



Tucson

HOME BUYING GUIDE

**YOUR GUIDE TO
PURCHASING A HOME**



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WELCOME TO TUCSON

YOU'RE GOING TO LOVE IT HERE!

Hey there! I'm Rachel Clark-Munday, your Tucson Realtor® and go-to resource for all things moving, living, and thriving in this amazing city.

Whether you're relocating or just rediscovering what makes Tucson special, this guide is packed with everything you need to feel at home. From breathtaking mountain views and epic hiking trails to vibrant neighborhoods and local hotspots, Tucson has something for everyone—and I'm here to help you find your perfect fit.

After working with so many out-of-state buyers through my YouTube and Instagram, I kept getting the same questions. That's why I created this E-GUIDE—to give you all the insider tips, must-know info, and real answers to make your move smooth and stress-free.

Thinking about buying, selling, or just exploring? I've got you covered. And if you have questions, I'm just a text, email, or call away. Let's get you settled and loving life in Tucson!

-Rachel





SIGN UP FOR OUR NEWSLETTER

Every week we send out a newsletter with useful information about the Tucson real estate market and things happening in the area. We don't have anything to sell you with the newsletter and we never will!

Some of the things you'll see in there:

1. Real estate market updates
2. The Property of The Week
3. New developments around Tucson

When you downloaded this guide, you automatically got put on the newsletter list, but you can always unsubscribe!



In 2020, Rachel started her YouTube channel 'Living in Tucson by Rachel Clark' to show what the greater Tucson area has to offer for anyone looking to relocate here...or rediscover Tucson! What better way to get information about the community, the real estate market, and everything in between, than from a local Tucsonan?! 😊

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WORKING WITH US

Moving to a new city is a big deal—but it doesn't have to be stressful. Our team specializes in making your move to Tucson smooth, simple, and exciting. Whether you're coming from out of state or just moving across town, we'll help you find the right home in the right neighborhood—without the guesswork.

With deep market expertise, strong local connections, and top-tier negotiation skills, we make sure you get the best deal possible. But it's not just about the transaction—it's about making sure you feel confident and at home in Tucson.

From the best schools and local hotspots to commute times and hidden gems, we give you real, unfiltered insights so you can make the best decision for YOU. You're not just getting a Realtor—you're getting a trusted partner who knows Tucson inside and out. I'll be there every step of the way, providing honest advice, local expertise, and the inside scoop on what it's really like to live here.

Plus, we go beyond buying and selling. Need help coordinating movers, setting up utilities, or finding trusted local pros for home repairs or renovations? We've got you covered. Our concierge-style service ensures you have everything you need to start your next chapter stress-free.

If you're ready to make Tucson home, let's make the process seamless, straightforward, and even fun! Call, text, or Email us today—your Tucson adventure starts here!



RACHEL CLARK-MUNDAY
REAL ESTATE AGENT



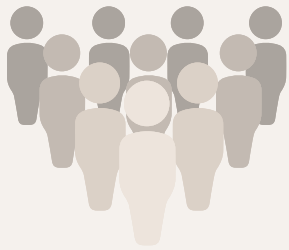
RYAN MUNDAY
OPERATIONS/MARKETING



ALLISON JOHNSON
TRANSACTION COORDINATOR

DEMOGRAPHICS

POPULATION



1.1M

ACTIVELY BUILDING



60+ COMMUNITIES

LISTED HOUSES



4,000

JOBS



96% EMPLOYED

THE HOME BUYING PROCESS

STEP 1

FINANCES

- ✓ Gather your documents
- ✓ Obtain pre-approval or proof of funds
- ✓ Locate down payment funds
- ✓ Prepare for any additional costs

STEP 2

HOME SEARCH

- ✓ Preview potential properties online
- ✓ Schedule showings and view the properties you are most interested in

STEP 3

UNDER CONTRACT

- ✓ Write an offer to purchase on your favorite property
- ✓ Negotiate the terms of the offer and accept the contract
- ✓ Deposit earnest money, complete loan application and homeowners insurance quotes

STEP 4

DUE DILIGENCE

- ✓ Conduct inspections
- ✓ Resolve/negotiate issues from inspection
- ✓ Your lender will order the appraisal
- ✓ Obtain homeowners appraisal

STEP 5

CLOSING TIME

- ✓ Title company will conduct title search and order survey
- ✓ Receive closing statement/clear to close
- ✓ Wire funds to closing company
- ✓ Conduct a walk-through of property and close
- ✓ Closing day: Get your keys, it's all yours!

THE MORTGAGE PROCESS

The very first step of the buying process is to get a pre-approval letter from a lender stating how much you are qualified for. It's important to ask your potential lenders some questions to make sure they are a good fit for you.

Don't understand something your lender says? Stop and ask for clarification. This is your home buying journey, and you deserve to understand the process every step of the way.

A pre-approval is only valid for 30-90 days, so while you can start talking to lenders, you'll want to wait on getting that pre-approval letter when you're ready to buy.



QUESTIONS TO ASK POTENTIAL LENDERS

1. What type of loan do you recommend for me? There's no one type of mortgage loan that's superior to another - but whichever you choose, you need to know why it's best and how it works.
2. Will my down payment vary based on the loan I choose? If you're tight on cash or don't want to be cash poor, let your lender know. Loans vary in their down payment requirements.
3. What is the interest rate and the annual percentage rate (APR)? Everyone talks about the interest rate, but the APR is just as important. It combines the interest rate with the fees a lender charges to originate your loan.
4. Can I lock-in an interest rate? If so, for how long? If you think rates will be moving up, ask if you can lock it in for a set period of time!
5. What will my closing costs be? Are they a part of my loan, or will I pay them in cash at closing? Remember, closing costs usually run around 3% of your loan value so you need to know how they'll be covered.

SEARCHING STRATEGICALLY

Before we hop into the home search, I like to advise my clients to create a “Needs” list and a “Wants” list. This will help us to really focus on the things that are most important in your future home.

Needs are the most non-negotiable features; the features you simply must have in your next home. Wants are the ones you’d like to have, but you can add or change down the road.

Don’t feel like your first draft has to be your final draft – and above all else, remember you can’t change the lot, the location, or the price you paid so spend a good amount of time thinking through those three before you move on.

NEEDS MIGHT BE THINGS LIKE:

- Enough square footage for you and your family
- Sufficient bedrooms and bathrooms
- First floor master bedroom
- Close proximity to work and school
- Attached two-car garage
- Grassy yard for children’s or pet’s play area

WANTS WILL LOOK MORE LIKE:

- Specific paint or exterior color
- Pool, exterior, or other exterior water feature
- Fenced-in backyard
- Specific carpet, hardwood floors, or tile
- Kitchen amenities like countertops and appliances
- Walk-in shower or double bathroom vanity in master

WANTS VS. NEEDS

Write down your *needs* and your *wants* in your future home.

NEEDS

WANTS

SEARCHING STRATEGICALLY ONLINE

Now that you've got your wants vs. needs list in hand, the fun really begins! It's time to talk about narrowing down those listings and deciding which ones to see in person. First up, let's talk about first practices for searching online. No doubt you know the sites (Realtor.com, Zillow, Redfin, Trulia), but how can you get the results you want? Try some of these tips.



Use the search filters but not too much.

You don't want to restrict your search so tightly that you only have a handful of homes to view. Keeping your wants vs. needs list in mind, expand your geographic search, and add do not, I repeat, DO NOT look at homes over your max budget!

If you find something that catches your eye, check out the Google street view.

Online pictures can be deceiving so a virtual "walk down the street" will give you a better sense of the house and surrounding area.

Don't shy away from a home because it is "pending" or "under contract."

Pending contracts do fall through, so keep it on your list especially if it checks all your boxes.

After you've found a few homes you like, jot down address. Shoot the list to me and I will call the listing agents to gather pertinent info and gauge the seller's motivation. At this point, it's time to look at the calendar and find a chunk of time to tour the homes on your shortlist. Carve out more time than you think you'll need since you don't want to be rushed if you find a home that may be "the one."

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR SHOWINGS

You're SO READY to get inside those homes on your shortlist and see for yourself if one of them is soon-to-be your new address. I know you're excited, but you gotta go into those showings calm, cool, and with your thinking cap on. Here's a quick list of how to do just that:



Before a showing, read over your wants vs. needs list and revisit your budget.

Having this fresh on your mind will help you stay objective and focused. Take pictures and videos to jog your memory later and to help you process with friends and family.

Remember, you can't change the lot or the location so make sure you love both.

You also don't want to be the priciest home on the block. I will help you assess whether or not that's the case.

Don't let yourself get distracted by decor or staging.

These things will be gone by the time you move in, so try to stay focused on the things that cannot be changed as easily.

Take your time.

If a home makes a good first impression, let me know you're interested and that you'd like to spend a bit more time looking around. This is one of the largest purchases you'll ever make so it's worth it to learn as much as you can while you're there.

TIPS FOR MAKING AN OFFER STAND OUT

So you think you've found "the one" and you're ready to put in an offer - one that will be simply irresistible to the sellers. Let's talk about making an offer that stands out.



- Include your pre-approval letter that shows that you're serious, qualified, and ready to purchase.
- Use a friendly tone. Let sellers know you want their home - and that you'll be easy to work with all the way to closing.
- Put your best-foot - and price - forward. You may only get one shot, so make it count. Use comps and trends as a guide, but go in with a strong number you know a seller would find favorable.
- If you can pay "all cash," say so. When you don't need financing, your offer is less risky for anxious sellers.

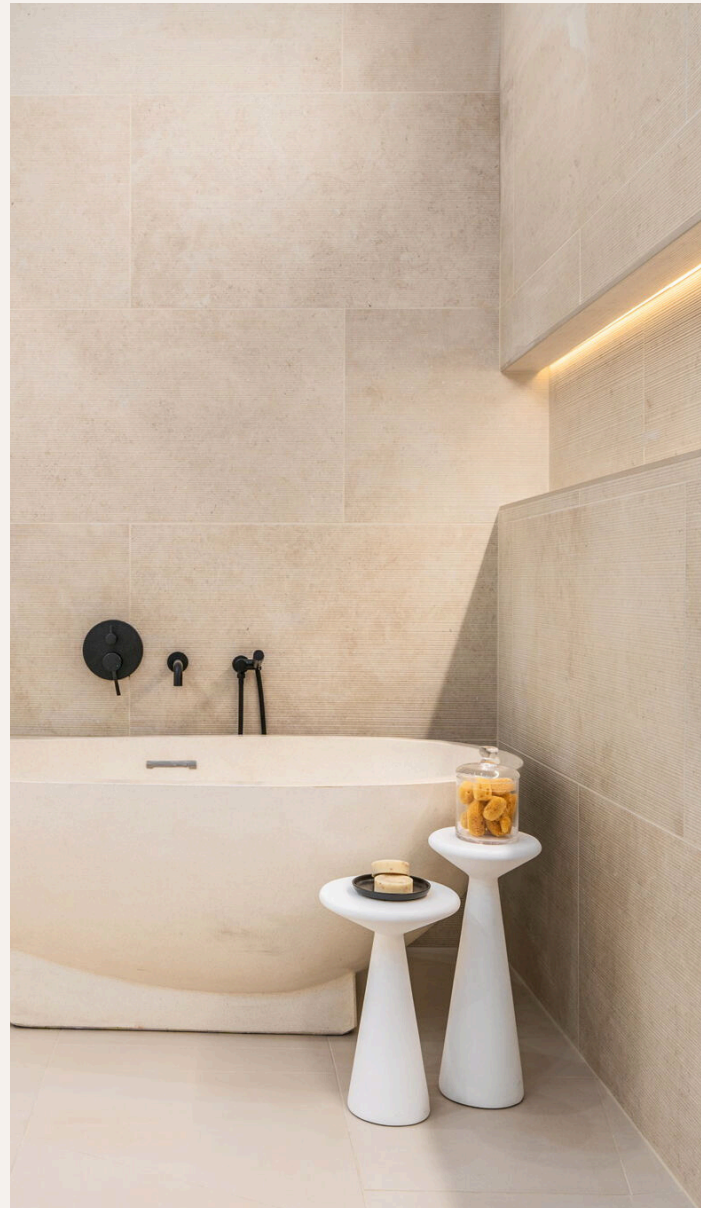
And of course, when you're ready, I will guide you through putting together an offer that gives you every advantage in landing the home of your dreams.

WE'RE UNDER CONTRACT... NOW WHAT?

You made an offer, and it has been accepted – go ahead, cue the confetti! And while it'll be a few more days until you can move in, you're well on your way to closing the deal on your new home sweet home.

Here's a quick rundown on what happens after you make an offer and your new home is "under contract."

- First, I will carefully review important dates and information you will need to know to ensure a successful closing. My transaction coordinator will send you and all involved parties an email within one business day going over all details and important dates as well!
- I will contact your lender to loop them in on the process. I recommend following up with them as well to firm up financing details and lock in your interest rate.
- We will schedule an inspection and once the home inspection report comes in (and you should definitely request a home inspection), you may need to negotiate any repairs with your seller.
- Towards the closing date, you'll get a call from your closing attorney's office to schedule your closing.



ALL ABOUT HOME INSPECTIONS AND INSURANCE

What is a home inspection?

The inspection will uncover any issues in the home that would have otherwise been unknown. You will receive a written report of the inspection. I always recommend that you are present for the inspection, so that you may ask the inspector any questions. I will be there as well!

What does “inspection period” mean?

During the inspection period, the buyer has the right to hire a professional to inspect the condition of the home. If the results on the inspection report comes back with any issues that need to be addressed, the buyer may ask the seller to cover the costs of these repairs, reduce the sales price, or fix the repairs before closing. If an agreement cannot be made, the buyer has the right to back out of the contract and get the escrow deposit back with no consequences.

TIP:

Schedule all inspections immediately, so if we need to negotiate any repairs we can before the inspection period ends.

The home seems fine, do I really need a home inspection?

You may think the home is in perfect shape, but some of the costliest problems are difficult to spot: leaks, termite damage, foundation issues, poor ventilation, faulty wiring, and drippy appliances. A home inspection gives you the chance (before you sign on the dotted line) to have a professional inspector see if there are any problems that need to be addressed, replaced, or fixed.

If you are getting a loan, the lender will require you to obtain home insurance. The home insurance company will typically require that you have certain inspections done. In order to obtain insurance, the inspection reports will need to fit the criteria of the insurance company. This is another reason that you may need to have an inspection done.

GLOSSARY

- Appraisal:** The estimation of a home's current value done for the lender by an official appraiser.
- Contingent:** Means "depending on certain circumstances." In real estate, when a house is listed as contingent, it means that an offer has been made and accepted, but before the deal is complete, some additional criteria must be met.
- Deed:** This is a legal document that transfers the property ownership from one person to another. The deed to a home is also known as a title and is the written proof of who owns it.
- Escalation Clause:** A clause in a real estate contract that lets homebuyers increase their offer by a predetermined amount over other offers in case the seller receives another offer at a higher price point. Escalation clauses are typically reserved for when a buyer is confident there will be multiple offers.
- Escrow:** Deposit for the home purchase held by a 3rd party (NOT the seller or buyer), typically the closing company or an attorney.
- Home Warranty:** A contract covering repairs and replacements on systems and appliances in your home.
- HOA Fee:** Monthly maintenance fee paid by homeowners to an association in their community to go towards costs such as, but not limited to, water/sewer, property maintenance, electricity, community amenities.
- Lease-back:** Also known as rent-back, when the buyer leases the property back to the seller after closing for a period of time, offering the seller to remain in the home as the "tenant." The buyer and seller will negotiate the length of time as well as a lease amount to be paid to the buyer.
- Lien:** Placed on a home when it is being held as collateral until a certain debt is paid.
- Multiple Listing Service:** MLS is a service (local or regional) that gathers real estate listings - homes that are for sale. It is accessed by brokers and real estate agents.
- Pre-approval:** Preliminary approval from a bank or other lending institution for the potential of a home mortgage. This doesn't mean guarantee.
- Title:** A title gives the person the right to, or ownership of, a certain piece of real estate property.
- Walkthrough:** A final walkthrough confirms that no damage has been done to the home since the time of inspection, that the major systems and appliances are in working order, all appliances and/or items that were in the purchase and sale agreement are present in/outside of the home, and any inspection items have been addressed (if applicable).

PRE-CLOSING

We are so close to the closing table! Here's what's going to happen leading up to you receiving the keys:

- Under Contract**
- Inspections**
- Obtain Insurance**

Appraisal

An appraisal is an estimate of the value of the property by a licensed professional appraiser. Once any problems during the inspection are solved, the appraisal will be ordered by the lender and paid for by you. The goal of the appraisal is to verify the value of the property for the lender and to protect you from overpaying. The contract is contingent upon whether the appraisal comes in at or above the purchase price. If the appraisal comes back short, we will be back to the negotiating table.

Obtain Mortgage

You have 5 days from the date of contract execution to begin the mortgage loan application. During the 30-45 days before closing, the lender will be finalizing your mortgage.

It is very important not to make any major job changes, major purchases, or open new credit cards or lines of credit, as any of these activities could alter your qualifications for a loan.

Title

The title company will conduct a title search to ensure the property is legitimate and find if there are any outstanding mortgage liens, judgments, restrictions, easements, leases, unpaid taxes, or any other restrictions that would impact your ownership associated with the property. Once the title is found to be valid, the title company will issue a title insurance policy which protects lenders or owners against claims or legal fees that may arise over ownership of the property. This will also be a part of your closing costs.

Clear-to-close!

The magic words! It means the mortgage underwriter has officially approved all documentation required to fund the loan. All that remains is the actual closing process.

CLOSING TIME!

You've gotten the "clear-to-close" and we've scheduled your closing date and time - let's answer some questions you may have about closing day:

Q: When do we do the final walk-through?

A: The final walk-through is exactly what it sounds like - it allows the buyers to do one last walk before closing to confirm that the seller made the repairs that were agreed upon and to make sure no issues have come up while under contract. We will typically schedule to do this a day or two before closing.

Q: Who will be at closing?

A: Situations vary, but you can expect the buyer (that's you!) and title company representative.

Q: What will I do?

A: Stretch those fingers and get ready to sign, sign, sign. At closing, the seller will sign ownership of the property over to you, and you'll sign to receive possession.

Q: What should I bring?

A: Bring a photo ID and a cashier's check to pay any closing costs (if you haven't already scheduled to wire your closing funds). Your escrow agent will tell you any other documents specific to your situation. The closing process is relatively simple but be prepared for A LOT of paperwork. (And always, always, always ask if you have a question along the way.) The good news is once you've signed the last page, it's time to get a hold of those keys and celebrate!



READY TO MAKE TUCSON HOME?

Whether you're ready to pack up or just curious about life in Tucson, we're here to help!

Call, text, or email us anytime with questions or to explore your options.

My team and I can provide quick answers, arrange viewings for homes that match your vision, and keep you in the loop as new properties and builds come on the market every day.

I hope this free resource helps you explore the greater Tucson area! If you're thinking of making a move, whether that be from out-of-state or just across town, we're here to help every step of the way. From finding the right neighborhood to securing your dream home!

Let's get started—reach out today!

TEXT OR CALL

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PREFER TO EMAIL?

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THE LIVING IN TUCSON TEAM


YOUR LOCAL EXPERT REALTOR®

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