



THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO

Buying

A HOME

Cody Ezell



BUYER'S GUIDE



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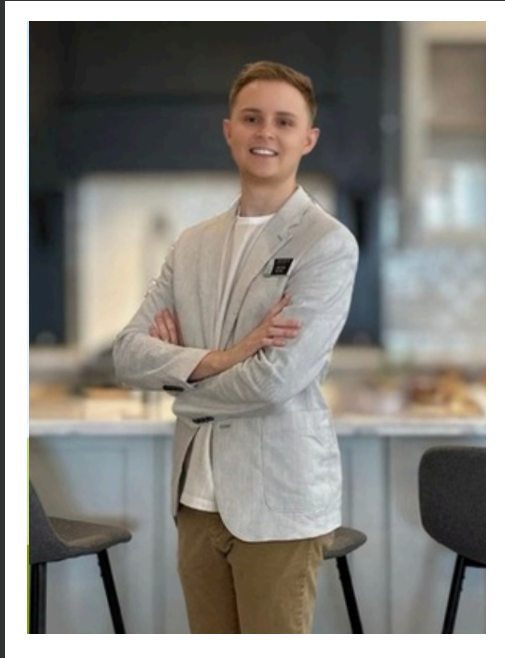
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MEET YOUR AGENT



Cody Ezell

Cody Ezell is a dedicated full-time agent, and a lifelong resident of the beautiful Mississippi Gulf Coast. With deep roots in the community, Cody's vast knowledge of the area's neighborhoods, trends, and opportunities sets him apart as a trusted advisor for buyers and sellers alike. His passion for real estate is fueled by a commitment to helping clients achieve their property goals while navigating the unique charm and dynamics of coastal living, especially first-time homebuyers seeking to embark on their homeownership journey. Whether it's finding the perfect beachfront getaway or maximizing returns on investment properties, Cody's blend of real estate acumen and tech-savvy approach ensures clients receive top-notch service tailored to their needs.

Let's Connect



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YOU CAN ALSO FIND ME ON



LET'S FIND YOUR DREAM HOME!

I'm here to guide you through the process, every step of the way.



THE HOME BUYING PROCESS



- MEET WITH YOUR AGENT
- GET PRE-APPROVED
- FIND YOUR HOME
- MAKE AN OFFER
- ORDER INSPECTION & APPRAISAL
- PREPARE FOR CLOSING
- GET YOUR KEYS!

PREPARING TO BUY

- » *Determine* HOW MUCH YOU CAN SPEND
- » *Save* FOR A DOWN PAYMENT
- » *Check* YOUR CREDIT
- » *Get Pre-Approved* FOR A HOME LOAN



BUT 1ST, GET PRE-APPROVED!

House shopping is an exciting time!

GET PRE-APPROVED FOR A LOAN FIRST SO YOU CAN BE READY TO MAKE AN OFFER WHEN YOU FIND A HOME THAT YOU LOVE.



PRE-QUALIFIED VS PRE-APPROVED

What's the difference

BETWEEN BEING PRE-QUALIFIED AND PRE-APPROVED?

PRE-QUALIFIED

In order to be pre-qualified, a lender may or may not check your credit score and won't require documentation, only going off what you tell them. This will give you an idea of what you could qualify for, but when you're serious about buying, you'll need to get pre-approved.

PRE-APPROVED

To be pre-approved, the lender will pull your credit and ask you for documentation to verify your finances. Before making an offer on a house, it is best to get pre-approved to show sellers your offer is serious and that a lender has already approved you for enough money to purchase the home.



WHICH LOAN IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

CONVENTIONAL LOAN

The most common type of home loan, which is offered through private lenders.

FHA LOAN

Loans designed for those with high debt-to-income ratios and low credit scores, and most commonly issued to first-time homebuyers. Offered by FHA-approved lenders only and backed by the Federal Housing Administration.

VA LOAN

Loans designated for veterans, spouses, and reservists, offered through private lenders and guaranteed by the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs.

USDA LOAN

Loans for homebuyers in designated rural areas, backed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

TYPE OF LOAN	DOWN PAYMENT	TERMS	MORTGAGE INSURANCE	MINIMUM CREDIT SCORE
CONVENTIONAL	3 - 20%	15-30 Years	On down payments under 20%	620
FHA	3.5 - 20%	15-30 Years	For 11 years or life of the loan	500
VA	None	15-30 Years	None	640
USDA	None	15-30 Years	None	640

QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN CHOOSING A LENDER

Interviewing Lenders

IS AN IMPORTANT STEP IN DETERMINING WHAT TYPE OF HOME LOAN IS BEST FOR YOU.

Not all lenders are the same, and the type of loans available, interest rates, and fees can vary. Here are some questions to consider when interviewing lenders:

- » Which types of home loans do you offer?
- » What will my interest and annual percentage rates be?
- » Do I qualify for any special programs or discounts?
- » What estimated closing costs can I expect to pay?
- » What is your average loan processing time?



TRUSTED LOCAL LENDERS

CHRISTINA LONG - STOCKTON MORTGAGE



Mobile: (251) 458-1650

Email: Christina.Long@stockton.com

<https://myhome.stockton.com/homehub/signup/Christina.Long@stockton.com>

TJ LEWIS - CMG HOME LOANS



Mobile: (228) 217-1358

Email: tjlewis@cmghomeloans.com

<https://www.cmghomeloans.com/mysite/tj-lewis>

KURT SATCHFIELD - SUNNY GROUP CROSS COUNTRY MORTGAGE



Mobile: (228) 596-8007

Work: (228) 385-0551

Email: kurt.satchfield@ccm.com

<https://crosscountrymortgage.com/biloxi-ms-6503/kurt-satchfield/>

SCAN TO APPLY NOW



CHRISTINA LONG - STOCKTON MORTGAGE



TJ LEWIS - CMG HOME LOANS



KURT SATCHFIELD - SUNNY GROUP CROSS COUNTRY MORTGAGE

HOME LOAN APPLICATION

DOCUMENTS CHECKLIST

To determine loan eligibility,

LENDERS TYPICALLY REQUIRE THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF DOCUMENTS FROM EACH APPLICANT

INCOME

- Federal tax returns: last 2 years
- W-2s: last 2 years
- Pay stubs: last 2 months
- Any additional income documentation: pension, retirement, child support, Social Security/disability income award letters, etc

ASSETS

- Bank statements: 2 most recent checking and savings account statements
- 401(k) or retirement account statement and summary
- Other assets: statements and summaries of IRAs, stocks, bonds, etc.

OTHER

- Copy of driver's license or ID and Social Security card
- Addresses for the past 2-5 years and landlord's contact info if applicable
- Student loan statements: showing current and future payment amounts
- Documents relating to any of the following if applicable: divorce, bankruptcy, collections, judgements or pending lawsuits

FINDING YOUR DREAM HOME

Create a list of what you want

IN YOUR NEW HOME. INCLUDE MUST-HAVES AS WELL AS WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO HAVE BUT AREN'T NECESSARILY DEAL BREAKERS.



HOUSE WANTS & NEEDS LIST

Determine the Features

YOU ARE LOOKING FOR IN YOUR IDEAL HOME AND PRIORITIZE WHICH ITEMS ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU.

No house is perfect, but this will help us find the best match for you.

TYPE OF HOME:

- Single Family Home Townhouse Condo

CONDITION OF HOME:

- Move-In Ready Some Work Needed is OK Fixer Upper

DESIRED FEATURES:

____ Bedrooms ____ Bathrooms ____ Car Garage (Circle) Small or Large Yard

Ideal Square Footage: _____

Desired Location/Neighborhood/School District: _____

MUST HAVE

WOULD LIKE TO HAVE

HOUSE HUNTING TIPS

When looking for a home,



INVESTIGATE THE AREA

Drive around neighborhoods that interest you to get a feel of the area, how the homes are cared for, what traffic is like, etc.



ASK AROUND

Talk to family, friends and co-workers to see if anyone might know of a house for sale in an area you're interested in. One of them may even know of someone that's thinking about selling but hasn't put the house on the market yet.



KEEP AN OPEN MIND

Finding your dream home isn't always an easy task! Have a priorities list but keep an open mind when viewing houses.



TAKE PICTURES & NOTES

When you visit multiple houses it gets difficult to remember specific details about each one. Take photos and notes while touring houses so that you can reference them later when comparing the properties that you've seen.



BE READY TO MAKE AN OFFER

When you find a home you want to buy, keep in mind there may be others interested in it as well. Be ready to make a solid offer quickly in order to have the best chance at getting that home.

MAKING AN OFFER

When we have found a home

THAT YOU'RE INTERESTED IN CALLING HOME, WE WILL QUICKLY AND STRATEGICALLY PLACE AN OFFER.

There are several factors to consider that can make your offer more enticing than other offers:

PUT IN A COMPETITIVE OFFER

We will decide on a reasonable offer price based on:

- > Current market conditions
- > Comparable properties recently sold in the area
- > The need to have closing costs and/or commission covered
- > The current condition of the house

FACTOR IN CLOSING COSTS

Closing costs are a required cost when purchasing a home. If you need assistance for closing costs after covering any down payment, we can request the seller to cover these expenses as part of the offer negotiations, a strategy known as seller concessions.

PUT DOWN AN EARNEST DEPOSIT

An Earnest deposit is a "good faith" deposit when making an offer on a house to show the seller you are serious and committed to the purchase. Offers with a larger earnest money deposit can present a more serious and competitive offer.

ADD A PERSONAL TOUCH

In tough markets where multiple offers are common, including a letter to the sellers with your offer letting them know what you love about their home. can add a personal touch and give you an advantage over other offers by making your offer stand out from the rest.

OFFER A SHORTER CLOSING TIMELINE

An offer with a shorter timeframe for closing is generally more attractive to sellers over one with an extended time period with a house sale contingency. A typical closing timeframe is 30-45 days.

CONTRACT PROTECTIONS

To protect you while under contract

I WILL ADD SEVERAL CONTINGENCIES TO EVERY OFFER WE SUBMIT TO THE SELLER.

Contingencies protect you and your earnest deposit should the contract require termination. There are several contingencies we can add including:

INSPECTION CONTINGENCY

Allows a buyer to have the property professionally inspected within a specified timeframe. If the inspection reveals significant defects, the buyer can typically request repairs from the seller, renegotiate the sale terms, or terminate the contract without penalty.

INSURANCE CONTINGENCY

Makes the sale conditional on you as the buyer being able to obtain affordable insurance for the property within a specified timeframe.. If you the buyer cannot secure necessary coverage at a reasonable rate, the clause allows for withdraw from the contract without penalty.

APPRAISAL CONTINGENCY

Protects you as the buyer by allowing you to back out of the deal if the home's appraised value is lower than the agreed-upon purchase price, thereby avoiding overpaying or taking on a property that doesn't support the lender's loan amount. If a low appraisal occurs, you the buyer can either negotiate a lower price with the seller, pay the difference in cash, or cancel the contract and get your earnest money deposit back.

FINANCING CONTINGENCY

Protects you as the buyer if you are unable to secure a mortgage. If the financing falls through within this timeframe and under the conditions of the contract, you can cancel the deal and receive your earnest money deposit back without penalty.

NEGOTIATIONS

A seller can accept or decline

YOUR OFFER, OR COME BACK WITH A COUNTER OFFER.

If they send you a counter offer, be prepared to negotiate to come up with reasonable terms for both parties. This process can go back and forth until an agreement is made.



UNDER CONTRACT & IN ESCROW

Once you and the seller

have agreed on terms, a sales agreement is signed and the house is officially under contract and in escrow. Here are the steps that follow:

PUT YOUR DEPOSIT INTO AN ESCROW ACCOUNT

Your earnest money deposit will be put into an escrow account that is managed by the buyer's brokerage or the title company who holds the money for the duration of the escrow period. They will manage these funds until closing, and your deposit will go towards your down payment which is paid at closing, or returned to you if no additional funds are needed.

SCHEDULE A HOME INSPECTION

Home inspections are optional but highly recommended to make sure that the home is in the condition for which it appears. Inspections are typically completed within 10 days after signing the sales agreement.

RENEGOTIATE IF NECESSARY

The home inspection will tell you if there are any dangerous or costly defects in the home that need to be addressed. You can then choose to either back out of the deal completely, ask for the seller to make repairs, or negotiate a lower price and handle the repairs yourself.

COMPLETE YOUR MORTGAGE APPLICATION

Once you've come to an agreement on the final offer, it's time to finalize your loan application and lock in your interest rate if you haven't done so already. You may need to provide additional documentation to your lender upon request.

ORDER AN APPRAISAL

An appraisal will be required by your lender to confirm that the home is indeed worth the loan amount. The appraisal takes into account factors such as similar property values, the home's age, location, size and condition to determine the current value of the property.

WHAT NOT TO DO DURING THE HOME BUYING PROCESS

It's Extremely Important

NOT TO DO ANY OF THE FOLLOWING UNTIL AFTER THE HOME BUYING PROCESS IS COMPLETE:

- ❌ BUY OR LEASE A CAR
- ❌ CHANGE JOBS
- ❌ MISS A BILL PAYMENT
- ❌ OPEN A LINE OF CREDIT
- ❌ MOVE MONEY AROUND
- ❌ MAKE A MAJOR PURCHASE



Any of these types of changes could jeopardize your loan approval. It's standard procedure for lenders to also do a final credit check before closing.



FINAL STEPS BEFORE CLOSING

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

Most lenders require both homeowner's insurance and title insurance. See following pages for more detailed information on each of these.

CLOSING DISCLOSURE

At least 3 days before closing, lenders are required to provide you with a Closing Disclosure with your final loan terms and closing costs for you to review. Closing costs for the buyer typically range from 2-5% of the purchase price, which can include lender fees, lender's title insurance, and HOA dues if applicable.

FINAL WALK THROUGH

Within 24 hours of closing we will do a final walk through of the home before signing the final paperwork. This last step is to verify that no damage has been done to the property since the inspection, that any agreed upon repairs have been completed, and that nothing from the purchase agreement has been removed from the home.

Next Step - Closing!



HOMEOWNERS INSURANCE

WHY DO YOU NEED HOMEOWNERS INSURANCE?

Homeowners insurance protects your home and possessions against damage and theft and is required by lenders before finalizing your loan. Policies vary and are completely customizable, so it's recommended to get quotes from multiple companies to compare price, coverage and limits.

WHAT DOES THIS INSURANCE COVER?

Homeowners insurance typically covers destruction and damage to the interior and exterior of a home due to things like fire, hurricanes, lightning, or vandalism. It also covers loss or theft of possessions, and personal liability for harm to others.

WHAT DOESN'T IT COVER?

Most policies do not cover flood or earthquake damage, and you may need to purchase an additional policy for this type of coverage.

WHAT ARE POLICY RATES BASED ON?

Rates are mostly determined by the insurer's risk that you will file a claim. The risk is based on your personal history of claims, frequency and severity of claims, past history of claims on the home, as well as the neighborhood statistics and the home's condition.

HOW CAN YOU QUALIFY FOR DISCOUNTS?

Many insurance companies offer discounts to seniors, and also to customers who have multiple policies with them, like auto or health insurance. Having a security system, smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors can also lower annual premium rates. When getting quotes, be sure to ask each company about their discounts and cost savings options.

TITLE INSURANCE

WHAT IS TITLE INSURANCE?

Title insurance protects the lender and/or homeowner from financial loss against claims regarding the legal ownership of a home.

HOW DOES TITLE INSURANCE COVERAGE WORK?

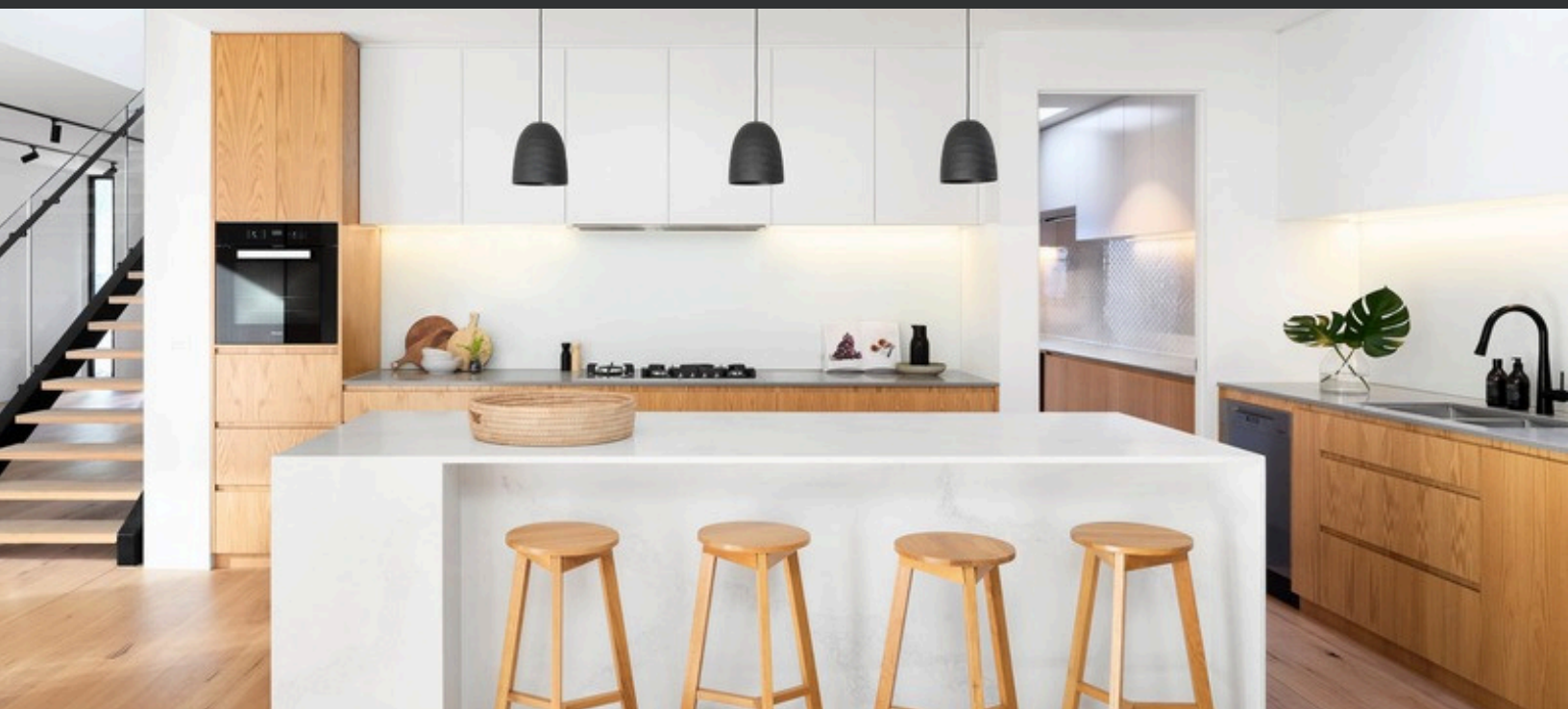
There are two types of title insurance: one for lenders and another for homeowners. Lender's title insurance is required by lenders but it does not cover you. A separate homeowners policy is needed to protect yourself from a claim on your home, and from being held financially responsible for possible unpaid property taxes from previous owners.

IS A TITLE SEARCH SUFFICIENT?

While most lenders require a title search, the title insurance ensures that if anything is missed during the search, those insured will be protected if any legal issues arise.

HOW MUCH DOES TITLE INSURANCE COST?

Title insurance is a one-time fee that is paid at closing, which costs between \$500-\$3,500 depending on the state, insurance provider and the purchase price of the home. Some companies will offer a discount if you bundle the lender's and owner's policies, but typically the buyer purchases the lender's policy and the seller pays for the owner's policy.



CLEARED TO CLOSE

Closing is the final step

of the buying process. On the day of closing, both parties sign documents, funds are dispersed, and property ownership is formally transferred from the seller to the buyer.



CLOSING DAY

Congratulations, You Made it to Closing!

On the day of closing you'll be going over and signing the final paperwork, and submitting a cashier's check (or previously arranged wire transfer) to pay the remaining down payment and closing costs.

ITEMS TO BRING TO CLOSING:

- ✓ Government Issued Photo ID
- ✓ Certified Funds or Cashier's Check
- ✓ Any Documents Requested by Title
- ✓ Camera For Closing Pictures

Enjoy Your New Home!



SUCCESS STORIES

"Professional, knowledgeable and an absolute dream to work with! Cody was a hundred percent on my side and made me feel very well taken care of and content!"

- Lane P.



"We started on a whim, and completely ignorant to buying and you made everything easy and took the fear out of our journey. Thank you for being the rock star you are. We are lucky to have you as our realtor!"

- Adam H.

"Working with Cody was truly an amazing experience for me and my family. He went above and beyond to help us find a beautiful home that fit our needs perfectly. What really stood out was how real he was—genuine, honest, down-to-earth and how well he knew the areas we were looking in."

- Dan Sariana F.



Buy with Confidence

CENTURY 21
Busch Realty Group