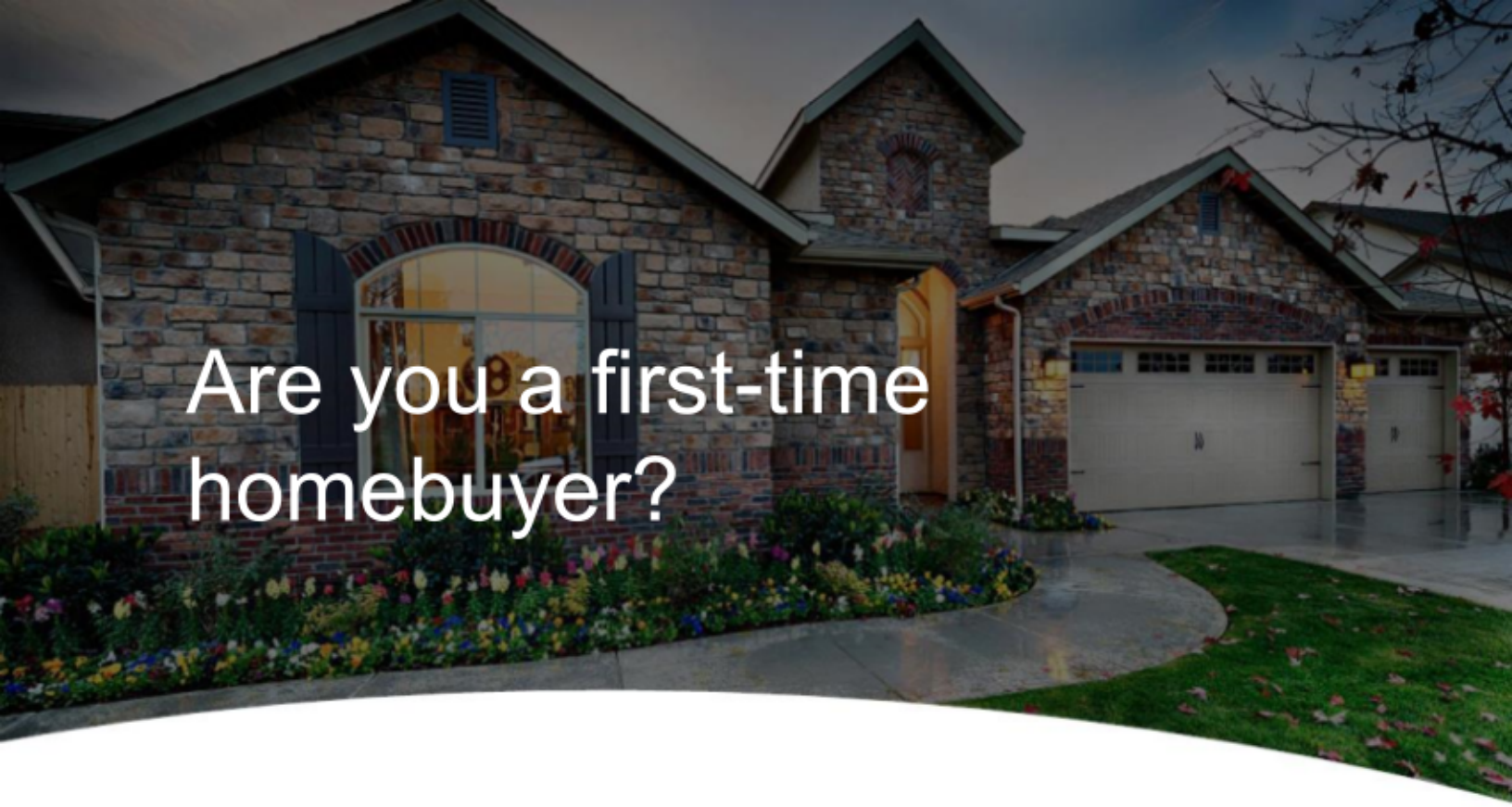
Your Guide to First-time Homeownership



Committed to Seeing You Home.



Are you a first-time homebuyer?

Buying a home is more than just a smart financial investment—it is an investment in yourself and your family.

We at The Franks Real Estate Team want you to enter the home market with confidence—no questions unanswered, no concerns unaddressed. This guide is to simplify the often not-so-simple homebuying process.

Afer reading through this guide, you should be able to:

- Determine how much home you can afford
- Understand and improve your credit score
- Make a reasonable down payment
- Manage future home expenses
- Find a home that fits your lifestyle



Table of Contents

PA G E 4

Owning vs. Renting

Why paying a mortgage is better than paying rent.

Owning a home allows you to build equity, financial stability, tax benefits, and creative license to design your living space—all benefits you lack when renting.

PA G E 5

Discover Your Buying Power

How much home can you afford?

Determine your purchase power in the homebuying market by examining the fiscal components of your monthly responsibility as a homeowner.

PA G E 7

Down-Payments and Closing Costs

Breaking down common homeownership expenses.

A down-payment is the initial payment you put toward a home's purchase price, while closing costs are fees paid upon settlement of the transaction.

PA G E 8

Finding Your Perfect Home

What is on your new home checklist?

Before shopping the market, distinguish your wants from your needs and determine the location of your new home.

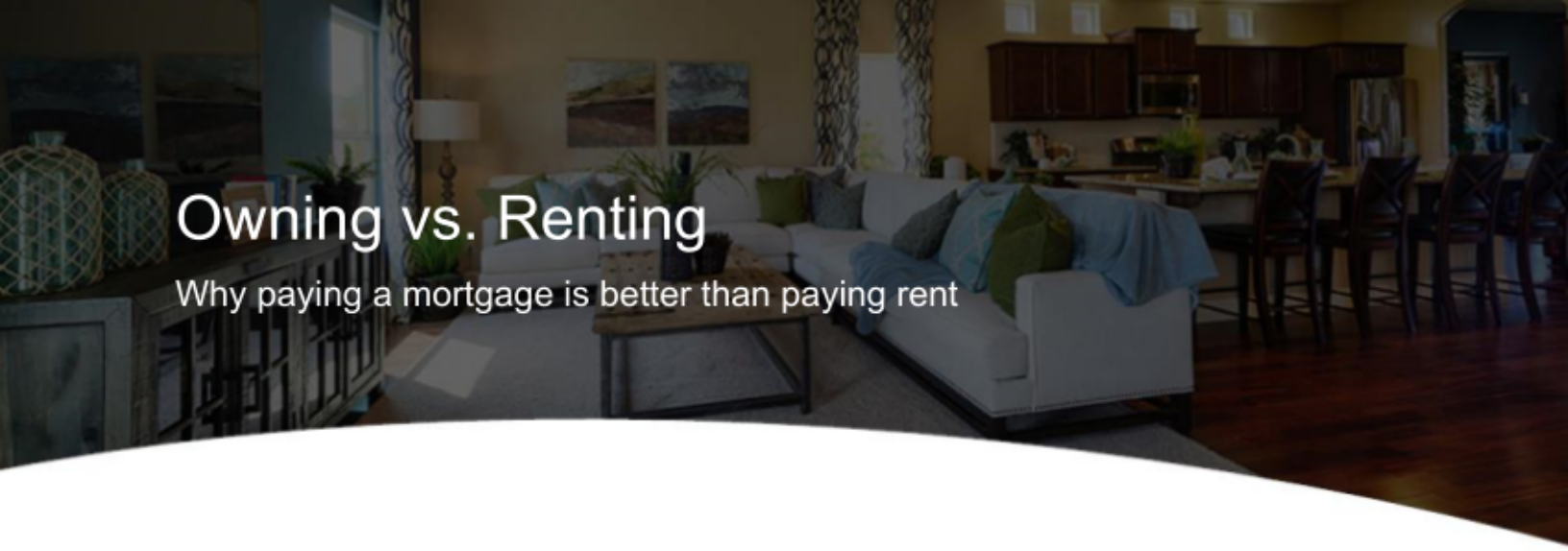
PA G E 9

Closing Thoughts

Leaving no stone unturned.

With The Franks Real Estate Team it's our mission to make sure all of your homeownership questions and concerns are addressed.





Owning vs. Renting

Why paying a mortgage is better than paying rent

The truth is, you're going to have to pay to live somewhere—regardless of whether you choose to rent or own. You just have to know which is right for you, given your unique circumstances.

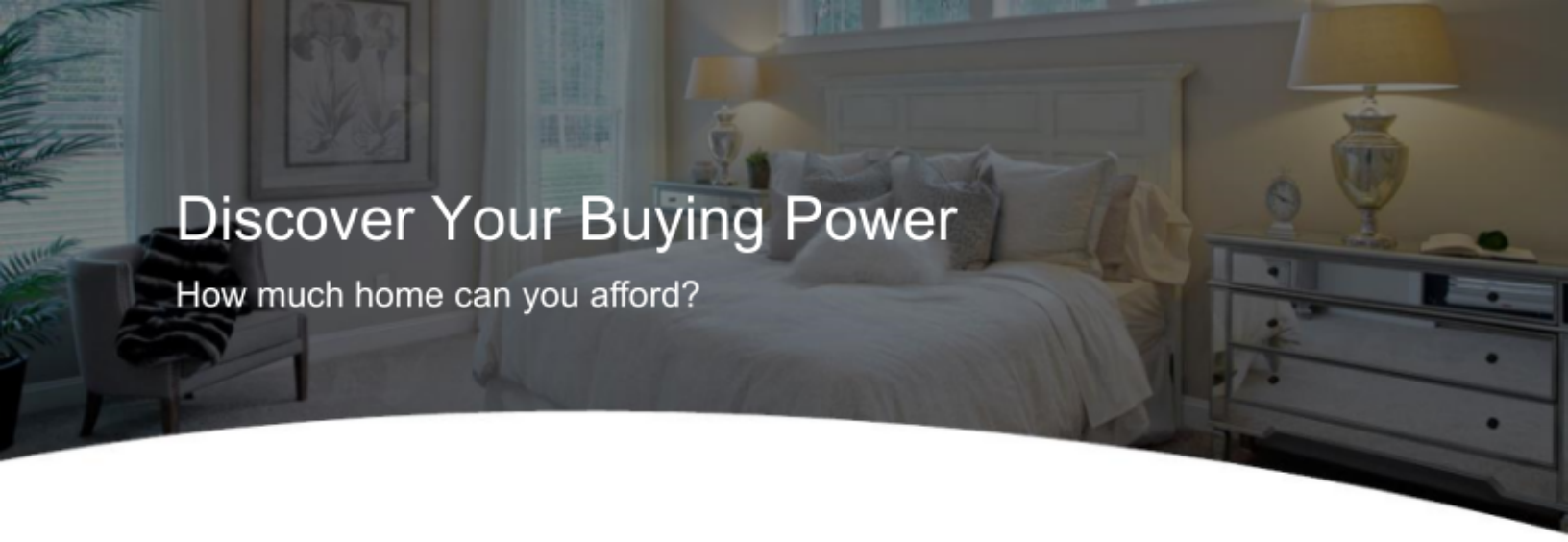
While renting does have its perks, (relief from maintenance fees, flexibility in location and opportunities to improve credit) owning your own property can allow for building a better financial future in the long run.

"Slow and steady wins the race."

When comparing renting to owning a home, renting can ofen seem like the less-expensive option—especially when those first few years of homeownership can come with a lot of one-time, up-front expenses. However, the path toward financial stability is a marathon, not a race. Sometimes the more you put into something, the more you get out of it.

As your years of homeownership fly by, you will begin to build equity and increase your net worth with each payment you make toward your mortgage. Purchasing a home may cost more upfront, but the long-term return on investment may be worth it.





Discover Your Buying Power

How much home can you afford?

The responsibility of purchasing a home can seem intimidating, and sometimes overwhelming. Whether you are a first-time homebuyer or a current homeowner looking to upgrade, it is important to research and understand all of the financial obligations ahead. Your buying power is the result of several variables that will establish how much home you can comfortably take on.

Below are a few important factors that will be considered when determining how much home you can afford.

The Pre-Approval Process

Getting pre-approved for a home loan gives you a solid upper-hand when putting in an offer on your dream home.

In order to get a mortgage pre-approval, your lender will look closely at your credit and verify your income. While a pre-approval letter does not guarantee your loan will be approved, it does give home sellers insight into your readiness to purchase and that you're prepared to meet any necessary down-payment and income requirements

Your Credit Score

Your credit score will be one of the primary metrics used to determine if you qualify for a mortgage, and what your loan terms may look like once you do.

If you are worried that your credit may need some work, we can put you in touch with a professional Credit Specialists that will provide the guidance you need to improve your scores and successfully prequalify for a mortgage.



Your Debt-to-Income Ratio

Making a nice, steady income is great—but it isn't everything when it comes to getting a mortgage. Lenders want reassurance that you will be able to pay your mortgage, in addition to any other debts you may have. To do this, they will look at your debt-to-income ratio—all of your monthly debt payments divided by your gross monthly income.

Your Down-Payment

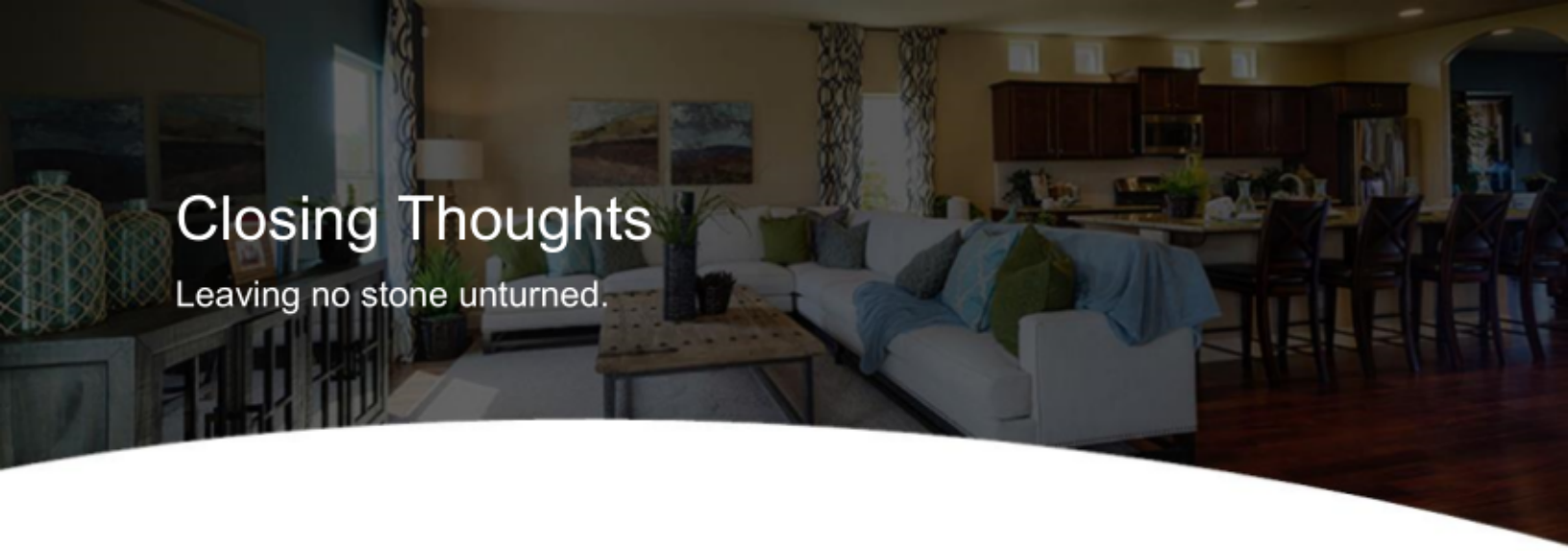
Although your credit score is a top variable considered when purchasing a home, cash is still king. Your ability to put down a solid down-payment will improve your overall buying power.

While there are plenty of programs that don't require 20 percent down, putting this much (or more!) toward your down-payment will eliminate the need for private mortgage insurance (PMI) and is attractive to sellers—potentially placing you above any competition.

A hefy down-payment shows you are committed and financially-ready to take your next step toward homeownership. (And not to mention, it will also significantly lower the amount you pay over the life of your loan!)

We know having to determine your purchasing power isn't the most exciting part of the homebuying process, but really digging into your finances enables you to set the right expectations and make any necessary adjustments prior to window-shopping.





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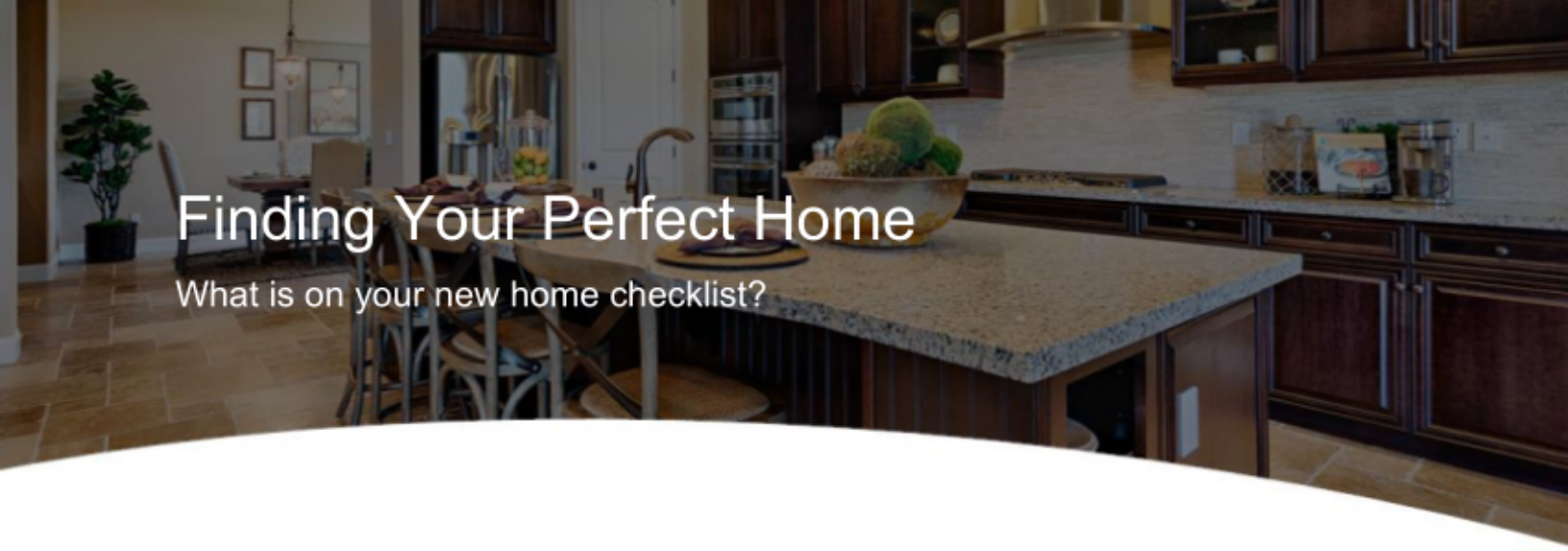
It's our mission to provide you with a smooth, efficient process that allows you to focus on the joy of moving into your new home and building new memories.

The Franks Real Estate Team wants your homebuying experience to be positive and rewarding—leaving no questions unanswered. We are at your disposal, so please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Committed to Seeing You Home

From pre-approvals to successful closings, we are eager to help answer any questions you may have. To get started on your path to homeownership, contact us today.





Finding Your Perfect Home

What is on your new home checklist?

You have done your research, saved for a down-payment, and now it's time to find the perfect home for you! While this stage of the homeownership journey is ofen seen as the most exciting part, it does come with its own set of challenges and considerations. Suburb or city? How many bedrooms? One-story or multi-level? How is the neighborhood? How long will your commute be? The decision process can be overwhelming!

Location, Location, Location!

There's a reason why location is the most important factor in real estate. Your home's location will help determine not only the future value of your home, but many aspects of your everyday life. Make this decision carefully by considering what is most important to you and your lifestyle. Consider home prices in the area, job opportunities and/or commute times, schools, safety, and proximity to loved ones.

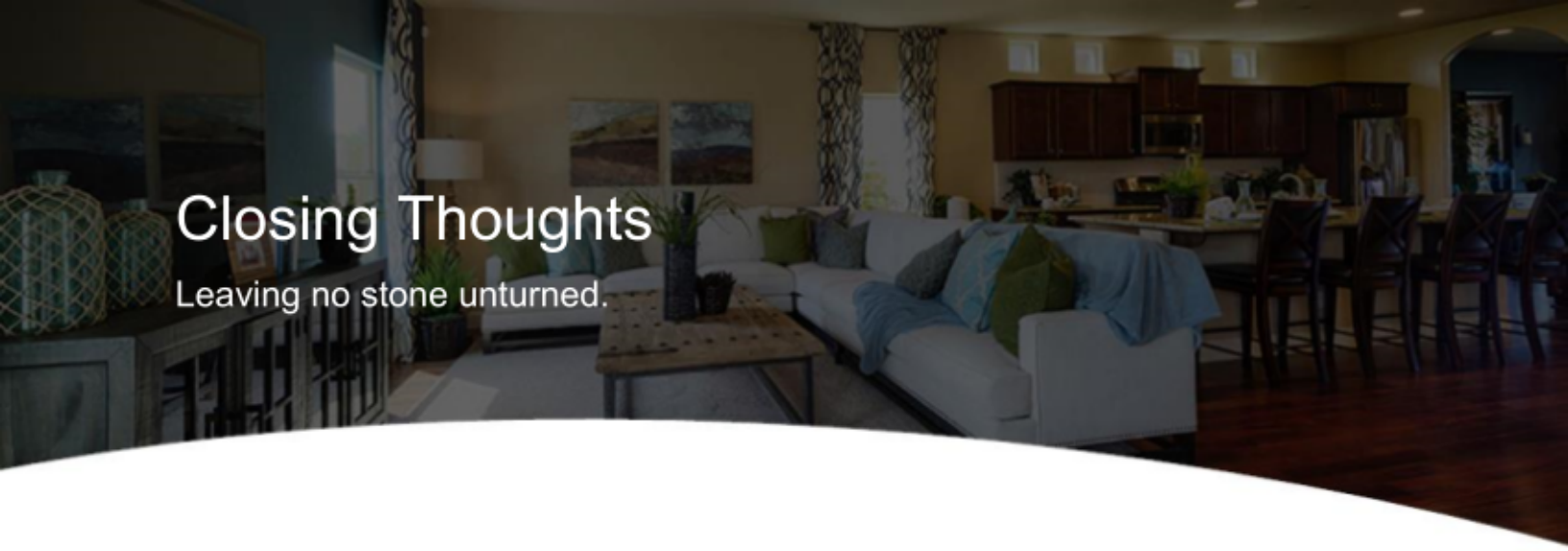
Distinguishing Between Your Needs vs. Wants

When searching for the right home, it's important to remember what is and what isn't realistic. Be honest with yourself when distinguishing your needs from your wants. You need a roof over your head and running water, but you want a cul-de-sac and a pool.

When evaluating your needs and wants, it's a good idea to consider items that will add value to your home rather than just personal preferences. Features like granite countertops, hardwood floors and being in a top-rated school district will add value to your property for future buyers.

As you prepare to buy, remember that no home is perfect. Finding a great home at the price you want will be easier when you become flexible on your wants. Happy home hunting!





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