

FROM THE LEWIS GROUP

The Northern Nevada Home Buyer Guide

A practical guide to buying in Reno, Sparks, and the surrounding communities, from your first search to the keys.

Talk about buying a home ↗

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STEP 01

Get ready to buy.

Set a budget that leaves room for the life you want to live in your new home.

Choose a comfortable monthly number

Add mortgage principal and interest, taxes, insurance, and any homeowners association (HOA) dues. Leave room for upkeep, utilities, and savings.

Plan for cash you'll need up front

Ask your lender for an estimate of the down payment and closing costs. Set aside money for inspections, moving, and early repairs.

Talk to a lender before touring

If you're financing, ask about preapproval and what could change the terms. Once you have an address, compare Loan Estimates from several lenders.

BRING TO YOUR FIRST CONVERSATION

Your move window, three must-haves, and a monthly payment you feel comfortable with. Share financial documents through your lender's secure process.

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STEP 02

Search with a plan.

Tour with your priorities in mind so you can compare homes on more than photos and price.

Picture a normal week

Try the commute and errands at the times you'd make them. Check parking, internet service, and how the home and yard will work for you year-round.

Get clear on representation

Before signing a buyer agreement, review the services, agreement length, how compensation works, and what you may owe. Ask your agent to walk you through it.

Build the offer around your goals

Use recent comparable sales to discuss price. Review the deposit, financing, inspection and appraisal terms, deadlines, and possession date together.

BEFORE YOU SIGN

Ask when the earnest money deposit is due and under what terms you could lose it. Keep a copy of the signed agreement and its dates.

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STEP 03

Look a little closer.

Use your contract's review period to learn what the home may need and what ownership will cost.

Inspect and read the disclosures

Schedule a home inspection and consider specialist checks for issues it uncovers. Review seller disclosures and discuss your options before the inspection deadline.

Read the documents that affect ownership

Review the preliminary title report and any HOA rules, dues, and planned assessments. For homes with a well or septic system, ask about records and testing.

Check insurance by address

Request quotes early. Ask about flood and wildfire coverage, any exclusions, and whether the insurer expects property improvements.

LOCAL PROPERTY RESEARCH

Check Washoe County's parcel and flood maps for homes in the county.

Open Washoe County maps

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STEP 04

Get the keys.

Confirm the final numbers, check the house, and coordinate your move.

Check the final numbers

Compare your Closing Disclosure with your Loan Estimate if you're financing. Ask your lender and escrow officer to explain any difference in costs or cash due.

Walk through and confirm possession

Check agreed repairs and what stays with the home. Confirm when the deed will be recorded and when you'll receive the keys.

VERIFY BEFORE SENDING FUNDS

Call your escrow officer at a trusted number you obtained in advance to confirm payment instructions, especially if an email says they've changed.

FURTHER READING

CFPB home buying resources
Nevada residential disclosures
Nevada wildfire preparedness

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