

Colleen Hemphill

Presents:



The Home Buying Guide

Congratulations! The decision to buy your own home is an exciting one. The experience should be enjoyable as well as get you the perfect home with the least amount of hassle. I am devoted to using my expertise to make your transaction successful!

Purchasing a home is a very important decision. I would like to help you with honest, accurate information so you can make well-informed decisions regarding the purchase of your home. This booklet will give you an idea of what to expect during each phase of your transaction. It also contains reference pages, note pages, deadline information, etc., and is useful as a reference guide even after the transaction is closed.

Please keep this booklet during all house hunting related activities: meetings, house hunting trips, etc. Use it to take notes and to keep track of deadlines. You can even staple cards to relevant pages to keep related materials together. Making this transaction as easy as possible for you is my job. I am happy to serve all your real estate needs!

Colleen Hemphill

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COLLEEN HEMPHILL *"BRINGING HOME RESULTS"*

Why Do You Need a Realtor?



A Realtor brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the business of buying a home. In fact, a licensed real estate professional provides much more than the service of helping you find the home of your dreams. Realtors are not just sales agents. They are expert negotiators, seasoned financial advisors, and superb navigators around the local neighborhood. They are members of the National Association of Realtors (NAR) and must abide by a Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice enforced by the NAR. A professional Realtor is your best resource when approaching to buy a home.

Let Me Be Your Guide —

Working with me can save you endless amounts of time, money and frustration.

I know the housing market and can help you avoid many a "wild goose chase."

I can help you with *any* house even if it is listed elsewhere, or is being sold by the owner directly.

I know the best lenders in the area and can help you get pre-qualified for a mortgage; and discuss down payments, closing costs, and monthly payment options.

I am an excellent source for general information about the community, specific information about schools, churches, shopping, transportation, plus tips on house inspections and pricing.

I am experienced at presenting your offer to the homeowner and can help you through the process of negotiating the best deal. I bring objectivity to the buying transaction, and can point out advantages and disadvantages of a particular property.

And the BEST thing is that all this help normally won't cost you a cent. Generally, the seller pays the commission to Realtors. However, that doesn't affect my dedication or the spirit of teamwork that I will put into helping you find and buy the home of your dreams. After all, my success depends on your success.

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Step by Step... The Buying Process

**Find a
Realtor you
can trust...**

The First Step...

In the home buying process is to find an experienced Realtor that you can trust and sign a Buyer's Agent Agreement. This guarantees, by the laws of the state, that your needs are met professionally and represented throughout the entire process of buying your home.

**Looking for
a home...**

The Next Step...

Is to look at various homes. I am available at anytime to help you find your dream HOME.

**Your
Offer**

Be Careful – This is a BIG Step...

When you find your dream home, you should present a competitive offer immediately. I have extensive experience in contract negotiations and will ensure you get just what you want for a fair price – a transaction in your best interest.

**The
Contract**

We're Starting to Jog Now ...

When the seller accepts your offer, you "go under contract." You want to make sure every detail is handled accurately and immediately and I will ensure your home closes properly and on time.

Inspections

You're on the "HOME" Stretch!

Final details are handled and inspections are performed to ensure the property is "perfect" for you. Contract details are further negotiated, and we head to closing!

**Now
it is
YOURS!**

The Next Step Will Be Into Your New Home...

Be prepared to bring your checkbook to the closing procedure – the next steps you will take will be over the threshold of your new home!

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WORKING WITH A REPUTABLE COMPANY

You're ready to buy or sell a home. Now you are looking to select a company and agent to work with. Finding the right company to help you sell or find your next home is imperative to making the process smooth. A reputable company with a well-known name in the area will give both solutions *and* credibility.

Larger firms that are established tend to have more resources. This is a benefit, because if you are a homeowner, you have more access to homes and other agents. If you are a home seller, then your marketing is likely to be more efficient and obtain greater results. Therefore, when you're ready to shop around for an agent, we encourage you to select one that has the credentials you desire and a popular track record.

People Who Care

A lot of companies say they function as a family. At Keller Williams Realty, we truly do and this approach guides us every day in how we conduct our business.

We support one another in achieving goals and celebrate the accomplishment of milestones. We treat each other with respect and integrity. We challenge ourselves and our colleagues in a productive, meaningful way. We encourage growth and self-discovery, and have fun in the process. And we lend a hand whenever it is needed.

Our Mission:

To build careers worth having, businesses worth owning and lives worth living

Our Vision:

To be the real estate company of choice for a new generation of sales associates and real estate owners.

Our Values:

God, Family then Business

Our Belief System:



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International Success Begins Locally

We believe that real estate is a local business driven by individual associates and their presence within their communities. Our associates are the face of Keller Williams Realty, so our associates have a strong voice in guiding the business through their local Associate Leadership Council (ALC).

Each ALC brings associates and management together in the market center on a monthly basis to direct decisions on how individual offices operate. Among the areas ALCs oversee are staff training and local marketing, finances and operations.

ALCs are comprised of top KW agents who know what it takes to succeed in their market and have a desire to see the company as a whole grow and prosper.

Unconventional – Our Family Reunion

Our dynamic annual meeting of agents and brokers is the best-attended company event in real estate. More than 10,000 of our family members gather to learn, socialize and become inspired to accomplish even greater goals.

What is KW Cares?

KW Cares is the brainchild of Keller Williams' agents who had a dream to reach out and support fellow KW associates in times of need. Mo Anderson, vice chairman of Keller Williams Realty Inc., took this dream and brought it to fruition as a public charity – KW Cares.

Today, KW Cares is supported by all our associates across North America. It has truly become the heart of the Keller Williams culture in action – finding and serving the higher purpose of business through charitable giving in the market centers and communities where our associates live and work.

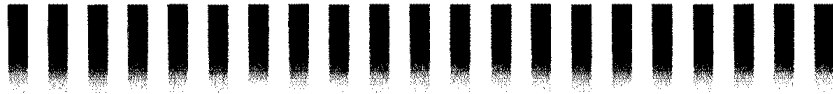
About Keller Williams:

Keller Williams Realty Bucks National Business Trends During the Toughest Real Estate Market on Record

RISMEDIA, January 29, 2009. Keller Williams® Realty Inc., the fourth largest real estate company in North America, announced that it outpaced the market in 2008, while remaining free of debt, and gave back more than \$30 million in profits to its agents. As we watch companies throughout the country take on billions of dollars of debt, we are proud to say that our company has not one dollar of financing debt and we remain strong and financially sound. Despite pervasive downward trends in the real estate industry, Keller Williams Realty continues to outperform the industry.

Keller Williams was founded 25 years ago during one of the toughest markets on record - when interest rates were higher than 18 percent.

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KW
KELLER WILLIAMS
 R E A L T Y

Dallas Preston Rd.
 Numbers You Should Know!

2008 Closed Production
\$710 Million

2008 Written Volume
\$761 Million

2008 # of Listings Taken
3178

2008 Total Gross Commission Income
\$20 Million

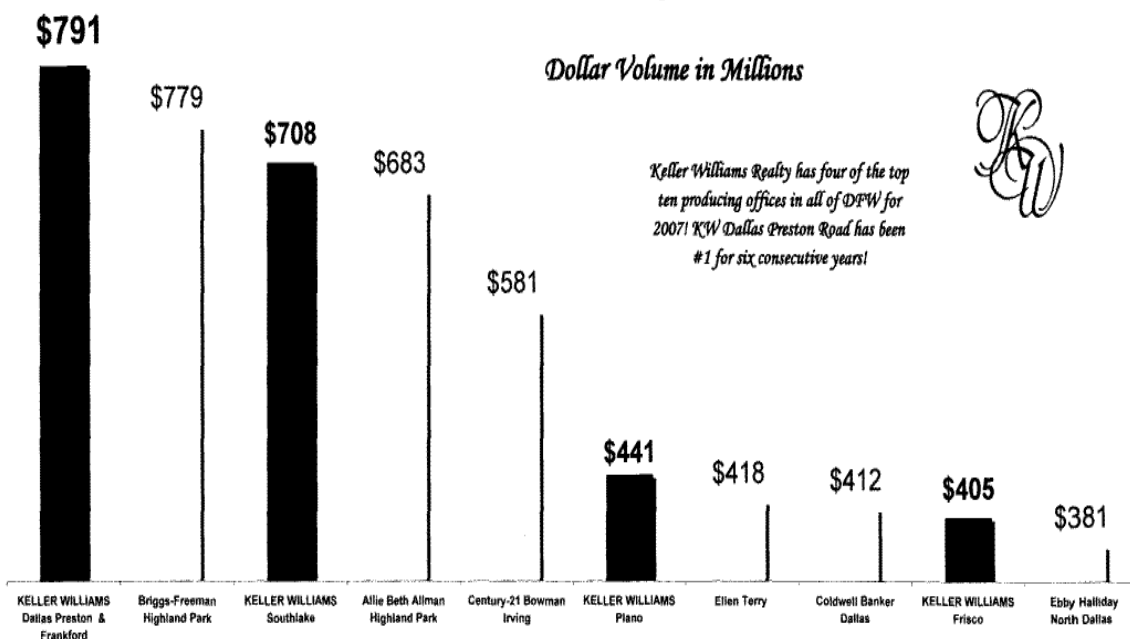
Year To Date Profit Share
\$380,000

of Agents
404

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Keller Williams Dallas Preston Road The #1 Producing Office in DFW for 2007

Listing Volume Sold plus Buyer Volume Sold



Top 10 Real Estate Offices in Closed Volume of Homes Sold (Jan 1 - Dec 31, 2007)
Information obtained from NTRIS MLS. All DFW Z areas included.

COLLEEN HEMPHILL *"BRINGING HOME RESULTS"***ABOUT COLLEEN HEMPHILL**

Colleen Hemphill joined Keller Williams, Dallas Preston Road, November 2001, the largest real estate office in all of DFW. She is in the top 2% for 2008 in dollar volume for individual agents in the largest real estate office in the DFW area, and was in the top 4% for 2005-2007. She was one out of 6 agents who received a special award for increased yearly production in 2005, a path she continues to follow. In 2007 she was in the top 2% for units closed for individual agents.

Her extensive corporate business experience and her degree in business has helped her tremendously in her real estate career with expert negotiation, contract, statistical, marketing and people skills. Also her attention to detail, follow thru and client concern has resulted in many referrals and happy clients. Because of her fashion background and passion for it, she personally stages all listings with props for free - a tremendous benefit to sellers. She has a full time assistant, Marilyn Lee, an inactive agent with Keller Williams for 6 years, who contributes greatly to her success.

Her prior experience has been a corporate fashion buyer for various department stores. Her last position was with JC Penney Corporate in New York City and in Plano, TX. While she was with JC Penney Corporate for 16 years, she travelled extensively around the United States, Europe and Asia.

She recently was asked to be on the ALC Board for 2009 at Keller Williams Preston. She has her ABR, SHS and NHS designations and is a member of the Women's Council of Realtors.

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KELLER WILLIAMS®

R E A L T Y

DALLAS PRESTON ROAD

13

INDIVIDUAL GCI

2007

COLLEEN HEMPHILL

Trae Williams

3/26/08



TRAE WILLIAMS, TEAM LEADER

DATE

WI4C2TS

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Tracie Williams
TRACIE WILLIAMS, TEAM LEADER

3/26/08
DATE



WI4C2TS

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Pioneer Agent Recognition

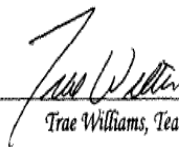
PRESENTED TO

Colleen Hemphill

*in appreciation for your long term commitment as a partner of Keller Williams Realty
Dallas Preston Road.*

August 20, 2008

Date



Trae Williams, Team Leader

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BUYERS

What you can expect from Colleen Hemphill as your Real Estate Consultant.

- Treat all parties fairly and honestly.
- Always ensure we keep a win-win relationship.
- Respect your time, needs and finances.
- Be on time for all meetings.
- Provide weekly updates on the progress of your purchase.
- Represent your best interest in any and all negotiations.
- Develop and implement a complete negotiation strategy.
- Consult you throughout the buying process to an intelligent, informed decision based on your needs.
- Stay focused on the goal of satisfying your needs.
- Always put your needs above the "unit".
- Provide comprehensive market information and recommend the best pricing strategy.
- Schedule all home showings.
- Show you only the homes that meet your established criteria.
- Assist you with the scheduling of inspections, closing, and document review.
- Respond to and resolve issues quickly and timely.
- Provide post-closing information, consulting services, and assist you with all future real estate needs!

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BUYERS

What Colleen Hemphill expects from you as clients.

- Be on time to all meetings.
- Keep all appointments or call to cancel in a timely manner.
- Meet with loan consultant in a timely manner after initial meeting. (if applicable)
- Never make large purchases or incur debt without first consulting with loan consultant!
- Respond to calls from mortgage, title, inspection, and other companies involved in the process.
- Loyalty – Disclose to all “new” home builders and other real estate agents that you are happily represented.
- Respect the seller’s property.
- Inform me immediately if criteria changes.
- Notify me if leaving area for longer than one week.
- Have fun and enjoy the process!

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Glossary of Real Estate Brokerage Relationships

IN TEXAS,

Real Estate brokers and their salespersons are required to disclose the type of working relationship they have with the buyers in a real estate transaction. There are several types of relationships that are available to you. You should understand these at the time a broker provides specific assistance to you in buying real estate. Buyer's Agent and Seller's Agent relationships are commonly referred to as "agency" relationships and carry with them legal duties and responsibilities for the broker as well as for the buyer and seller.

BUYER'S AGENT

A Buyer's Agent acts solely on behalf of the buyer and owes duties to the buyer, which includes the utmost good faith, loyalty, and fidelity. The agent will negotiate on behalf of, and act as an advocate for the buyer. The buyer is legally responsible for the actions of the agent when that agent is acting within the scope of the agency. The agent must disclose to sellers all adverse material facts concerning the buyer's financial ability to perform the terms of the transaction and whether the buyer intends to occupy the property. A separate written buyer's agreement is required which sets forth the duties and obligations of the parties.

SELLER'S AGENT

A Seller's Agent acts solely on behalf of the seller and owes duties to the seller, which includes the utmost good faith, loyalty, and fidelity. The agent will negotiate on behalf of, and act as an advocate for the seller. The seller is legally responsible for the actions of the agent when that agent is acting within the scope of the agency. The agent must disclose to buyers or tenants all adverse material facts about the property known by the broker. A separate written listing agreement is required which sets forth the duties and obligations of the parties.

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The Advantages of a Buyer's Agency Agreement

YOUR INTERESTS ARE PROFESSIONALLY REPRESENTED —

Enlisting the services of a professional Buyer's Agent is similar to using an accountant to help you with your taxes, a doctor to help you with your health care, or a mechanic to help you with your car. So the first advantage is pretty obvious. If you had the time to devote to learning all you need to know about accounting, medicine, and automotive mechanics, you could do these services yourself. But who has the time? You probably already have a full-time career to which you are committed. This is why you allow other professionals to help you in specific areas of expertise.

Colleen has devoted her time to perfecting a career in real estate service. Continuous education, market research, and vast experience are combined with an excellent team of real estate professionals to find you the perfect home quickly. Colleen will take care of all the hassles of every day real estate transactions for you. We let you concentrate on your full-time job, while we do ours. Colleen will guide you through the home buying process and exclusively represent your interests as we help you find a home, present your contract offer, negotiate, and close!

YOU WILL GET A GREAT HOME QUICKLY AND CONVENIENTLY —

The advantage to signing a Buyer's Agency Agreement with Colleen is that you will have a professional working to find and secure the perfect home for you exactly when you need it. It is nearly impossible to find a home that meets your needs, get a contract negotiated, and close the transaction without an experienced agent. Colleen has vast computer networks to make sure you only tour homes that meet your specific needs. You won't need to spend endless evenings and weekends driving around looking for homes for sale or trying to search computer networks yourself. When you tour homes with your professional Buyer's Agent, you will already know that the homes meet your criteria for bedrooms, bathrooms, garage space, square footage, neighborhood, etc. Also, your Agent will ensure you are looking at homes that are in your price range.

YOU GET A PERSONAL SPECIALIST WHO KNOWS YOUR NEEDS —

Just as your accountant, doctor, and mechanic get to know your needs through a steady relationship, your Buyer's Agent gets to know your real estate needs and concerns. This type of relationship is built by open communication at all times and by touring homes with your Agent so she gets a good idea of your feedback and concerns about each home. If you try to jump from agent to agent, you will not receive the best real estate services possible, and you will be violating your agreement to your agent. There is nothing to gain from trying to find and tour homes on your own, and you will save a lot of time when your agent can tell you everything about any home before you see it.

WHAT IS THE BUYER'S AGENCY AGREEMENT —

Entering into a Buyer's Agency Agreement has countless advantages and no disadvantages. When you sign the agreement, you are simply agreeing to "hire" a personal representative who, by law, must represent your best interests to the best of her ability. All of this personal service is available at absolutely NO COST TO YOU! The Seller's Agent is responsible for paying your Buyer's Agent fee. With Colleen, you get a professional devoted to protecting your needs to help you make one of the most important investment decisions of your life — and you don't even have to pay the fee!

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How Much Home Can You Afford?

When you are ready to begin looking at various houses to find your dream home, you need to prepare all of the necessary materials to present to the lender. Your lender will tell you exactly what you can afford so that you do not spend time looking at "too much" home. There are three key factors that you will need to consider when determining how much home you can afford. These are 1.) the down payment, 2.) your ability to qualify for a mortgage, and 3.) the closing costs associated with your transaction.

Down Payment Requirements:

Most loans today require a down payment of between 3.5% and 5.0% depending on the type and terms of the loan. If you are able to come up with 20% down payment, you may be eligible to take advantage of special fast-track programs and possibly eliminate mortgage insurance.

It is often thought that bigger is better when it comes to down payments. In many cases, this may be true. However, the arithmetic will differ from case to case. A bigger down payment means smaller monthly payments and lower interest expense for as long as you remain with a mortgage. This can be an important factor for many people. But if you can put your available funds to work for you so that they can earn more than the interest rate on your loan, you could be dollars ahead with a smaller down payment. Also, a smaller down payment may allow you to keep you extra cash liquid and available for an emergency.

Closing Costs:

Don't forget to think ahead carefully. In addition to the down payment on your dream home, you will be required to pay fees for loan processing and other closing costs. These fees must be paid in full in cash at the time of the final settlement, unless you are able to include these in your financing. Typically, total closing costs will be 3% of your mortgage loan. A more detailed schedule is included herein in the section detailing your closing.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

COLLEEN HEMPHILL "BRINGING HOME RESULTS"**Qualifying for the Mortgage:**

Most lenders require that your monthly payment range between 25-28% of your gross monthly income, but rules are changing daily. Your mortgage payment to the lender includes four items....the PITI. These items are discussed in detail on the page entitled, "Predicting Your Monthly Payment (The PITI)." Remember, when you buy a home all interest is tax deductible, so you will qualify for a major tax advantage that will effectively increase your take-home pay. Your total monthly PITI and all debts (from installments to revolving charge accounts) should range between 33-38% of your gross monthly income. This is a general rule of thumb, but other key factors specifically determine your ability for a home loan. These factors are:

INCOME: History of employment, stability of income, potential for future earning, education, vocational training and background, and any secondary income such as bonuses, commissions, child support, etc.

CREDIT REPORT: History of debt repayment, total outstanding debt and total available credit. If you have concerns about your credit report, consider contacting one of the major credit bureaus for a copy of your file: TRW (1-800-422-4879), Trans Union (1-602-933-1200), and CSC Credit (1-800-759-5979).

ASSETS: Cash on hand, other liquid assets such as savings, checking, CDs, stocks, etc.

PROPERTY: The home you are buying must be appraised to determine that it has adequate value and is marketable to ensure it will secure the loan.

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Predicting Your Monthly Payment (The PITI)

Your monthly payment (PITI) is the sum of four items – the principle on the loan (P), the interest on the loan (I), property taxes (T), and homeowner's insurance (I). To predict your monthly payment for a 30-year fixed rate loan, use the following table to determine the principal and interest part of the payment. Simply divide the loan amount by 1,000 and then multiply that figure by the appropriate interest rate factor from the table below. To that sum add 1/12th of the amount of your yearly taxes and 1/12th the amount of your yearly insurance.

For example: If your mortgage loan amount is \$150,000 and the interest rate is 12%, your monthly "PI" would be:

$$\frac{\$150,000}{1,000} = 150$$

$$150 \times 10.29 = \$1,542.50$$

Then add your monthly insurance premium (approximately \$25-\$75) and your property tax to your principal and interest and this is your monthly payment.

PRINCIPAL AND INTEREST PAYMENT TABLE		
If your interest is:		Your PI Factor is:
6.00%	.....	6.00%
6.50%	.....	6.32%
7.00%	.....	6.65%
7.50%	.....	6.99%
8.00%	.....	7.34%
8.50%	.....	7.69%
9.00%	.....	8.05%
9.50%	.....	8.41%
10.00%	.....	8.78%
10.50%	.....	9.15%
11.00%	.....	9.52%
11.50%	.....	9.90%
12.00%	.....	10.29%
12.50%	.....	10.67%
13.00%	.....	11.06%

Hazard Insurance covering your home for its contract value is required by your mortgage lender. You are at liberty to choose any insurance company and agent you wish. Ask your agent to quote you a policy for insurance coverage.

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Predicting Your Monthly Payment (The PITI) (CONTINUED)

All property owners must pay general real estate taxes. These taxes are also called "ad valorem" taxes because the amount of the taxes varies, according to the value of your property. General real estate is levied for the operations of various governmental agencies and municipalities. Other taxing bodies may include school districts, drainage, water, sanitary, and recreation districts.

Each agency or municipality determines how much money is needed for the budget. They receive these funds through mills levied against properties in their counties. The state limits how much the mill levy can increase each year without voter approval. Each mill is equal to one-thousandth of one dollar (\$.001) of assessed value or \$1 for every \$1,000 of assessed value.

The actual tax is calculated by multiplying the assessed value by the current mill levy. General taxes are a lien against your home as of January 1st, the year of the tax, even though they are not due until the following year.

Properties are valued or assessed by the county assessor. The land and buildings are usually assessed separately. The assessed value is approximately 12-15% of the true value (percentage value is determined by state law). If an owner feels the assessed value of their property is incorrect, they can present their objection through the local taxing authority on an annual basis.

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Choosing the Right Neighborhood is as Important as Choosing the Right House!

There are many factors to consider when selecting a neighborhood that is right for you. Below are just a few of the many factors -- You may think of others that are important to you. Please write them on your Requirements List so they do not get forgotten.



Scout out the Neighborhood!

It is important that you scout the neighborhood in person. You live in more than your house. Talk to people who live there. Drive through the entire area at different times of the day, morning, afternoon, evening, and late at night, as well as going during the week and on weekends. Look carefully at how well other homes in the area are being maintained; are they painted, are the yards well cared for; are parked cars in good condition, etc.

Neighborhood Factors to Consider --

Look for things like access to major thoroughfares, highways, and shopping. Listen for noise created by commerce, roads, railways, public areas, schools, etc. Smell the air for adjacent commerce or agriculture. Check with local civic, police, fire, and school officials to find information about the area. Research things like soil and water. Look at traffic patterns around the area during different times of the day and drive from the area to work. Is the neighborhood near parks, churches, recreation centers, shopping, theaters, restaurants, public transportation, schools, etc.? Does the neighborhood belong to a Homeowner's Association?

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Five Items We Negotiate

- 1. Price**
- 2. Terms**
- 3. Inclusions**
- 4. Possession**
- 5. Contingencies**

We'll work through all of these together!

That's My Commitment to You!

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Using a Realtor to Purchase a New Home

Why should I use an Agent to purchase a new home?

The advantages of having Colleen help you purchase a new home are the same as those for purchasing a resale home...knowledge of the market, help in finding the perfect home quickly, expertise in contract writing/negotiation, and closing assistance. The builder has a professional representative watching out for his needs, and you need the same expert representation.

Buying a new home is a little more difficult and time-consuming than buying a resale. Colleen can professionally guide you through this process. Colleen has experience working with builders, has access to a database of information about subdivisions, floor plans, etc. Colleen is also familiar with new home warranties and builders purchase contracts.

It is very important that your interests be professionally represented when you are entering into a contract for a semi-custom or build-to-suit home. These transactions are complex and the contract details must be exact in order to protect you and to ensure you get exactly the home you want!

Is there any advantage to not using an Agent to purchase a new home?

No. There is no financial advantage for you to buy directly from the builder. Builders have a "single-price" policy, meaning you will be charged the same price whether your interests are represented by an Agent or not. Just as in any resale, the Seller pays your Agent's fee.

REMEMBER – the Builder requires that your Agent accompany you on your first visit to the Builder's sales office, or they will NOT PAY your representative's fee!

This article originally appeared in the [Denver Post](#)

"Should You Use a Realtor When Buying a New Home? YES!"

Think of planning a trip to Europe without the help of a travel agent...or how about buying insurance without an insurance agent? Then imagine being involved in a major league business dispute, and you're representing yourself in front of the judge and jury. If you depend on people in the service industry for travel needs, filing a claim for hail damage to your roof, or handling legal matters, then why would you want to represent yourself in the most expensive and probably most important purchase of your lifetime...your new home?

It is a common conception that buying a new home directly from the builder, without the assistance of a Realtor, will save you money. Not so! The price of a new home is the same whether you have a Realtor or not. Since this is the case, common sense would tell you to utilize a professional to help you with contract negotiations, researching loans, or helping you to decide which lot is best suited for you!

Phyllis Sinclair, a broker associate, has been on both sides of the fence. For 10 years she represented builders as an on-site salesperson. During the past three years she has represented both buyers and sellers in resale and the purchase of new homes. Sinclair sums up new homes sales as, "A one price policy...buyers receive all of the services and don't pay them any extra, but they also don't receive any discounts. I always felt concern for buyers who weren't associated with a Realtor, as they didn't have the support system they deserve in such a major lifetime transaction."

In our current, fast-paced real estate market, there are many new home communities to choose from. You need to ask yourself some pertinent questions when looking for a new home. Is this a good builder? Does he have a solid reputation, years in business, etc.? How does the quality of his product compare to that of other builders? What are the existing inventories of the various builders? How do builder models meet your needs (floor plans, square footage, and location)? If I sell in a few years, what upgrades should I include to be competitive?

When you find the answers to these questions, ask yourself if the time spent in researching these answers was time well spent – put a dollar value on your time. Real estate professionals can be a valuable asset in collecting information in areas, which may affect your decision on the purchase of a new home.

If builders rely on real estate professionals to sell their homes, then why wouldn't you, the buyer, take the same precautions in assuring yourself the best service and expertise in making this important decision?

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Loan Application Checklist



General:

- ◆ Picture ID with social security number of borrower and co-borrowers.
- ◆ Payment to cover the application fee.
- ◆ Name and complete address of all landlords for the past two years.

Income:

- ◆ Employment history for the past two years including names, addresses, phone numbers, and length of time with company.
- ◆ Copies of your most recent pay stubs and W-2 forms (past two years).
- ◆ Verification of other income (social security, child support, retirement).
- ◆ If self-employed, you need copies of the past two years signed tax returns including all schedules, and a signed profit and loss statement of the current year. Retirees need tax returns for the past two years.
- ◆ If you have rental property income, bring a copy of all lease agreements.

Assets:

- ◆ Copies of all bank and credit union statements for the past three months.
- ◆ Copies of all stock/bond certificates and/or the past three statements from all investment and retirement accounts.
- ◆ Prepare a list of household items and their values.
- ◆ Copies of title documents for all automobiles, boats, motorcycles, etc.
- ◆ Face amount, monthly premiums and cash values of all life insurance policies. (Cash value may be used for closing costs or down payments. You need documentation from the carrier indicating cash value).

Creditors:

- ◆ Credit cards (account numbers, current balances, and monthly payments).
- ◆ Installment loans (car, student, etc.). Same details as for credit cards.
- ◆ Mortgage loans (property address, lender with address, account numbers, monthly payment and balance owed on all properties presently owned or sold within the last two years). Bring proof of sale of properties sold.
- ◆ Child care expense/support (name, address, phone number).

Other:

- ◆ Bankruptcy – bring discharge and schedule of creditors.
- ◆ Adverse credit – bring letters of explanation.
- ◆ Divorce – bring Divorce Decrees, property settlements, quit claim deeds, modifications, etc. for all divorces by yourself or your spouse.
- ◆ VA only – bring Form DD214 and Certificate of Eligibility.
- ◆ Retirees – bring retirement and/or Social Security Award Letter.

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Home Service Contract Protection



New Home Warranties —

When you purchase a newly built home, the builder usually offers some sort of full or limited warranty on things such as the quality of design, materials, and workmanship. These warranties are usually for a period of one-year from the purchase of the home.

At closing, the builder will assign to you the manufacturer's warranties that were provided to the builder for materials, appliances, fixtures, etc. For example, if your dishwasher were to become faulty within one year from the purchase of your newly built home, you would call the manufacturer of the dishwasher – not the builder.

If the homebuilder does not offer a warranty, BE SURE TO ASK WHY!

Resale Home Service Contracts —

When you purchase a resale home, you can purchase service contracts that will protect you against most ordinary flaws and breakdowns for at least the first year of occupancy. The service contract may be offered by the Seller as part of his overall package or by some Realtors who have access to programs that will ensure the buyer against any defects in the home. Even with a service contract, you should have the home carefully inspected before you purchase it.

A home service contract will give you peace of mind, knowing that the major covered components in your home will be repaired, if necessary. Ask me for more details about home service contracts.

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How to Choose a Good Inspection Company

Is an inspection necessary?

You have the right to request an inspection of any property you are thinking of purchasing by a professional inspector of your choice. You should always exercise your option to have the physical condition of the property and its inclusions inspected. Many of the more severe and expensive problems such as mechanical, electrical, structural, and plumbing are not noticeable to the untrained eye. If repairs are needed, negotiate these in your contract offer. A professionally conducted home inspection followed by a written evaluation is becoming standard procedure in home buying because of increased buyer awareness and savvy.

What does an inspection entail?

A qualified inspector will follow Standards of Practice in conducting their inspection. The inspection consists of a physical inspection of the home with the purchaser present, followed by a written report detailing their findings. They report on the general condition of the home's electrical, heating, and air systems, interior plumbing, roof, visible insulation, walls, ceilings, floors, windows, doors, foundation, and visible structure. The inspection is not designed to criticize every minor problem or defect in the home. No home is perfect. It is intended to report on major damage or serious problems that require repair for the well being of the home and that might require significant expense. In Texas, a special concern is expansive soils. They can be destructive when water causes these high clay content soils to swell and exert upward pressure on foundation and driveway slabs. If improperly constructed, these structures can crown up in the middle.

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More Inspection Information...

Buyer education is necessary —

The primary purpose of the inspection is to educate the buyer to make an informed purchasing decision. The inspector should allow and even encourage the buyer to attend the home inspection. A good home inspector knows how the home's many systems and components work together and how to minimize the damaging effects of sun and water. The buyer's attendance of the inspection provides them with an overall idea of possible future repair costs and maintenance routines. This is valuable information, which could increase the life span, and perhaps the future selling price of the home.

Continuing education is important for inspectors —

A competent home inspector is familiar with the latest construction materials, home building techniques, and professional equipment. Consumers should research whether prospective home inspectors actively monitor the changes in construction and real estate in order to keep their business practices current and professional. Members must meet annual continuing education requirements for this purpose.

Time and fee guidelines for the inspection —

The time necessary to properly inspect a home, as well as the fee charged by an inspector, varies according to market location, the size and age of the home, and the individual inspection company. However, you can expect that it will take an average of two to three hours to competently inspect a typical one-family, three-bedroom home, with an average cost of \$300 to \$400, depending on the square footage, foundation type and features.

Beware of false claims —

Consumers must be cautious in evaluating some of the claims made by people hoping to fill the growing demand for home inspection services. Many new companies request only an application fee. Some claim to offer certification but do not require exams or proven credentials. Still others boast engineering licenses as assurance of competence, even though the engineering license has nothing to do with home inspecting.

Inspection extras —

Some inspectors may be qualified to provide other types of services with their inspection that go beyond the scope of the ASHI standards.

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Now we CLOSE your Transaction!

What is a Real Estate "Closing?"

A "closing" is the meeting the Buyer, Seller, and their agents (optional), and representative from the lending institution and title company wherein the actual transfer of title to the property occurs. The purchase agreement or contract you have signed describes the property, states the purchase price and terms, sets forth the method of payment, and usually names the date and place where the closing or actual transfer of the property title and keys will occur. This meeting is also referred to as the settlement.

The title company transferring ownership of the property to you will prepare a new deed. Your lender will require you to sign a document, usually a promissory note, as evidence that you are personally responsible for repaying the loan. You will also sign a mortgage or deed of trust on the property as security to the lender for the loan. The mortgage or deed of trust gives the lender the right to sell the property if you fail to make the payments. Before you exchange these papers, the property may be surveyed, appraised, or inspected, and the ownership of title will be checked in county and court records.

What Should I do to Prepare for the Closing?

As previously mentioned, you should have already conducted any inspections, etc. you wish to have done on the property.

There are two kinds of title insurance. A lender or mortgagee's title insurance policy protects only the lending institution. Lenders require this type of insurance and require the borrower to pay for it. That does not mean that the borrower will receive its protection. An owner's policy is necessary to protect the owner against loss.

You will also be required to pay all fees and closing costs in the form of "guaranteed funds" such as a Cashier's Check. Your agent or escrow officer will notify you of the exact amount.

What is an Escrow Account?

An escrow account is a neutral depository for funds that will be used to pay expenses incurred by the property, such as taxes, assessments, property insurance, or mortgage insurance premiums which fall due in the future. You will pay one-twelfth of the annual amount of these bills each month with your regular mortgage payment. When the bills fall due, the lender pays them from the special account. At closing, it may be necessary to pay enough into the account to cover these amounts for several months so that funds will be available to pay the bills as they fall due. You may also be required to refund items prepaid by the Seller. For example, if the Seller has paid the special assessments or taxes for that year, you may be required to refund the value of the months remaining the year when you take possession of the property. An escrow fee is usually charged to set up the account.

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We're Moving!

Now that you have a new address, send out all your change of address notices.

Complete your Change of Address notices and mail them to the following. Keep in mind that the post office will forward your mail for 30 days but they do expect that you are sending notices to everyone who sends you mail.

Post Office
 Friends and relatives
 Magazine and mail order subscriptions
 Professional organizations of which you are a member
 Clubs, social or civic organizations with mailings
 Charge accounts, insurance carriers, and creditors
 Driver's bureau to receive tag notices
 Voter Registration officials



Don't forget the needs of your furry friends!

Do not transport your pets much farther than they have safely traveled in the past without consulting your veterinarian. To transport animals by air, you need an airline-approved animal carrier. A moving company can inform you of any state regulations for pet entry, vaccination or quarantine procedures. Ask about regulations, licenses, tags, etc. for pets. Also, do not forget to obtain a copy of your pet's medical records.

Keep detailed records – some moving expenses are tax deductible!

Keep detailed records of all moving expenses if your move is job related. Many expenses, including house-hunting trips, are tax deductible. If your move is 35 miles or more from your home, you can deduct your family's travel expenses, including meals and lodging; the cost of transporting furniture, other household goods and personal belongings; food and hotel bills for up to 30 days in the new city if you have to wait to move into your new home; and the costs associated with selling your old home or leasing your new home.

Note: There is a ceiling on deductions which is outlined in detail in the IRS's Publication 521, "Tax Information on Moving Expenses," available free from the IRS.

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When You Close on Your New Home, You Should Complete the Following:

Ask your bank about electronically transferring your funds to a bank in your new area. Discuss branch options and arrange for check cashing in your new location.

Close out your safety deposit box.

Obtain travelers checks for traveling funds and for funds while you are settling into your new location.

Ask your insurance agent to transfer coverage to your new home. Make sure all coverage (life, health, automobile, personal belongings, etc.) is in force while you are en route.

Schedule a moving company to assist you or begin notifying people who are helping you of your planned move date.

Begin depleting your store of canned and frozen foods. Defrost your freezer and use charcoal to dispel odors.

Now that you have a new address, you can begin transferring or canceling home services:

Electric and Water (_____)

Telephone (_____)

Cable Television (_____)

Trash (_____)

Gas (_____)

Make arrangements for canceling home deliveries and services such as the following. Arrange for service at your new address.

Newspaper (_____)

Cleaning Service (_____)

Lawn Service (_____)

Laundry / Cleaners (_____)

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Let's Adhere to "The Plan" To Secure Your Dream Home Quickly!

A successful real estate transaction hinges on numerous details involving deadlines that must be met so that you can move into your dream home as soon as possible.

TO DO:	DATE COMPLETED:
Loan Application: (Application fee is due at this time).	_____
Seller's Disclosure must be signed:	_____
Set inspection date and time:	_____
Written notice due – all items from the inspection that you wish to be repaired:	_____
Negotiation of inspection repair items complete:	_____
Title Commitment due:	_____
Insurance: (You are required to arrange for insurance coverage and to inform your mortgage company of your agent's name and phone number).	_____
Loan approval	_____
Closing Date:	_____

Please note: During the loan and home-buying process, you will be asked to supply documentation, respond to phone calls requesting information, schedule dates into your calendar, etc....

Please respond quickly to these requests so that your transaction does not encounter problems.