EastLake Home Buyer Checklist

From pre-approval to your first month: what to do, in order.

Before you shop

- [ ] Meet a lender and get pre-approved so you know your budget.
- [ ] Decide the monthly payment you are comfortable with, including property tax, insurance and any HOA dues.
- [ ] List what you cannot live without and what you would trade.
- [ ] Look up typical values and recent price changes in the areas you like.

Touring homes

- [ ] See each home on a weekday and on a weekend if you can.
- [ ] Ask how old the roof, water heater, heating and cooling and windows are.
- [ ] Find out what association dues and special assessments apply.
- [ ] Note stains, cracks or sloping floors and raise them with the inspector.
- [ ] Ask what is included in the sale.
- [ ] Ask whether the home is in a Mello-Roos district or has another special tax, and the annual amount and end date.
- [ ] Ask which associations apply, community-wide and neighborhood.

Making an offer

- [ ] Review recent sales of similar nearby homes with your agent before you choose a price.
- [ ] Decide the deposit, the contingency periods and the closing date.
- [ ] Attach your pre-approval letter and proof of funds to the offer.

Under contract

- [ ] Deliver your earnest money deposit to escrow on time.
- [ ] Schedule inspections in the first days of the contract.
- [ ] Read the seller’s disclosures and the preliminary title report and ask about anything unclear.
- [ ] Line up insurance before you remove contingencies.
- [ ] Respond quickly to lender requests, and avoid new debt or large purchases until closing.

Closing and after

- [ ] Walk the home before signing and check the repairs.
- [ ] Sign the loan documents and the Preliminary Change of Ownership Report at escrow.
- [ ] On day one, re-key the locks, arrange utilities and check smoke alarms.
- [ ] File for the homeowners’ exemption, and set money aside for the supplemental property tax bill.

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Preferred lender: Rodrigo Ballon, CrossCountry Mortgage, 858-735-0255. You are always free to choose any lender you like.