

First Home Buyer Checklist

It is easy to become lost in the volume of information available for first home buyers. We have put this easy-to-use First Home Buyer Checklist together for you to use regardless of whether you are buying an established home or building brand new. Print it off and use it to make sure have everything covered and can make well-informed decisions.

1. Speak to a Home Loan Specialist early

It's never too early to get professional advice to assist your home buying decisions. Whether it is helping you on your deposit savings journey or calculating your borrowing capacity (i.e. how much you can borrow based on your income and liabilities), a Home Loan Specialist (Link:17) will take the guess work out of the research and ensure a solution is tailor made for your needs.

2. Know your limits

Remember rates can rise and you still need to enjoy life! It is a good idea to use a budget planner (Link:10) to get a comprehensive view of all your current and predicted liabilities. All of these outgoings will still be in place when you have a home loan so they need to be considered in the affordability equation.

3. Save a deposit

The best tip for first home buyers is – start saving early! On average you will need a deposit (Link:08) of around 20% of the purchase price of your new home and the more you can save the better.

4. Understand the additional costs

Buying property is an expensive exercise, especially when unexpected additional costs pop up that haven't been factored into the affordability criteria. Your Home Loan Specialist and Real Estate Agent or New Home Sales Consultant will be able to assist you with predicted costs such as: lender's mortgage insurance (Link:08), establishment fees, body corporate fees, conveyancing costs, stamp duty, fencing and driveways (new homes). The more you know, the better prepared you can be.

5. Check grant eligibility

The First Home Owner Grant (FHOG) (Link: <http://www.firsthome.gov.au>) has been put in place nationally in Australia to offset the effects of GST and make homeownership more attainable. If you are buying or building a new home valued up to \$750,000, you may be eligible for the First Home Owner Grant (FHOG), you need to check with your Home Loan Specialist for eligibility criteria (Link: <http://www.sro.vic.gov.au/node/181>).

6. Do your research

Buying your first home is a major milestone decision so it makes sense that you invest time into researching the right outcome to suit your current and future lifestyle needs. Don't rush into a purchase without having already examined all components such as: buying established or building new, location, capital growth opportunities, finance options, savings plans.

7. Create your wish list

Writing a list of 'must-haves' and 'wish-list' items will help you to find a healthy balance between your dream home and what you can afford, and help to finetune your property search. Whether it be bedroom number, suburb amenity or future re-sale, this set of criteria can become your evaluation list to keep you focused.