**Ten steps to buying a home**

By Jillian Stinson, [BrighterLife.ca](http://www.brighterlife.ca)

When you’re buying a home, there’s a lot to do before you get the keys to your new place. It can feel overwhelming at first, but house-hunting can be a lot of fun. Being prepared is the key to knowing what you’re getting into and enjoying it along the way. Here are 10 things you’ll need to do:

**1. Decide what kind of home you want:** Do you want a condo, townhouse, semi- or detached home? How many bedrooms do you want? How many bathrooms? In which neighbourhood?

**2. Calculate what you can afford and get pre-approved:** Think about your down payment, closing costs, [monthly mortgage payments](http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/co/buho/buho_005.cfm) and monthly bills. Getting pre-approved for a mortgage will help you know what you can afford. You’ll need to decide if a [fixed-rate or variable-rate mortgage](http://brighterlife.ca/2012/03/21/lock-in-a-fixed-mortgage-rate-says-gordon-pape/?category-ref=money) will work best for you.

**3. Find your team of professionals:**

* **A realtor** will help you find the home that’s right for you and guide you through the offer and closing process.
* **A lawyer** will help you handle the home purchase and look after your legal interests.
* **A financial advisor** will help you find the right insurance solutions to protect your mortgage and your family.

**4. Book appointments to see homes you’re interested in:** Work with your realtor or on your own to find suitable homes and arrange viewing times.

**5. Make an offer:** When you find that perfect place, your realtor will help you negotiate the purchase price. The seller may accept your initial offer, or sign it back at a higher amount. Then, you can accept the seller’s price, decide to walk away or keep negotiating in the hope of reaching a price acceptable to both you and the seller. You can make your offer conditional —dependent on things like a home inspection or confirming your mortgage financing is in place before you make the purchase. But be aware that if offers from several buyers are on the table, an unconditional offer has a better chance of success, all else being equal.

**6. Get a home inspection:** A qualified home inspector can tell you what kind of shape important things such as wiring, plumbing, the roof and foundation are in. If your offer is conditional upon a home inspection, you might even be able to ask the current owners to fix any potential issues.

**7. Protect your mortgage:** Work with your advisor to [protect your mortgage](http://brighterlife.ca/2012/03/22/do-you-need-mortgage-insurance/?category-ref=money) and your family with term life insurance and critical illness insurance.

**8. Arrange for homeowner’s insurance:** Also known as property or home insurance, it helps protect your home from things like fire, water damage, accidents and theft.

**9. Pack and get ready to move:** Book a moving truck, hire movers or call your friends to help you on moving day. Get packing – you’ll need boxes, tape, labels, etc.

**10. Pick up your keys and move into your new home!**

Your home is a big investment – maybe the biggest one you’ll ever make. I can help you create a plan that fits your home, your family, your life.

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***Original source:*** [Ten steps to buying a home](http://brighterlife.ca/2012/05/30/ten-steps-to-buying-a-home/) written by Jillian Stinson for [BrighterLife.ca](http://brighterlife.ca/).

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