0.33, or 33%.

SAVE FOR A DOWN PAYMENT AND CLOSING COSTS

There are many ways to save for your home purchase, including through investments and savings accounts. If you have relatives who are willing to contribute money, you may be able to use gift money toward your down payment (in which case, be sure to provide your lender with a gift letter).

But how much do you need to save before buying a home? Let's look at some of the major expenses related to the purchase, and how much you might want to save for them.

DOWN PAYMENT

Your down payment is a large, one-time payment toward the purchase of a home. Many lenders require a down payment because it mitigates the loss they might suffer in the event that a borrower defaults on their mortgage.

Many home buyers believe that they need a 20% down payment to buy a home. This isn't true. Plus, a down payment of that size isn't realistic for many first-time home buyers.

Fortunately, there are many options for buyers who can't afford a 20% down payment. For example, you can get a conventional loan for as little as 3% down. Federal Housing Administration (FHA) loans have a minimum down payment of 3.5%. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) loans and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) loans even allow eligible and qualified borrowers to put 0% down.

There are advantages, however, to making a larger down payment. For one, it typically means you'll have more mortgage options. It also usually means you'll have a smaller monthly payment and a lower interest rate. Plus, if you put at least 20% down on a conventional loan, you won't need to pay for private mortgage insurance (PMI).

CLOSING COSTS

You'll also need to save money to cover closing costs – the fees you pay to get the loan. There are many variables that go into determining how much you'll pay for closing costs, but it's usually smart to prepare for 3 – 6% of the home value. This means that if you're buying a home worth $200,000, you might pay $6,000 – $12,000 in closing costs.

The specific closing costs will depend on your loan type, your lender, and where you live. Almost all homeowners will pay for things like appraisal fees and title insurance. If you take out a government-backed loan, you'll typically need to pay an insurance premium or funding fee upfront.

IMPORTANT!

Before you close on your loan, your lender will give you a document called a Closing Disclosure, which lists each of the closing costs you need to cover and how much you'll need to pay at closing. Look over your Closing Disclosure carefully before you close to know what to expect and to catch any errors.

STEP 4

DECIDE WHAT TYPE OF MORTGAGE IS RIGHT FOR YOU

Before you can apply for a mortgage, you'll need to decide what the best type of loan is for you and which one you'll qualify for.

CONVENTIONAL LOANS

Conventional loans are mortgages made by a private lender and not backed by the government. The most common type of conventional loans are loans that are backed by Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac, sometimes called conforming loans. The majority of mortgages in the U.S. are conventional loans. Conventional loans are always a popular option for home buyers, and you can get one with as little as 3% down.

FHA LOANS

Backed by the Federal Housing Administration, FHA loans are less of a risk for lenders because the government insures them if you stop making payments. As a result, FHA loans have credit score requirements that aren't as strict. You can get an FHA loan with a down payment as small as 3.5%.

VA LOANS

Backed by the Federal Housing Administration, FHA loans are less of a risk for lenders because the government insures them if you stop making payments. As a result, FHA loans have credit score requirements that aren't as strict. You can get an FHA loan with a down payment as small as 3.5%.

GET PREAPPROVED FOR A MORTGAGE

When you're ready to start house hunting, it's time to get preapproved for a mortgage. When you apply, your lender will give you a preapproval letter that states how much you're approved for based on your credit, assets, and income. You can show your preapproval letter to your real estate agent so they can help you find homes within your budget.

To get preapproved, you need to apply with your lender. The preapproval process typically involves answering some questions about your income, your assets, and the home you want to buy.

Pre-approvals are a dress rehearsal for your mortgage and are necessary to make a serious offer on a home. They typically expire after 90 days and can be refreshed if you don't find the home you're looking for in that time.
Know that pre-approvals don't guarantee your mortgage approval or interest rate. After you're pre-approved, avoid opening new credit lines or making large debt payments that can impact your FICO score.

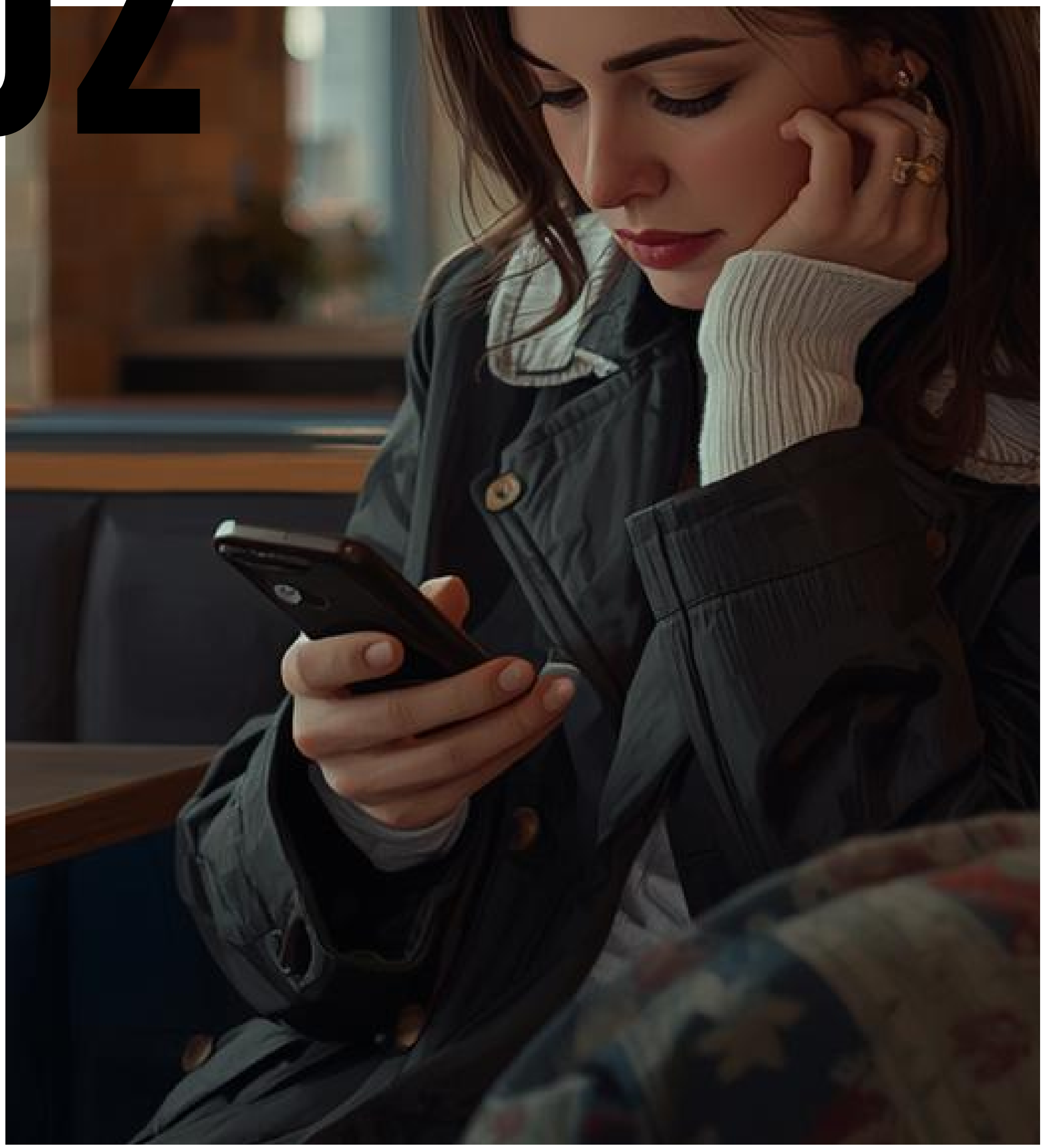
Working with a lender to get preapproved for a mortgage is an important step in accurately determining your budget. A mortgage preapproval will give you real numbers since the lender will have detailed info about your finances. That includes a hard inquiry, which will show up on your credit report. The good news: If you apply with multiple lenders around the same time, it'll only count as one hard pull.

★★★★★

RYAN WAS WONDERFUL FROM START TO FINISH. WE HAD A BAD EXPERIENCE WITH OUR FIRST HOME PURCHASE SO WE WERE COMING INTO THIS VERY SKEPTICAL. RIGHT FROM THE START RYAN WAS VERY WELL INFORMED ABOUT THE HOUSES WE WERE LOOKING INTO. HE BROKE DOWN AND EXPLAINED ALL THE STEPS WE WOULD HAVE TO DO IN ORDER TO PURCHASE OUR HOME. WE WERE MUCH MORE AT EASE AND KNEW WE WERE IN GOOD HANDS AFTER OUR FIRST CONVERSATION WITH RYAN. THROUGHOUT OUR PROCESS, RYAN WAS THERE ANYTIME WE HAD QUESTIONS; IT DIDN'T MATTER THE TIME. RYAN REALLY LISTENED TO US WHEN WE EXPRESSED WHAT WE WERE LOOKING FOR IN A NEW HOME. HE WOULD CONSTANTLY UPDATE US WITH NEW LISTING AND WAS QUICK TO SET US UP TO SEE THE HOUSE WE WERE INTERESTED IN. WE WOULD LOVE TO WORK WITH RYAN AGAIN BECAUSE HE TRULY IS THERE TO HELP THE CONSUMER. HE WAS REALLY TRANSPARENT AND HONEST AND HAD AN AMAZING ATTITUDE THE WHOLE WAY THROUGH.

AJ & KAYLIE

_02



STAGE 2 - THE SEARCH

STEP 6

YOUR WISHLIST

CREATE A WISH LIST

Make a list of the things you'll need to have in the house. Ask yourself how many bedrooms and bathrooms you'll need and get an idea of how much space you desire. How big do you want the kitchen to be? Do you need lots of closets and cabinet space? Do you need a big yard for your kids and/or pets to play in?

Once you've made a list of your must-haves, don't forget to think about the kind of neighborhood you want, the types of schools in the area, the length of your commute to and from work, and the convenience of local shopping. Take into account your safety concerns as well as how good the rate of home appreciation is in the area.

TIPS

We will make sure to check out the little details of each house

•Test the plumbing

•Try the electrical system

•Open and close the windows & doors to make sure they work properly

Evaluate the neighborhood and surrounding areas.

•Are the surrounding homes well maintained?

•How much traffic is on the street?

•Is it conveniently located to schools, shopping, restaurants, & parks?

THE BASICS

What part of town (or country) do you want to live in?

What price range would you consider?

No less than $______ but no more than $______

Are schools a factor and, if so, what do you need to take into consideration (e.g., want specific school system, want kids to be able to walk to school, etc.)?

Do you want an older home or a newer home (less than 5 years old)? ___yes ___no

How much renovation would you be willing to do?
___A lot ___A little ___None!

What kind of houses would you be willing to see?

___One story ___2 story
___split level ___bi-level
___townhouse ___condo
___New construction ___Ranch

What style house appeals to you most?

___contemporary ___traditional
____tudor ____colonial
____modern ____no preference

Do you have any physical needs that must be met, such as wheelchair access?
___yes ___no

THE INTERIOR

How many bedrooms must you have? ____ would you like to have? ____

How many bathrooms do you want? ____

How big would you like your house to be (square feet)?
No less than ____ But no more than ____

What features do you want to have in your house?

	Need	Want
Carpet	______	______
Ceramic tile	______	______
Hardwood floors	______	______
Eat-in kitchen	______	______
Separate dining room	______	______
Formal living room	______	______
Family room	______	______
Basement	______	______
Separate laundry room	______	______
Fireplace	______	______
Master on the main	______	______

THE LOT

	Need	Want
Large yard (1 acre or more)	____________	____________
Small yard (less than 1 acre)	____________	____________
Fenced yard	____________	____________
1 Car Garage	____________	____________
2 Car Garage	____________	____________
3 Car Garage	____________	____________
4+ Car Garage	____________	____________
Extra parking	____________	____________
Patio/deck	____________	____________
Pool	____________	____________
Outdoor spa	____________	____________
Outdoor Kitchen	____________	____________
Other buildings	____________	____________
Special view of what?	____________	____________

STEP 7

THE MOST COMMONLY MISSED STEP...

DOCUMENTING YOUR VISIT

When it's time to take your home tour, check the features against the checklist you made. Do you need to re-evaluate any of your must-haves?

Get a feel for the home and consider anything you may have left off of your list. Remember, paint can be replaced and staged furniture will change, but there are aspects that can't change so easily:

IS THERE ENOUGH SPACE OR TOO MUCH SPACE?

WHERE COULD YOU USE MORE SPACE?

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE LAYOUT?

DO YOU LIKE THE FIXTURES AND FINISHES?

ARE YOU HAPPY WITH THE WINDOWS (ENOUGH NATURAL LIGHT, WELL-PLACED, TOO SUNNY)?

DOES THE HOME HAVE CURB APPEAL?

DOES THE HOME HAVE ADEQUATE PARKING?

ADDRESS: ______________________________

DATE VIEWED: ____________ TIME OF DAY: __________

HOME SCORE: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

LOCATION

- [ ] The home is in our desired neighborhood and/or area.
- [ ] We like the parks and recreational options close by.
- [ ] The home is in our desired school district.
- [ ] The home is within our determined work radius.

INTERIOR DETAILS

- [ ] The home has the number of bedrooms we want/need.
- [ ] The home is as updated as we want.
- [ ] The home has the number of bathrooms we want/need.
- [ ] The home has the square feet we want/need.

EXTERIOR DETAILS

- [ ] The exterior is in good condition & is as updated as we want/need.
- [ ] We like the landscape and it is what we want/need.
- [ ] We like the look and design of the exterior of the home.
- [ ] The backyard will work for us and is what we want/need.

STEP 9

START TOURING HOMES

★★★★★

WE CANNOT SAY ENOUGH GOOD THINGS ABOUT RYAN AND HIS TEAM! THERE WERE SIX OTHER BIDS ON OUR HOME AND RYAN MADE IT HAPPEN FOR US. PLUS WE MOVED IN WITH EQUITY! HE WAS SUCH A JOY TO BE AROUND WHILE WE LITERALLY DROVE ALL OVER SACRAMENTO, AND OUR DAUGHTER OFTEN ASKS ABOUT HER "NEW BEST FRIEND RYAN." IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A HOME BUYING EXPERIENCE THAT STILL FEELS LIKE A WALK IN THE PARK AFTER THERE'S THE SLIGHTEST OF SET BACKS, CALL RYAN. HE WAS WITH US EVERY STEP OF THE WAY, ANSWERED EVERY QUESTION, BE IT BIG OR SMALL, AND WAS ALWAYS, ALWAYS AVAILABLE TO US. HE WAS SO CLEAR IN EXPLAINING EVERYTHING THAT GOES
INTO BUYING A HOME, WHICH CAN BE DAUNTING FOR FIRST TIME HOME BUYERS. WE GENUINELY LOVE RYAN AND CAN'T WAIT TO HAVE HIM BECOME A REGULAR GUEST AT OUR BARBEQUES WHEN THE WORLD EVENTUALLY OPENS UP AGAIN!

JESSIKA

STAGE 3 - UNDER CONTRACT & CLOSING

03

STEP 9

YOU'VE FOUND "THE ONE"

NOW IT IS TIME TO MAKE AN OFFER

WRITING AN OFFER

Before you make an offer on a house There are three key elements that you'll want to have in place before you make an offer on a house.

The first is a mortgage preapproval from at least one lender. Ideally, you should get preapproved before you start looking at houses. It can be time-consuming to pull together all the required documents, but most importantly, a preapproval lets you know how much house you can afford. Having a preapproval in hand also lets the seller know that you're serious and provides reassurance that the deal will close. That can be extra helpful in a scenario where the seller is in a hurry to move.

Second, know your market to ensure you're making a competitive offer. This can be based on comparable sales, other market information from your own research, or a comparative market analysis provided by your real estate agent. You'll probably want to make an offer that's for slightly less than your preapproval amount, which leaves room to negotiate.

Last, verify that the down payment required by your lender is in the bank and ready to go. Simply having earmarked certain assets as the funds to buy a home (including the money required for the earnest deposit, down payment, closing costs, etc.) is not enough to ensure a smooth transaction. Having direct and immediate access to the cash is essential.

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN AN OFFER:

A written offer may contain these elements, among others:

- Address: The home's legal address, and sometimes the legal property description.
- Price: Details regarding the purchase price and terms.
- Earnest money: The amount and terms regarding the earnest money, including its disposition upon the acceptance of the offer.
- Title: A stipulation that the seller will provide clear title to the property.
- Closing costs: Details regarding which party will pay closing costs or other fees, as well as how certain taxes and expenses will be prorated between the buyer and the seller at closing. (Some lenders may cap the amount of seller participation in these expenses.)
- The date and time of the offer’s expiration: In hot markets, this can be mere hours, but in most cases, it’s one or two days.
- A projected loan closing date: This is typically 30 to 60 days, though how long your lender's underwriting process takes can be the deciding factor here.
- Contingencies: Any contingencies that the deal is subject to (more on these in the next section).
- Disclosures: Other state-required provisions or disclosures.

COMMON CONTINGENCIES:

Your written offer will likely include a least a couple of standard contingencies. These are things that need to happen before the sale can move forward. Common contingencies include:

- Final loan approval: In other words, you get the mortgage, often within a specified amount of time.
- Home inspection: In addition to requiring that the property undergo a home inspection, this contingency may also specify how issues revealed during the inspection will be addressed (for example, if the seller will repair or provide a credit at closing), or if the inspection is for informational purposes only.
- Appraisal: Lenders generally insist on verification of the home's value via an appraisal, as they don't want to lend you more than the property is worth.
- Home sale: This is a less common contingency that means the purchase relies on the completion of another, separate transaction. This is usually either the sale of your current home or the seller finding a new home.

Although you have to protect your interests and gather enough information to make a wise purchase, contingencies may act as roadblocks to getting a deal done — especially in hot markets. It’s best for both the buyer and the seller to put only enough stipulations in the contract to cover the necessary bases; no more.

THE OFFER PROCESS

BUYER'S AGENT	SELLER'S AGENT
WRITE INITIAL OFFER AND SUBMIT TO SELLER'S AGENT →	INITIAL OFFER IS REVIEWED, SELLER CAN EITHER:
CONGRATS YOU'RE UNDER CONTRACT ←	ACCEPT THE OFFER
	OR
COUNTER OFFER IS REVIEWED, BUYER CAN EITHER: ←	DECLINE THE OFFER & COUNTER WITH NEW TERMS

REPEAT

YOU CAN NEGOTIATE BACK AND FORTH AS MANY TIMES AS NEEDED UNTIL YOU REACH AN AGREEMENT OR SOMEONE CHOOSES TO WALK AWAY.

ACCEPT THE OFFER

ACCEPT THE OFFER

CONGRATS YOU'RE UNDER CONTRACT

STEP 10

FINALIZE YOUR MORTGAGE

You know the property you want to buy and how much you'll have to pay for it. Now you'll choose a lender to get a mortgage from (you can go with a lender that preapproved you or start fresh with a different one).

Even with an online-first lender, you'll often work closely with a loan officer to complete the actual application.

This is a paperwork-heavy process, so get ready to do a lot of uploading. Here's what you're likely to need:

- W-2 forms from the past two years (possibly more, if you've changed employers).
- Pay stubs from the past 30 to 60 days.
- Proof of other sources of income (including documentation of any gift money).
- Federal income tax returns from the past two years.
- Recent bank statements (usually for the last couple of months).
- Details on long-term debts like car or student loans.
- ID and Social Security number.

Once your mortgage application is complete, you'll go into underwriting. During this process, the lender makes a final decision on whether to give you the loan — it's basically making sure there's not anything about the deal that's just too risky.

Underwriting includes digging deep into your finances, so you may need to come up with even more documents. The lender will also look at the home you've chosen via an appraisal and request a title search.

STEP 11

FINALIZE HOME INSURANCE

It might feel a little strange to take out an insurance policy on a home you don't actually own yet, but most lenders make securing homeowners insurance a condition of giving you a mortgage. You'll want enough coverage to fully replace the home (which might not be the same as your purchase price or the appraised value), and typically the policy should become effective on your closing date.

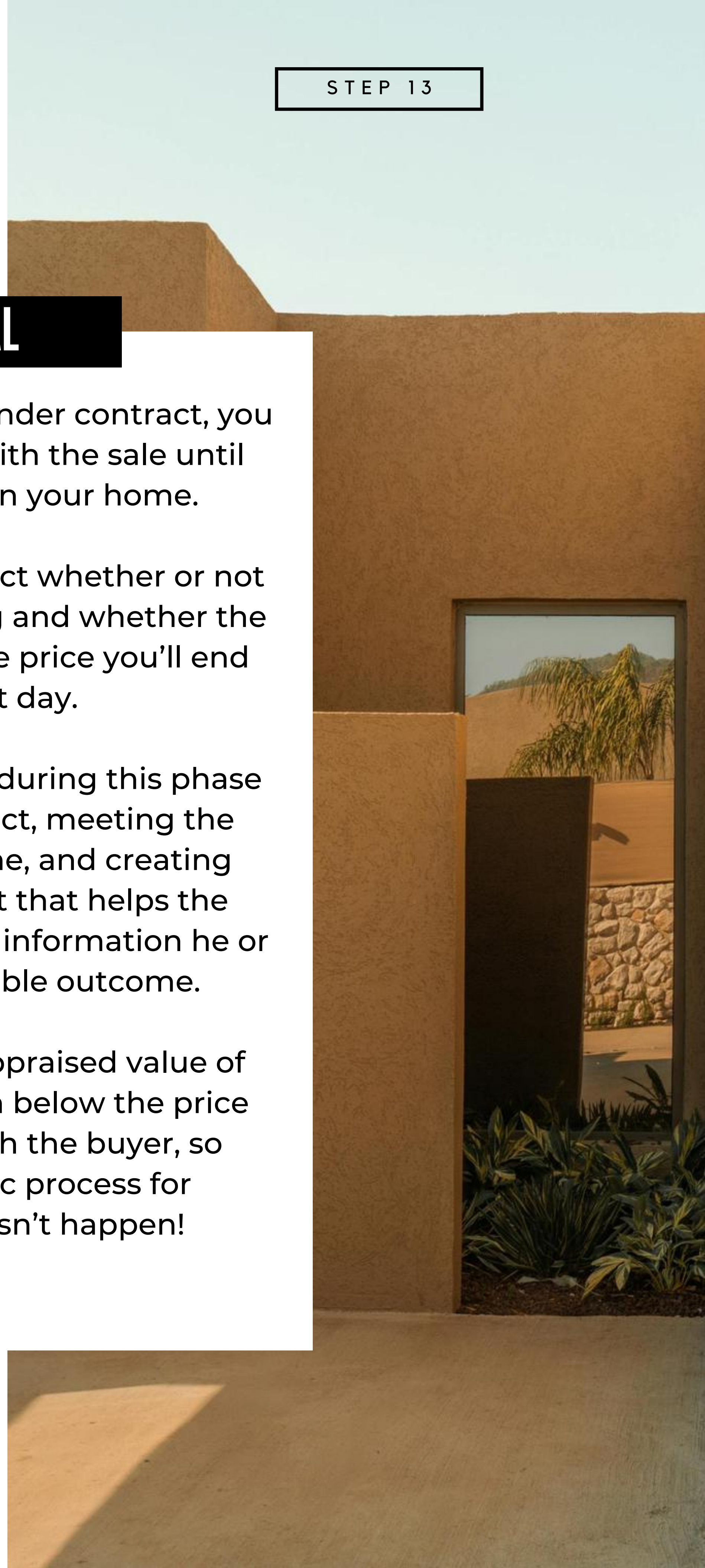
STEP 12

ORDER AND ATTEND INSPECTION

A basic home inspection can raise issues you might face down the road and point out any necessary repairs. This visual assessment covers all aspects of the house and its systems, from the foundation to the roof. If you have a particular concern, like mold or radon, you may want to get one of the more specialized types of home inspections in addition to a standard inspection.

You choose the home inspector and pay for the home inspection. If it uncovers problems that weren't included in the seller's disclosures, you may be able to negotiate with the seller

STEP 13



ORDER AN APPRAISAL

When your home is under contract, you can't move forward with the sale until an appraisal is done on your home.

The outcome can affect whether or not you make it to closing and whether the price in the offer is the price you'll end up with on settlement day.

We go the extra mile during this phase of being under contract, meeting the appraiser at your home, and creating an information packet that helps the appraiser have all the information he or she needs for a favorable outcome.

You don't want the appraised value of your home to come in below the price you've negotiated with the buyer, so we have a very specific process for making sure that doesn't happen!

NEGOTIATE ANY REPAIRS OR CREDITS WITH THE SELLER

Though some items, like prorating property taxes or HOA fees, will already have been addressed in your offer letter, you may still have some items to negotiate before closing.

Your ability to negotiate can hinge on what kind of market you're facing. In a strong seller's market, it can be difficult to get concessions, since the seller can simply go to their next offer. But if it's an issue that will come up with any buyer — for example, a necessary repair that will get flagged by any home inspector — you may still have leverage.

ASKING FOR A CREDIT AT CLOSING RATHER THAN FOR THE SELLER TO COMPLETE NEEDED REPAIRS CAN HELP KEEP THE TRANSACTION MOVING. THE SELLER SIMPLY REBATES YOU AN AGREED-UPON AMOUNT FOR SPECIFIC IMPROVEMENTS. THAT CAN SAVE YOU A BIT OF CASH AT CLOSING, PLUS HANDLING THE REPAIRS YOURSELF (WHETHER DIY OR WITH A PRO) ENSURES THE WORK WILL BE DONE TO YOUR SATISFACTION.

SCHEDULING YOUR MOVE

AFTER SIGNING

- [ ] Declutter! Sort through every drawer, closet, cupboard & shelf, removing items you no longer need or like.
- [ ] Donate or sell items that are in good condition.
- [ ] Get copies of medical records and store them with your other important documents
- [ ] Create an inventory of anything valuable that you plan to move
- [ ] Get estimates from moving companies

4 WEEKS TO MOVE

- [ ] Give 30 days' notice if you are currently renting
- [ ] Schedule movers/moving truck
- [ ] Buy/find packing materials
- [ ] Start packing

2 WEEKS TO MOVE

- [ ] Contact utility companies (water, electric, cable)
- [ ] Change address: mailing, subscriptions, etc.
- [ ] Minimize grocery shopping
- [ ] Keep on packing

1 WEEK TO MOVE

- [ ] Obtain a certified check for closing
- [ ] Complete final walkthrough
- [ ] Finish packing
- [ ] Clean
- [ ] Pack essentials for a few nights in new home
- [ ] Confirm delivery date with the moving company. Write directions to the new home, along with your cell phone number

DAY OF CLOSING

CLOSING DAY

Closing is when you sign ownership and insurance paperwork and you receive your new home's keys! Typically, closing takes four to six weeks. During this time, purchase funds are held in escrow, where your money is held safe until the transaction is complete.

FINAL WALK-THROUGH

We will do a final walk of the home within 24 hours of closing to check the property's condition. This final inspection takes about an hour. We will make sure any repair work that the seller agreed to make has been done.

We will be sure to:

- Make sure all appliances are working properly
- Run the water in all the faucets and check for any possible leaks
- Open and close garage doors with opener
- Flush toilets
- Run the garbage disposal and exhaust fans

CLOSING TABLE

Who will be there:

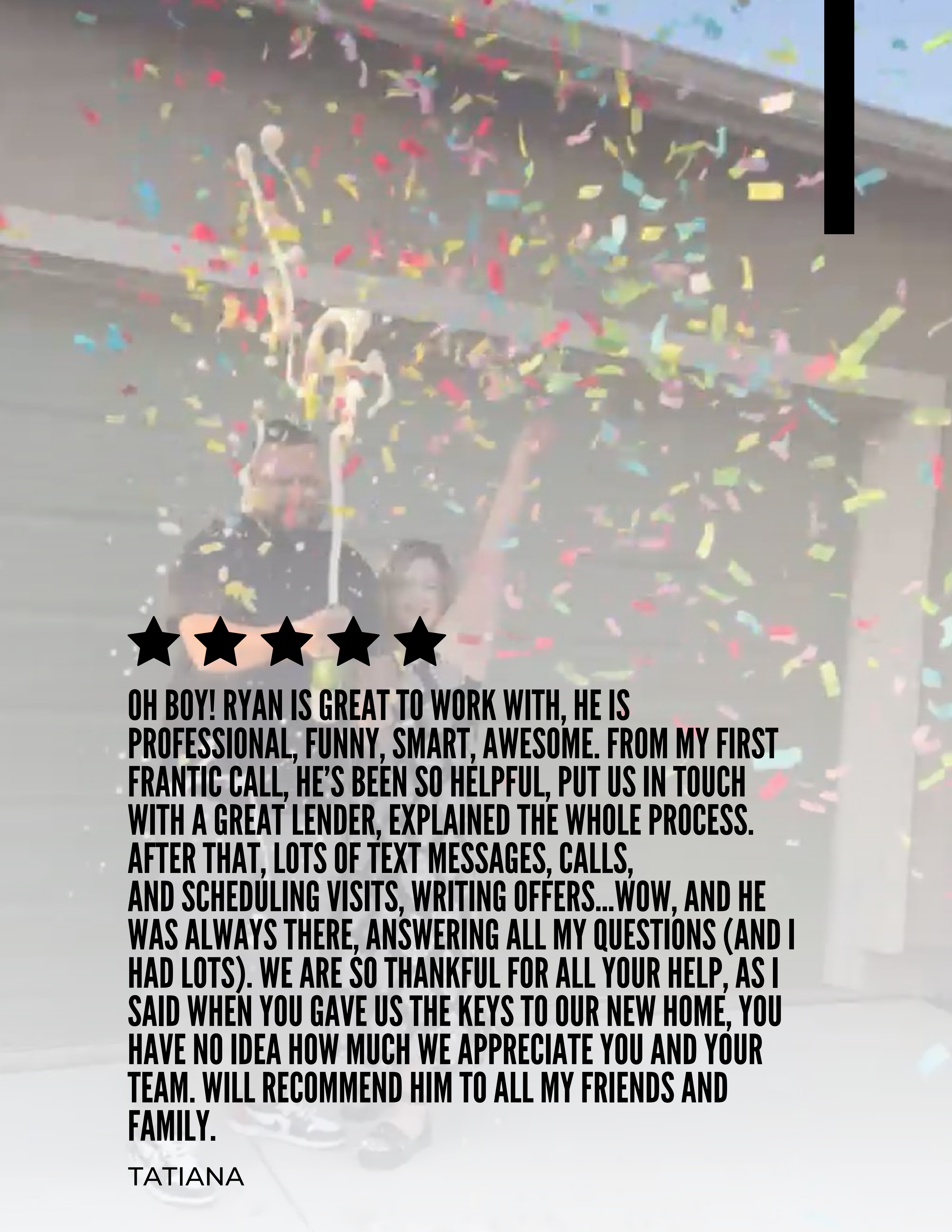
- Your agent
- The seller
- The seller's agent
- Your loan officer

BRING TO CLOSING

- Government-issued photo ID
- Copy of the sales contract

RECEIVE YOUR KEYS

Congratulations! It was a lot of hard work but you are now officially homeowners!! Time to throw a party and get to know your new neighbors!



★★★★★

OH BOY! RYAN IS GREAT TO WORK WITH, HE IS PROFESSIONAL, FUNNY, SMART, AWESOME. FROM MY FIRST FRANTIC CALL, HE'S BEEN SO HELPFUL, PUT US IN TOUCH WITH A GREAT LENDER, EXPLAINED THE WHOLE PROCESS. AFTER THAT, LOTS OF TEXT MESSAGES, CALLS, AND SCHEDULING VISITS, WRITING OFFERS...WOW, AND HE WAS ALWAYS THERE, ANSWERING ALL MY QUESTIONS (AND I HAD LOTS). WE ARE SO THANKFUL FOR ALL YOUR HELP, AS I SAID WHEN YOU GAVE US THE KEYS TO OUR NEW HOME, YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW MUCH WE APPRECIATE YOU AND YOUR TEAM. WILL RECOMMEND HIM TO ALL MY FRIENDS AND FAMILY.

TATIANA

THANK YOU!

RYAN HAMMOND

DRE#02097560
408-659-9378
RYAN@CRAFTBAUER.COM
AGENTRYANHAMMOND.COM
@RYANJONHAMMOND