



JOHNSON & WALKER



BUYER BLUEPRINT

THE ULTIMATE ROADMAP TO BUYING A HOME



Buying a home can be a daunting process, with confusing terminology and numerous steps that can overwhelm even the most experienced buyer.

However, the desire to move into a home and make it your own is a powerful motivator. At the same time, you deserve a transparent and effective process. By breaking down the home buying experience into a simple, step-by-step process, we ensure that your journey will be smooth, stress-free, and an experience you can enjoy!

The key to success is to surround yourself with the right team of professionals for the job. Enter Cassie and Jeremy . . .

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Meet the team



When people inquire about the type of real estate we specialize in, our answer is straightforward:

"The people kind."

Our passion lies in building relationships, which we seamlessly blend with our vast knowledge of Seattle's real estate market. We approach challenges head-on, and our ultimate objective is to ensure that the home-buying process is both enjoyable and stress-free.

Drawing from our own personal experiences of the highs and lows of the real estate market, we possess the expertise required to navigate this complex process.

Expect to spend quality time with us, engaging in detailed conversations about the intricacies of home buying and enjoying the thrill of touring homes.

Cassie & Jeremy



Step 1 INTAKE

During our first meeting, whether in-person or virtual, we'll take the time to understand your **IDEAL HOME**. If you're having trouble visualizing it, don't worry – our process includes a thorough brainstorming session where we'll dive deep into your wants, needs, must-haves, and deal breakers. With a clear understanding of what your perfect home looks like, we'll create a customized plan of action to help you achieve your goals.

Step 2: FINANCING

Reviewing your loan options and **OBTAINING LOAN APPROVAL** is critical, not only to guide your search parameters but also to demonstrate to sellers that you are serious and prepared to purchase a home. If you haven't yet found a lender, we can refer you to a selection of lenders we work with regularly. Regardless of whom you choose, be sure to pick a local mortgage lender who has been recommended by someone you trust. With an experienced financial advocate on your side, you'll have peace of mind knowing that your transaction will be seamless.

Step 3: EDUCATION DAY

Now, the fun begins! Using the information gathered during our Intake session, we'll create a list of homes to **TOUR TOGETHER**. This list will include homes that may be your top contenders, some maybes, and even a few you may not have considered before. During the 2-4 hour tour, we'll ask lots of questions to gain insights into your preferences, so don't hesitate to be honest with us – we want to know what you love and what you don't. By the end of the tour, we'll have a clear understanding of what constitutes your perfect home.



Step 4: THE OFFER

When we've found "the one," we'll collaborate on composing the offer. First, we'll provide a market analysis to determine a reasonable offer price. Then, we'll guide you through the contract and review the various contingencies and addenda available to you. Our top priorities during the offer writing process are to **ENSURE YOU FULLY UNDERSTAND** the contract language and your obligations as a buyer, strategize for negotiating the best price and terms, and safeguard your earnest money by establishing protections to address any potential hidden issues.

Step 5: MUTUAL ACCEPTANCE

Our objective is to attain mutual acceptance, which is when all terms are agreed upon and put in writing. Once your offer has been submitted, we'll negotiate counteroffers and work toward an agreement. Once mutual acceptance is reached, we'll provide you with a **BUYER TRANSACTION SUMMARY** that outlines the timeline, including tasks and deadlines that must be completed before each contingency expiration. If this sounds overwhelming, don't worry - we're here to help you through every step of the process!



Step 6: INSPECTION

A home inspection is an [IN-DEPTH WALK-THROUGH](#) of the home. To conduct the inspection, you'll hire a professional home inspector who will scrutinize the property and identify any potential issues. The report will include various levels of attention, ranging from items that need immediate repair to those that need to be monitored. With this information in hand, we may have the opportunity to go back to the seller and negotiate funds to cover necessary repairs or hire an expert to further examine specific issues that require more exploration.

Step 7: ESCROW

An escrow officer is a neutral third-party who plays a crucial role in [OVERSEEING THE TRANSACTION](#) to ensure that all parties involved fulfill their financial obligations as outlined in the contract. They will receive and disburse funds as well as the documents required to transfer ownership of your home. After your loan documents have been sent to escrow, you will meet with the escrow officer about 1-3 days before closing to sign. On the day of closing, we will receive confirmation that the ownership documents (the deed) have officially been recorded and we can finally hand over the keys to your new home!

Step 8: MOVING DAY

When the day you've been waiting for finally arrives, we're ready to help you plan a successful transition. Typically you can move into your new home the day after closing. You may decide to conduct a few updates before you move in, or just need a referral for a mover. Of course, [WE HAVE RESOURCES](#) to assist you with the entire process.



THE BUYER 10 COMMANDMENTS

During the home purchase process, your lender will be closely monitoring for any red flags that could pose a concern when approving your loan. To ensure a successful transaction, it's crucial to maintain conservative financial behavior until the day after closing. Engaging in any of the activities listed below could put your home purchase and loan approval in jeopardy. Therefore, it's important to avoid taking on new debt, opening or closing credit accounts, making large purchases, or transferring large sums of money without consulting with your lender first.

Thou shalt not:

- Change jobs, become self-employed or quit your job.
- Buy a new car, truck, van or boat.
- Spend money you have set aside for closing.
- Omit debts or liabilities from your loan application.
- Use credit cards excessively or let current accounts fall behind.
- Buy furniture on credit.
- Originate any inquiries into your credit.
- Change bank accounts.
- Co-sign a loan for anyone.
- Make large deposits without checking with your loan officer.





What you need to know about choosing a lender:

To empower you in making the most competitive offer, we will require that you obtain pre-approval from a lender before beginning your property search. This crucial information will provide you with a clear understanding of your financial capabilities and allow you to plan accordingly, including estimating your monthly payments. If you do not currently have an established relationship with a lender, let us know, we would be happy to refer a mortgage professional to you.

→ **SHOP AROUND:**

Not all lenders are the same. Each has have varying loan products based on several factors including income, assets, debt, savings, and credit history. Furthermore, they may charge different fees in different formats. As a result, it is crucial to understand and compare the services they offer. This will enable you to make an informed decision and select a lender that best aligns with your unique financial situation.

→ **SHOP LOCAL:**

Simply because a loan officer works with a bank you have used for years, does not necessarily mean they are the best option for you. In fact, smaller, local lenders are often known for providing exceptional customer service and being dedicated to delivering on their promises. They can also offer a more personalized and tailored experience compared to larger banks. It's essential to consider all your options and not solely rely on past relationships when choosing a lender for your specific needs.

→ **SHOP BANKS vs. MORTGAGE BROKERS:**

Banks may offer lower closing costs, but they might have higher interest rates. Mortgage brokers may provide lower interest rates, but they could have higher closing costs. Therefore, it's crucial to engage in comparison shopping to determine what best suits your individual financial situation. By exploring different options and carefully evaluating factors such as closing costs and interest rates, you can make an informed decision that aligns with your specific goals.



Understanding Title and Escrow services

Title insurance is a crucial safeguard for both homeowners and lenders against legitimate or false claims made by previous owners or lien holders. Although most potential issues, known as "defects," are typically resolved before closing, title insurance provides added protection for unforeseen issues that may arise after closing. In addition to this, Escrow services play a pivotal role in ensuring that funds are securely delivered and ownership is accurately transferred during the closing process.

➔ WHAT IS TITLE INSURANCE?

A title insurance policy is a contractual agreement that provides insurance coverage for the ownership or interest of the insured in a specific property.

➔ WHAT IS ESCROW?

Escrow acts as a vital neutral intermediary that receives and manages contract documents and funds from buyers, sellers, and lenders, facilitating the smooth closing of a real estate transaction.

➔ SIGNING DAY:

As the closing date approaches and your documents are prepared, your escrow officer will reach out to you to schedule a signing appointment and provide instructions for delivering the remaining funds due to escrow 24 hours before closing.

*The ache for home lives in all of
us, the safe place where we can go
as we are and not be questioned.*

- MAYA ANGELOU





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WHAT DOES IT COST TO PURCHASE A HOME?

As you go through the process of buying a new home, you will soon realize that the cost involved is not limited to just the down payment and mortgage. In fact, before closing on the purchase, your Escrow officer will present you with a settlement statement for your review. This statement will include a list of various fees that may be charged, along with the respective amounts you can expect to pay for each one. Know that we will also review this statement to ensure there are no surprises before closing.

EXPENSE:	AMOUNT:	WHEN TO PAY:
Earnest money	Typically 3 - 5% of purchase price	1-3 days after mutual acceptance
Home inspection	\$500 - \$850	On inspection day
Appraisal	\$800 - \$1200	Within 1st week of mutual acceptance
Credit report	\$30 - \$50	Paid at closing
Loan origination (points)	Typically 0.50 - 1.5% of loan amount	Paid at closing
Down payment	Typically 3-20% of purchase price	24 hours prior to closing
Title insurance	\$1400 - \$3000	Paid at closing
Escrow fee	\$1500 - \$1800	Paid at closing
Loan processing fee	Variable	Paid at closing
Underwriting fee	Variable	Paid at closing
Recording fee	\$400 - \$700	Paid at closing
Courier & notary fees	\$50 - \$250	Paid at closing
Flood certification fee	\$8 - \$10	Paid at closing
Broker compensation**	Variable	Paid at closing
Property taxes	Pro-rated based on closing date	Paid at closing
Prepaid interest	Pro-rated based on closing date	Paid at closing
Homeowner's Insurance	Pro-rated based on closing date	Paid at closing
Propane/oil fuel tank	Pro-rated based on closing date	Paid at closing

Rates and fees quoted are estimated and are variable dependent upon purchase price and loan amount.

**Buyer broker compensation is typically paid by the seller at closing. However, if the rate of compensation is less than what is agreed to in the Buyer Agency Agreement, buyer may be asked to pay the balance of the compensation rate due to buyer broker at closing.



JOHNSON & WALKER

Real estate consultants for the people of Seattle



JEREMEY JOHNSON

Managing Broker

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With the knowledge gained from working alongside my grandfather (an avid builder and tinkerer) and working with a contractor over the summers, I gained the confidence to buy my first fixer-upper at age 21. After renovating and renting it out for a few years, I sold it for a profit, acquiring even more first-hand experience along the way. Now on our fifth and current fixer-upper, I'd like to say we've found our forever home (until the next irresistible opportunity arises, of course!).

My own lackluster experience in buying my first home motivated me to become a broker, but with a twist – I vowed to never be “salesy.” Instead, I'm known for being pragmatic and empathetic, always taking the time to sift through my clients' wants and needs to truly understand what they want. My tried-and-true negotiation skills empower my clients to turn their desires into a reality.

I still love remodeling homes, and also enjoy skiing with my family, being an avid Seahawks fan who rarely misses a home game, and training for my next Ragnar race. When it's time to unwind, you'll find me cooking a gourmet meal for our family and friends.



CASSIE WALKER JOHNSON

Managing Broker

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As a passionate and driven real estate professional, there's nothing quite like that moment when everything falls into place for our clients. Being a matchmaker and connecting buyers and sellers with their perfect homes is my forte. Throw in the opportunity to expand my interior design skills with staging and and my cup is filled!

My bread and butter is establishing relationships, connecting people, and coming up with creative, out-of-the-box marketing strategies. With extensive real estate experience, I have built a vast network of connections that provides our clients with a significant advantage. Many have come to appreciate the value of having a resourceful, well-connected broker during intense negotiations.

When I'm not working, I love exploring new cities and returning to my second home, Paris. In my free time you'll most likely find me at Target or University Village enjoying girl time with our teenage daughter. Or in our kitchen indulging in my passion for baking. While I'm no professional pastry chef, some of my mishaps could easily land me a spot on the TV show, Nailed It!

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